

Getting Started with the Visualization Portal

Introduction

The visualization portal provides a user friendly interface to the GPU hardware in the DAVinCI cluster for running graphical applications remotely.

Logging Into the Portal

The visualization portal can be accessed by directing your web browser to <https://viz.rice.edu/enginframe>

To connect to the portal you must either be on campus or connected to the Rice VPN. Read this page to [connect to Rice from remote networks](#).

To reach the login page, select any of the services listed in the left column, or the login link at the top right.

Prior to logging in the first time, please [file a help request](#) and request access to the visualization portal for your RCSG account. After access has been granted, you can use your NetID username and password to log in. Once successfully logged in, the login link will be replaced by a logout link and next to it will be a settings link.

The settings page allows the user to configure common parameters that are preserved between settings. The geometry and color depth tab sets the default geometry and color depth for VNC sessions.

The viewer type tab controls what type of VNC client will be used by the portal. With open native client selected, the browser will attempt to launch a standalone VNC viewer on the client system. To use this setting, a VNC viewer must be installed on the client system. The open session in current window and separate window settings will use a VNC client written in Java that will be automatically downloaded from the server. To use this setting, a Java runtime must be installed on the client system, and the Java plug-in must be enabled in the browser.

VNC Viewers

Most services available on the portal use VNC to provide remote desktop support. While it is possible to run the Java VNC client in a browser with an enabled Java plug-in, use of a native VNC viewer is recommended for best performance. Almost any VNC viewer will work, however more compatible viewers will provide more features and better performance, the preferred viewer is [TurboVNC](#). Some VNC viewers do not support parsing VNC connection files, this includes the default TigerVNC viewer on RHEL systems and the Chicken viewer popular on OSX systems. These scripts: [tigervncwrapper.sh](#) and [chickenvncwrapper.sh](#) can be used to parse a connection file and launch the system VNC viewer with the proper command line arguments.

The first time you start a remote desktop session, the web browser may ask you to associate the .vnc file extension with a helper application. If this happens, select the native VNC viewer or wrapper script you've just installed.