Formal Methods Europe
Minutes of the 33rd meeting
held at the Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal
22 May 2003

Present at the meeting were:
- Luis Barboja
- Dines Bjørner
- Ana Cavalcanti
- John Fitzgerald (Chairman)
- Stefania Gnesi
- Dino Mandrioli
- José Oliveira
- Nico Plat (Secretary)
- Kees Pronk (Treasurer)
- Jim Woodcock

Apologies had been received from: Cliff Jones, Derek Andrews, David Crocker, Jonathan Bowen, Lars-Henrik Eriksson, Alessandro Fantechi, Markus Montigel, Eerke Boiten, Jan Storbank Pedersen, Bruce Watson, Peter Gorm Larsen, Loe Feijs, Michael Goldsmith, Manuel J. Fernandez Iglesias, Marcel Verhoef, Raymond Boute, Stefan Gruner, Bruce Watson, Yves Ledru, Paul Mukherjee, Jan Tretmans.

1   Welcome
John Fitzgerald welcomed all those present at the meeting. He thanked José Oliveira and Paula Anjo for organising and hosting the meeting.

2   Agree upon agenda
The agenda distributed at the meeting was agreed upon.

3   Minutes of the meeting held in Pisa on 19 October 2002
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with a few modifications:
- Page 2, bottom of the page: EUR 500 should be EUR 5000.
- Page 2, bottom of the page: the phrase ", an amount which will be paid back this year" should be deleted. On this issue it was remarked by the Treasurer that still no invoice had been received by the I-Day organizers: it was decided that if no invoice is received by 1 June then the matter will be considered as closed.
- José Oliveira should be added to the list of those who apologized for not being present at the meeting.

4   Action list
Action 28/5: The document will appear in a first draft on 2 June 2003. Action continues.
Action 29/3: Done, action closed.
Action 29/9: No progress for a long time, action closed. However it was felt that an evaluation amongst the attendees of FM'03 might be useful for future symposia.
Action 33/1: John Fitzgerald to setup a questionnaire to evaluate FM'03 amongst its participants.
Action 30/10: No progress for a long time, action closed.
Action 30/15: No progress, action continues.
Action 31/2: Done. Not yet fully completed but it was proposed by the Chairman to nominate Cliff Jones as an ambassador for FME . Action closed.
Action 32/1 No progress, action continues.

Action 32/2: Has become obsolete, action closed.
Action 32/3: Will be done this week, action closed.
Action 32/4: Done, action closed.
Action 32/5: Done, action closed.
Action 32/6: No progress, action continues.
Action 32/7: Has become obsolete, action closed.
Action 32/8: Done, action closed.
Action 32/9: Done, action closed.
Action 32/10: Done, action closed.
Action 32/11: Done, action closed.
Action 32/12: Has become obsolete, action closed.
Action 32/13: No progress, action continues. It was decided to send Jonathan Bowen a reminder on this issue.

Action 33/2: John Fitzgerald to send Jonathan Bowen a reminder to formulate a proposal for FME sponsorship of ZB2003.

5   Status report on FM03

Stefania Gnesi and Dino Mandrioli gave a status report on FM'03. Paper selection has been finished. There had been 144 submissions, which can be considered a great success. The PC was quite large this time: 30 members. Dino felt that this had worked well and would advise a large PC for future symposia. The large number of submissions is probably due to the active solicitation for papers by the PC members. Problems with the tool that was used to support the review process and the large number of paper submissions did cause a lot of stress to both the PC members and especially the PC Chairs. 43 Papers in total were accepted. 18 of these are theoretical papers (out of 94 submitted). The next step is to arrange the Symposium program. Tutorials will be on Monday and Tuesday, I-Day on Tuesday. The Symposium will run from Wednesday through Friday with parallel sessions in the afternoon.

Invited speakers for the Symposium are: Gerald Holzmann, Raymond Abrial, Brian Randell and Kouchi Kishida (dinner speech).

There have been many submissions for tutorials and workshops. 8 Out of 16 proposals for tutorials had been accepted, and 6 proposals for workshops had been accepted. Unfortunately this meant that, despite the ample space available in the conference centre, a number of proposals had to be turned down. Dines supported the selection of as many workshops and tutorials as could be accommodated. He recalled that, due to lack of interest one tutorial had to be cancelled at FM'02 (Denmark) and he therefore recommended that tutorials and workshops be better advertised.

Stefania reported that the agency hired for registration support had been closed down and that a new agency had been hired.

