



“Ask” Q&A for Scientific Researchers to be Demonstrated at Prestigious SC18 Conference Voting for Most Useful Posts Will Be Used to Improve, Increase Awareness of Research Tool

Holyoke, Massachusetts, Oct. 25, 2018 – “Ask”, the Q&A platform developed by the Northeast Cyberteam Initiative and XSEDE Campus Champions Program for scientific academic researchers, will be demonstrated at next month’s SC18, the nation’s largest high performance computing conference. To increase awareness of the platform and generate feedback for content developers, the Cyberteam and Campus Champions will also recognize the most useful posts to Ask, which already has participation from contributors at universities in approximately 30 states.

“Our goal is to accelerate scientific research by offering expert answers unique to the intersection of scientific research and high performance computing,” said John Goodhue, Principal Investigator of the Northeast Cyberteam Initiative and Executive Director of the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center. “The highly regarded SC18 conference will provide us with an opportunity to keep building on the success of Ask and establish the platform as a tool for the global research computing community.”

[Ask](#) will be demonstrated during a [Birds of a Feather session](#) at SC18, which is being held from Nov. 11 through Nov. 16 at the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center in Dallas. The Ask session will take place on Thursday, Nov. 15, from 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm, in room D174. Voting on the most useful posts will be counted until the end of the BoF session, when badges will be awarded for each question or answer that receives more than 10 votes. Badges will also be awarded to anyone who participates by voting or posting a new question or answer.

“Ask has already exceeded our expectations for growth, breadth and quality since we announced it in July,” said Julie Ma, Project Leader of the Northeast Cyberteam Initiative. “We’re grateful for the user community’s help in spreading the word about the availability of Ask to an even broader audience.”

Reflecting the critical role that high performance computing plays in all fields of scientific inquiry today, Ask was designed to aggregate answers to a broad spectrum of questions that are commonly asked as researchers utilize advanced computing resources, creating a self-service knowledge base for the community of domain researchers, facilitators, cyberinfrastructure engineers and others.

It began as a project of the Northeast Cyberteam Initiative, which makes high performance computing resources more accessible to small and mid-size colleges and universities through web-based tools, and by connecting researchers with student Research Computing Facilitators (RCFs) supported by mentor RCFs. However, the platform project quickly drew support from

collaborators outside the Northeast, including members of the XSEDE Campus Champions Program.

[About the Northeast Cyberteam Initiative](#)

High performance computing has become an indispensable part of scientific inquiry today. The Northeast Cyberteam Initiative seeks to build a sustainable system of computational support for researchers at small and mid-sized colleges and universities in New England, who typically lack the computing resources available at larger institutions. The Cyberteam Initiative offers online computing tools and is developing a regional pool of Research Computing Facilitators (RCFs), who are expert at connecting researchers with appropriate computer systems. Funded by the National Science Foundation, the Cyberteam is a collaborative project led by the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center, University of Maine System, University of New Hampshire, and University of Vermont, with support from Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

[About the XSEDE Campus Champions Program](#)

The Campus Champions are a community of practice of campus research computing professionals celebrating 10 years since initiation under Teragrid and support through XSEDE. The Campus Champions have grown to over 470 individuals from over 250 institutions, including 46 Minority Serving Institutions and 70 institutions in Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) jurisdictions. The Campus Champions focus discussion on challenges, opportunities, solutions, and leading practices via an active mailing list and videoconferences. The Campus Champions community promotes and facilitates the effective participation of a diverse national community of campuses in the application of advanced digital resources and services to accelerate scientific discovery and scholarly achievement.

[About the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center](#)

The Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center (MGHPCC) provides state-of-the-art infrastructure for computationally intensive research that is indispensable in the increasingly sensor and data-rich environments of modern science and engineering. Computers at the MGHPCC run millions of virtual experiments every month, supporting thousands of researchers in Massachusetts and around the world. The MGHPCC was developed through an unprecedented collaboration among the most research-intensive universities in Massachusetts (Boston University, Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Northeastern University and the University of Massachusetts); the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and private industry (Cisco and Dell EMC). The member universities fund the ongoing operation of the data center, which is open for use by any research organization.

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