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NICOS - The instrument control user interface

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NICOS (Networked Instrument Control System) is the general user interface to control the instruments at the MLZ. NICOS is now in use at 23 instruments.

A number of standard commands exist, and instrument specific commands are possible.

Python is also used as the command and scripting language.

There is a script execution component, components to create a history of measured data as well as of nearly all parameters of the instrument, various option to display the current measured data (detector image, scan data, and so on).

To display the status of the instrument and current measurement the most important instrument and measurement parameters may be displayed on a screen or via an internet browser.

A newly developed protocol for sample environment integration (SECoP) is available as well as the plug-and-play integration of decoupled embedded systems (e.g. sample environment systems)

Nearly all components are written in Python which gives a high degree of platform independence (Linux, Windows, macOS). It also allows easy implementation of new features (devices, commands, data sinks, and GUI components).

An international collaboration with the SINQ at PSI and the ESS has started.

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