Early registration for the Symposium will be at the beginning of July (Symposium and tutorials) and August (for those only attending the Symposium). Unfortunately the programs of the workshops will not be ready by then. The program for the Symposium will be published by 10 June at the latest.

The following sponsors have been found:
- CoLogNET (EUR 5000)
- Ercim (EUR 2000)
- Microsoft (EUR 2000)
- I-Logix (EUR 2000, with a request for presentation space. It was suggested to do this at lunch time or perhaps use the money for a reception at which I-Logix gives a presentation.
- Epson (materials + EUR 500)

Nothing had been heard from Telelogic so far and also the EU will not provide any funding. The level of sponsorship has exceeded the original budget projections.

A well equipped internet room will be provided at the Symposium, perhaps with a wireless access point.

The meeting congratulated Dino, Stefania and all their fellow organisers on the success of the organisation so far. In accordance with prior agreements, The meeting officially resolved to go ahead with the Symposium as planned in Pisa.

6   Industrial day at FM'03/Industrial Association

Dines explained the I-Day program using the document that had been distributed prior to the meeting. It was suggested that, to complement the current program, some perhaps papers with industrial relevance that had, regrettably, not been accepted for the Symposium purely for lack of space rather than technical deficiencies could form part of the I-Day program. Dino will look into this and select four additional papers.

Action 33/3: Dino Mandrioli to select four papers for FM'03 I-Day

The signup for I-Day will be separate. The fee will be EUR 60 for early registration.

The intended audience for I-Day is anyone interested in formal methods, "converted" or not. Dines aims for 30 to 40 attendees: if this level of attendance is reached then the event can be considered to be a success.

Dines explained his plans for an "Formal Methods Association", focussing on industrial participation, which would fund the I-Day in the long run. Tim Denvir has been hired to help Dines setting up this association, including writing bylaws. John suggested that many of the proposed activities could be carried out by FME and that perhaps having a legally separate entity might not be a good idea. Nico Plat suggested that perhaps the "FME institutional membership" could be used for this (with a membership fee, initially EUR 500), and that the Formal Methods Association that Dines has in mind could formally be one of FME's subgroups. (A) member(s) of this subgroup could e.g. also become FME board member(s). This idea was welcomed. Dines asked for EUR 4000 initial funding. John Fitzgerald explained that FME still has no uniform procedure for funding events but at least asked that Dines would formulate a proposal to justify this funding.

Action 33/4: Dines Bjørner to justify initial funding of I-Day by FME
Action 33/5: Nico Plat to inform Tim Denvir of this part of the I-Day part of the meeting

7   FM'05

A few locations were suggested to hold FM'05: Shanghai, Macau (probably supported by the Chinese government), Portugal, London, McMaster University in Canada and Southampton (by Stefan Gruner, not present the meeting). Jim Woodcock suggested Shanghai: there is a new institution on dependable computing having good facilities, and the people involved would be very interested in hosting the Symposium and the publicity that it will give them. ICFEM was held in Shanghai last November but not that many people attended.

It was decided that John Fitzgerald would approach people at the suggested locations and ask them if they would be willing to organise FM'05.

Action 33/6: John Fitzgerald to approach organisations in Shanghai, Macau, Portugal, Canada and UK (London and Southampton) and ask about their willingness to host and organise FM'05

8   FMnet Network of Excellence Proposal

Jonathan Bowen was not present at the meeting but he had sent in a written report prior to the meeting. The current status is as follows. After a visit to Brussels with Prof. Traian Muntean

(CNRS Grenoble/Marseille, France), The FMnet partners decided to go for and Coordination Action (old-style Network) within the "Open Platforms for Software and Services" area under the 2nd FP6 call. So FMnet will concentrate on open tools for major formal methods (e.g., ASM, B, RAISE, VDM, Z), emphasizing interoperability where possible (probably via XML-based interfaces in general). After advice from the CEC, this seems to be the most realistic option. Jonathan shall see Traian at the RCS Workshop (associated with ZB2003) in Turku, Finland on Tuesday 3rd June. Traian will also present FMnet at an Information Day in Brussels, 4-5 June 2003. Jonathan shall present the status and discuss the proposal at the ZB2003 conference, Turku, Finland, 4-6 June 2003. In particular, there will be an opportunity to discuss the role of the CTZ (Community Z Tools) initiative. FMnet will be rather selective in the core partners involved in the proposal, but will encourage a wider range of "affiliate" partners to attend meetings if the proposal is successful. Online information is available under http://www.fmnet.info/.

