Appointment of
Chief Executive Officer
May 2024
Executive Summary

GÉANT is a unique, not-for-profit organisation at the very heart of research and education networking. It’s 160 staff, based in Amsterdam and Cambridge, represent approximately 40 cultures and underpin GÉANT’s global outlook. Together with its European membership and global partners, GÉANT continues to push the boundaries of research and education networking – harnessing the power of a truly collaborative, talented, and democratic community to deliver innovative solutions and services for scientists, academics, and students.

GÉANT is looking for a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who will be entrusted with the dual responsibilities of overseeing the day-to-day operations and guiding the long-term strategic direction of the organisation. Key duties include ensuring GÉANT continues to best serve its community by continually evaluating its effectiveness and outcomes, leading the development and execution of medium to long-term strategies, and monitoring influential factors in the operational environment. The CEO is also responsible for identifying potential funding opportunities, addressing challenges and opportunities, and recommending policy updates to the Board to meet the future needs of the membership and organisation.

The ideal CEO candidate will have a proven capability to lead a multinational technical organisation within a European context, and have experience of operating in a values-based and collegially driven decision-making culture. This role demands a seasoned leader who is adept at balancing risk with innovation and excels in fostering collaboration among a federation of active partners based on trust. The candidate should have a clear vision for navigating and delivering global solutions, maintaining robust relationships with all stakeholders, and enhancing GÉANT’s presence and influence on European and global stages. Required skills include deep knowledge of the European Research & Education community, proficiency in stakeholder consensus building, and excellent multilingual communication abilities. The candidate should also display resilience, a high level of integrity, and the ability to prioritise effectively under pressure.

GÉANT is committed to diversity and inclusion and encourages qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds to apply.
About GÉANT

GÉANT receives funding from the European Union, to deliver large scale and long-term projects that support research and education communities in Europe and beyond.

Together with its National Research and Education Network (NREN) members and project partners, GÉANT delivers an integrated catalogue of connectivity, collaboration and identity services to over 50 million users. These services provide reliable, secure, and unconstrained access to communication, computing, analysis, storage, applications and other resources, whenever and wherever needed.

The recently restructured GÉANT network interconnects Europe’s NRENs and is helping to put Europe at the forefront of global research and education collaboration by connecting Europe’s researchers, academics, and students to each other, and to over half the countries in the world. The restructured network has been designed to support the rapidly growing needs of the research and education community for the next 15 years, taking into account the demands of High-Performance Computing, Quantum Key Distribution, and so on.

Beyond Europe, GÉANT collaborates with global research and education network partners to ensure high performance connectivity is in place, and also to make a range of services available to user groups across the world, enhancing their ability to work together.

GÉANT manages research and education networking projects serving Europe and Africa. In addition, it supports intercontinental connectivity to North America, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region. At the heart of this work, GÉANT nurtures relationships with counterparts across the globe.

Underpinning all of this is the GÉANT community, representing the GÉANT Association, its members, partners, and the extremely wide range of users from individual students to some of the biggest scientific endeavours ever seen with thousands of contributors worldwide. With a growing Community Programme comprising Special Interest Groups, Task Forces, Workshops and supporting programmes to grow innovation and learning and development, GÉANT’s position at the heart of research and education networking has never been stronger.
What Drives the GÉANT Association?

For researchers worldwide, the ability to cooperate and build rapidly upon each other’s ideas and results is paramount to allow them to conduct world-class research. The quantity of data and information exchanged is constantly growing. The GÉANT network itself has seen average annual increases of 30% in network traffic over the past five years. Capabilities such as creativity, brainpower, and research skills are urgently needed to tackle major issues, such as shortages of energy, material, and food, aging, and climate change. At the same time, technological developments also have an impact on education. These developments change the way students collaborate and interact with teachers and each other. It is important to make sure that education, worldwide, can benefit from new technological opportunities. To realise this goal, knowledge communities need access to trusted, effective, and efficient information and communication services and products that enable and enrich collaboration, as well as provide new and innovative possibilities to their users.

Values

GÉANT embodies core values that define its ethos and approach. These values collectively foster a dynamic and supportive atmosphere, crucial for the advancement and success of GÉANT’s initiatives and its community.

- **Community**: “I AM BECAUSE WE ARE” underscores the essence of community within GÉANT. It emphasises the symbiotic relationship between the individual and the group. The strength of the community hinges on the contributions and successes of its members, just as each member’s well-being relies on the robustness of the community.

- **Trust**: forms the foundation of GÉANT’s interactions and operations. “BUILT ON TRUST” reflects the reliance on mutual respect, understanding, and dependability across all communications and collaborations within the community. This trust fosters a safe environment for developing and launching new services.

- **Innovation**: at GÉANT manifests in various forms, including new services, methodologies, or initiatives aimed at enhancing overall efficacy and impact. “INNOVATION EVERYWHERE” captures GÉANT’s commitment to continuous improvement and creativity, benefitting both the community and broader society.

