Steering Committee Meeting

IASSIST 2007 - Montreal, Quebec
May 16, 2007

Minutes

Present: Mark Abramson (representing Roper Center, a host organization); Ernie Boyko (representing IASSIST, a host association); Myron Gutmann (representing ICPSR, a host organization); Hans Jorgen Marker, Danish Data Archive (representing the Expert Committee); Ron Nakao, Stanford University (representing the Expert Committee); Mary Vardigan, ICPSR (Alliance Director).

DDI Alliance 2006 Annual Report and Financial Status

The group reviewed the budgets of the Alliance, which continue to show a positive fund balance. It was noted that the Alliance does not have to shelter much of a reserve, and thus the Alliance monies should be targeted to produce the needed products to move the initiative forward. Given that DDI Version 3.0 is soon to be published, the Alliance should spend money in a thoughtful way to promote the new version and commission the types of products it needs to be successful - i.e., documentation, a user guide, use cases, promotional materials, etc.

DDI 2007 Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan presents a vision of where the Alliance wants to be in five years and beyond and sets out some tactics to reach the goals. There was a detailed discussion of promotional goals and opportunities. The suggestion was made that the Alliance needs a professional brochure and a set of PowerPoint presentations that can be used in various settings. It was also pointed out that there are several conferences that may be relevant to the Alliance and that we should strive to be on the programs at these and other key meetings.

The schedule for meeting and conference attendance to be supported during the upcoming year was reviewed:

- Sponsored by GESIS-ZUMA, training for mostly European participants to learn about using DDI 3.0 will be held at the

Dagstuhl conference center in Germany the last week in October 2007. An SRG meeting will also take place following the workshop.

- DDI will be on the agenda of the Comparative Survey Design and Implementation (CSDI) meeting in Berlin in June 2008. This may include a workshop and papers. Wendy and Achim have submitted a proposal for an invited paper.

- Coalition of Networked Information (CNI) meeting in Washington, DC, in December 2007 and the Digital Curation Conference around the same time. Pascal may be able to attend.

- E-Social Science, Ann Arbor, MI, October 7-9, 2007. We may be able to submit a short paper and poster sessions.

- OpenForum meeting on metadata registries in July 2007. Wendy Thomas is attending.

- Alliance meeting at IASSIST 2008 at Stanford University, May 30, 2008

Also discussed were potential outreach efforts to strategic partners like the statistical software firms and those involved in the institutional repository movement such as D-Space and Fedora.

Another idea expressed was that the Alliance create information describing the various metadata standards and how they relate to one another. There is a need for greater clarity for organizations making decisions about which standards to adopt. Related to this, we need to connect the DDI to the digital preservation standards such as the Open Archival Information System (OAIS).

DDI 3.0 Status Report and Discussion

The Public Review period for DDI 3.0 closed in April. The Expert Committee was scheduled to vote at its meeting on May 19 to approve the post-Public Release version as a Candidate Release, to be followed by an Implementation Period of less than a year. This is a concept borrowed from the W3C. During the Implementation Period, developers can use the standard, which remains relatively stable, and can report any bugs discovered. At the end of the Implementation Period when Proof of Concept is demonstrated, the Alliance will vote to publish DDI 3.0 formally.

Tools Update

The group reviewed a proposal to jumpstart development of DDI 3.0 tools through a joint project. This work is to be done in an open environment with contributions from several sources, including the Alliance, GESIS-ZUMA, UKDA, DDA, Canada Research Data Centres, and Open Data Foundation. So far there is a total allocation of around $18,000 along with in-kind contributions.