It was remarked at the meeting that perhaps the proposal needs concrete backup by the formal methods industry association (but this subgroup may come in existence too late to have any effect) or FME itself.

9   Subgroups
John Fitzgerald had just sent out a message to inform the FME members about the purpose of the FME subgroups. The FME subgroups have undertaken very little action in the last year, with the exception of the subgroup on Education.

10   FME website
Nico Plat reported that students of Raymond Boute had redesigned the FME website, also increasing its maintainability. In Nico's opinion Raymond's students had done a very good job on the design of the website but, as far as maintainability is concerned, the situation is not yet ideal: entries added cannot be deleted or modified in the mechanism itself is rather inflexible. Nico therefore suggested to keep the current design but use a content management system for its maintenance. West Consulting B.V. (West), the company Nico works for and that also sponsors FME by hosting the FME website, has offered to have FME use its current CMS, called Man-a-Site, for free. The system offers easy maintainability of web pages, automatic archiving, scheduled publication of web pages, workflow and authorisation of editors to be able to change certain pages or not. More information can be found on http://man-a-site.west.nl (in Dutch only). It does mean, however, that the current site has to be transformed and that Man-a-Site "templates" need to be made. West has offered to do this at a reduced rate of 50% (which would probably mean that the transformation would cost around EUR 2000-2500). Dines suggested that perhaps this could be funded by CoLogNET. Alternatively, as Kees Pronk suggested, the work could be done by students. Nico was asked to outline all alternatives by the end of May, so a decision can be made by the board by the end of June.
Action 33/7: Nico Plat to present alternatives for maintaining the FME web site

11   Date and place of next meeting
The next meeting will be organised in September 2003 – as part of FM'03 - by Stefania Gnesi.

The meeting after that will be organised on Friday 21 November 2003 (tentative). Raymond Boute (who has offered to host an FME meeting in conjunction with a one-day workshop) will be asked to organise and host the meeting in Ghent, Belgium. This meeting will then also be the 2003 AGM.
Action 33/8: Nico Plat to ask Raymond Boute to organise an FME meeting in Ghent.

12   Other business
Kees Pronk asked if members who attend an FME meeting and who are getting their travel expenses reimbursed by FME would, from now on, specify their bank's IBAN code or BIC code

on the reimbursement form. Using one these codes makes the international transfer of money less expensive for FME.

Summary of actions

Action 28/5: John Fitzgerald to coordinate the production of a document on "Best practices while organising a FME symposium"

Action 30/15: Nico Plat to find a volunteer to set up a web page with FME members and associated skills

Action 32/1: John Fitzgerald to stress the need for advertisements of workshops in the Symposium Guidelines

Action 32/6: Jonathan Bowen to organize an FME funded meeting to put together the final FMnet proposal

Action 32/13: John Fitzgerald and Jonathan Bowen to formulate a proposal for FME sponsorship of ZB2003

Action 33/1: John Fitzgerald to setup a questionnaire to evaluate FM'03 amongst its participants

Action 33/2: John Fitzgerald to send Jonathan Bowen a reminder to formulate a proposal for FME sponsorship of ZB2003

Action 33/3: Dino Mandrioli to select four papers for FM'03 I-Day

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Members of the Subgroup on Education:
- Dines Bjørner
- Eerke Boiten
- Raymond Boute
- Andrew Butterfield
- John Fitzgerald
- Randolph Johnson
- Steve King
- Peter Lucas
- Michael Mac an Airchinnigh
- Dino Mandrioli
- Andrew Martin
- José Oliveira (Convenor)
- Kees Pronk
- Wolfgang Reisg

Members of the Web Publications (to be formed):
- Jonathan Bowen
- John Fitzgerald
- Stefan Gruner (Convenor)

Members of the FMnet Subgroup (to be formed):
- Dines Bjørner
- John Fitzgerald
- Jan Storbank Pedersen
- Nico Plat

Members of the Subgroup on Industrial Associations (to be formed):
- Dines Bjørner

Members of the subgroup on the FME symposium:
- Dines Bjørner
- Lars-Henrik Eriksson
- John Fitzgerald
- Michael Goldsmith
- Stefania Gnesi (Convenor)
- Peter Lindsay
- Paul Mukherjee
- José Oliveira
- Nico Plat
- Kees Pronk
- Wolfgang Reisig