Research Computing Advisory Committee
Minutes Oct 1, 2018 (taken by Erik Deumens)

Present: Anna Conesa, Erik Deumens, Richard Hennig, Rafa Munoz-Carpena, Alberto Riva

Report from Research Computing
1. HiPerGator expansion with a rack of Skylake nodes, the latest processors from Intel. The hardware has arrived and is being installed. Expect production sometime in November.
2. RC is evaluating options for expanding the number of GPUs we have, but the cost and the performance are not aligned. We need to get useful GPUs, but the top-of-the-line costs 9 times more than the regular version and it is only 3 times faster.
3. RC is working with research groups to move data from older systems /rlts /spec to the newer /orange and /rlts. Then that hardware will be turned off.
4. RC is exploring vendors and configurations for a replacement of the /home server.
5. RC offers a $50/hour consulting, but RC does not have enough staff to deliver on the commitments in a timely manner.
   a. With 2,000 hour in a year, that covers a $70,000 salary with benefits for a year ($100,000).
   b. But not all work on projects is allowable cost on a grant: Preparation in a proof or concept for a proposal is not allowable on any grant or contract.
   c. A consultant working on a project does leverage other staff and resources in RC, so a higher rate per hour is allowable.
   d. However, if the rate is too high, then hiring a consultant is less attractive for the project.

Discussion
RC needs more staff to help research groups execute the complex projects they are undertaking. The UF leadership is willing to support such activity during a startup phase, but there must be a long-term sustainability plan.
- $50/hr is a great rate. $100/hr is too much, in particular because consulting has 51% IDC.
- Maybe $100/hr is acceptable if it included overhead: That is $66/hr.
- ICBR charges $66/hr.
- RC should clarify on its website what work is done at no cost and what needs consulting. Maybe give everyone a number of hours as part of an investment?

Organization
- Next meeting will be on Monday November 5, 2018 in the usual conference room NPB 2304 from 1:30 – 2:30 pm. The meeting will be Zoom enabled for virtual attendance.