# *F*oundation for *I*ntelligent *P*hysical *A*gents

## Durham Press Release

## AGENTS PIG PICKIN' DOWN SOUTH

Members of FIPA were in Durham from the 19th to th e 23th of October 1998 to hold their 11th meeting . This meeting was sponsored by DARPA, IBM Nortel, NCSU, and OBJS. This was the key meeting of FIPA in 1998, at which the new set of specifications was released, called FIPA 98.

These specifications are concerned with:

- addin gfunctionalities to the Agent platform specified in FIPA 97;
- ensuring that the platform will support various types of agent mobility
- addressing the security management issues for the platform supporting FIPA agents
- defining the ontology support services for FIPA agents
- specifying the minimum requirements for communication between humans and FIPA agents

FIPA also revised two parts of the FIPA 97 specifications taking into account the comments received from the public. These modifications are of a minor nature and give confidence to FIPA of their maturity.

As another watershed event DARPA's Control of Agent Based Systems CoABS) panel also held their meeting at the same venue and there was a strong affinity of purpose  CoABS is the most important US Government funde program on software agents. Major (Dr.) Doug Dyer, the CoABS Project Manager, gave a keynote presentation to FIPA members explaining his vision of CoABS and their support t FIPA's activities. FIPA can look forward to close relationship with the range of activities that will be taking place withi CoABS over the next years.

Given the increasing importance and popularity of intelligent software agents, FIPA has determined to continue with its standards making work in 1999. Therefore, members were active in discussing what new technologies and applications need to be specified next. From this discussion, FIPA has issued its 5th call for proposals requesting contributions in a variety of areas such as efficient and effective communication language protocols, global agent naming services, and applications in areas such electronic commerce realtime systems, and personal

communicators. The response to this call will be evaluated at this next meeting in January 1999 to be held in Seoul Korea.

FIPA has elected new board members at this meeting. These are Donald Steiner from Siemens and Francis McCabe from Fujitsu. FIPA also now has an independent secretariat to help take care of FIPA's growing activities and maintain its new Web site at http://www.fipa.org.