- **Passion**: Inspired by the dedication observed within the community, GÉANT’s value of “PASSION” highlights the motivational energy that propels its members to exceed expectations consistently. The collective drive and commitment are contagious, pushing everyone to achieve more as a unified entity.
About GÉANT

GÉANT Association Strategy

The GÉANT Association Strategy for 2021-2026 outlines its commitment to delivering infrastructures and services that bolster the R&E community’s capabilities. As a collective of European NRENs, GÉANT strives to advance research, education, and innovation on a global scale through a sustainable, open, innovative, and trusted information ecosystem. Their ambition is to be recognised by the R&E community and the European Union as an indispensable partner.

GÉANT’s vision encompasses being a trusted network partner for advanced R&E networking in Europe and globally, ensuring a secure information ecosystem, continually innovating infrastructures and services, and being acknowledged as a leader in supporting R&E networking communities. Financial sustainability, strong stakeholder relationships, and agile governance benefiting from member diversity are also core to their strategic goals.

GÉANT Projects

GÉANT has a long-standing and highly collaborative relationship with the European Union, sharing the objective of providing a stable and innovative environment for research, education, and innovation.

For over 25 years this approach has benefited research and education communities worldwide, until recently within the seven-year Horizon 2020 Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), now under the seven-year Horizon Europe FPA and the new GNS-1 Project (which follows predecessor projects GN1/2/3/4) which commenced in January 2023, and which is joined by its sister project GNS-IC1 which focuses on intercontinental connectivity.

More widely, GÉANT manages research and education networking projects in partnership with the European Commission (EC), our European NREN members, global NRENs and other partners. This includes networking projects serving Europe (GÉANT Project), the Eastern Partnership countries (EaPConnect – EU4Digital) and Africa (AfricaConnect3 – DG INTPA); trust and identity projects that support the seamless integration and management of identity across research and education sectors worldwide; and collaboration and assistance projects with international partners.

These comprehensive efforts underscore GÉANT’s commitment to advancing research and education networking, facilitating global collaboration, and enhancing service innovation through strategic partnerships.
The GÉANT Vereniging (GÉANT Association) is registered with the Chamber of Commerce in Amsterdam and operates in the UK as a branch of the association. GÉANT’s highest governing body is the General Assembly (GA), which includes representatives from member organisations and convenes at least twice per year. The GA is composed of National Members, a Representative Member, and Associates. It is responsible for electing members to the Board of Directors (BoD), which oversees the management and administration of the organisation.

The day-to-day operations of GÉANT are conducted by staff located in Amsterdam and Cambridge, guided by the CEO and Executive Team. Additionally, the Executive Team, which operates seamlessly across both GÉANT offices, provides collective leadership for all activities of the association. Each member of this team is responsible for leading specific areas.

Staff

GÉANT employs a diverse team of 160 staff members from approximately 40 cultures, located across their two locations in Amsterdam and Cambridge. English is their daily working language, facilitating clear and effective communication across the organisation.

Their staff bring a rich variety of cultural and professional backgrounds that enhance their collaboration within the GÉANT community. They actively participate in and contribute their expertise to various GÉANT community activities.

Appointment of Chief Executive Officer | May 2024
GÉANT is looking for a new Chief Executive Officer, responsible for both the day-to-day and longer-term success of GÉANT, as well as leading the executive management team. Together with the Board, the CEO ensures that GÉANT remains relevant to its members and the wider community it serves.

The CEO will have the proven ability to effectively lead a multinational technical organisation. They will bring extensive experience in directing a values-based organisation with a strong focus on collegial decision-making. The successful candidate will have a track record of setting, and successfully delivering organisational strategies, a highly developed network and experience within a European context. Additionally, the successful candidate will be skilled at balancing risk and innovation, as well as operating effectively in environments where co-delivery among a federation of partners is standard. By leading with a clear vision, the successful CEO will be adept at navigating global solutions, positioning them as an effective leader in complex, collaborative settings.

Mission, strategy and policy

The CEO is responsible for maintaining and developing GÉANT's mission, strategies, and policies by:

- ensuring GÉANT’s continued relevance to the community, by measuring its effectiveness, and its results;
- lead the development and the execution of GÉANT’s medium and long-term strategies to meet the challenges and opportunities agreed with the Board;
- monitoring the environment in which GÉANT operates and the important factors influencing it in both the short and longer term;
- proactively identifying possible funding opportunities;
- identifying challenges and opportunities and means of addressing them; bringing those which are appropriate to the Board and/or its committees for agreement on the direction of travel for the organisation, or for other resolution;
- recommending to the Board appropriate new or amended policies where these are required to meet the future business needs of GÉANT and its members.
Leadership and management

The CEO will play a crucial role in shaping the organisation’s culture through strategic leadership and operational management, and by being approachable and actively involved in developing staff at all levels. GÉANT is looking for a leader who is passionate about individual and team development and has a genuine commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace.

The CEO:

- is responsible for managing all day-to-day operations at GÉANT, including business and people development, commercial matters, financial and budget control, technical direction, public affairs and communications. These are governed by the policies and strategic direction set by the Board and the General Assembly;
- will actively develop the senior leadership team within the organisation so that it can support the CEO and Board in delivering for the membership;
- will champion a people-first culture by actively fostering an inclusive, transparent, and supportive workplace environment, ensuring all team members feel valued and empowered to contribute to GÉANT’s success.

Stakeholder management and external relations

The CEO acts as an ambassador for GÉANT within various European and global bodies; and more generally on the global stage. The successful candidate will develop and maintain strong and productive relationships with all GÉANT stakeholders through effective communication and relationship management.

In particular, ensuring that:

- members, customers and users are listened to in order to develop new and existing services and improve community involvement;
- member participation in collaborative projects and other activities is promoted;
- GÉANT’s visibility is enhanced and the organisation further develops its relationship with the European Commission and its advisory bodies;
- relationships with key stakeholders, nationally, within Europe and globally are initiated, developed, and maintained in a cooperative fashion.

Governance, legal, risk and regulatory compliance

The CEO:

- ensures that all the appropriate processes and measures are in place to maintain compliance with relevant laws and regulations in all territories in which GÉANT operates;
- enables the Board to measure the overall performance of GÉANT, and its own performance, through the development and measurement of appropriate KPIs; and by the identification and management of operational, financial, political, regulatory and other risks to its business and its continued success;
- alongside the executive management team, works with the Chair of the Board to ensure that the appropriate support is in place to enable the Board and the General Assembly of members to fulfil their various duties and obligations, and to facilitate optimum performance by the General Assembly, the Board and their committees.
Profile & Requirements

Knowledge and Skills
• Understanding and experience of a membership organisation with both vocal and active members;
• Ability to identify and build consensus in the membership community and align the organisation with the community’s needs;
• In depth knowledge and understanding of European Research & Education community;
• Good understanding of the political and funding environment of the European Research & Education environment;
• Clear evidence of the ability to build a high performing leadership team and an agile organisation;
• Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, in English and at least one other European language.

Personal Attributes
• Politically astute
• Proven ability to perform under both time and political pressure
• The ability to prioritise effectively
• Passionate and active communicator
• High integrity and trustworthiness
• The ability to build trusting relationships
• Resilient.

Working Arrangements
The CEO will be based in GÉANT’s Amsterdam office, in the Netherlands. GÉANT has adopted a flexible-hybrid model whereby employees can work flexibly between a remote and office environment. As an international organisation operating with a global community of colleagues and members, regular collaboration – both in person and virtually – is the standard practice.

GÉANT have accelerated their growth in recent years. The CEO shall guide the organisation’s working practices to support GÉANT’s values (community, trust, innovation and passion) to enable their teams to deliver great work.

Business Travel
Frequent travel within Europe, and regular world-wide travel, will be required for the role. This will include frequent visits to the GÉANT UK office in Cambridge.
An executive search exercise is being undertaken by Perrett Laver to assist the Recruitment Committee in identifying the widest possible field of qualified candidates and assisting in the assessment of candidates against the requirements for the role.

Informal enquiries and questions can be directed to Tiziano Sartor on +31 202 404 370 or by emailing tiziano.sartor@perrettlaver.com. Applications can be uploaded at https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/, quoting reference number 7301.

The closing date for applications is at 9am CEST on Monday 27th May.

Applications should consist of a cover letter addressing suitability against the person specification and a full curriculum vitae.

Applications will be considered by the Recruitment Committee in early June. Perrett Laver will conduct preliminary discussions with longlisted candidates in mid-June, and the Committee will then meet in early July to decide on a shortlist of candidates. These individuals will subsequently be invited for formal interviews in mid-July. Selection of and negotiations with the preferred candidate will take place thereafter.

Please note the following dates for the interview rounds on which successful candidates would be expected to be available:

First Round Interviews: Monday 8th July (taking place online).

Second Round Interviews: Tuesday 16th July (taking place in-person in Amsterdam).

A psychometric assessment will be part of the procedure.

As defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is ‘Legitimate Interest’. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website https://www.perrettlaver.com/privacy-statement/.
The workplace culture at GÉANT is deeply collaborative and supportive, emphasising the importance of community and mutual assistance from the first day. New employees are welcomed with a comprehensive Induction Plan that facilitates integration into the organisation through meetings with staff across various departments, sharing insights into the organisation’s operations and culture. GÉANT values a strong collegial decision-making culture and maintains an open-plan office environment to foster cooperation among all staff levels.

GÉANT supports hybrid and flexible working arrangements, accommodating the diverse needs and preferences of its staff. This approach is part of a broader commitment to work-life balance, inclusivity, and staff well-being, which is supported through various benefits like private healthcare, on-site gym access, and regular wellness activities.

The organisation is committed to continual learning and professional development, offering a range of training and growth opportunities to help staff excel in their roles and advance their careers. GÉANT also places a strong emphasis on diversity, equality, and inclusion, actively working to attract diverse talent and ensure a balanced and equitable workplace.

Social interaction and community building are integral to life at GÉANT, with numerous social events, celebrations, and casual gatherings that enrich the work experience and foster a friendly, engaging corporate environment.

For more information on how GÉANT collects, uses, and shares applicant data for recruitment, including how to use Eploy to access and modify your information, please visit the Candidate Privacy Notice.
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