

DIRECTIONS

A newsletter of the Data Documentation Initiative

The DDI community is a vibrant one with a diverse set of stakeholders. The DDI Review now taking place is a great opportunity to ensure that the Alliance works well for everyone and continues to thrive. Please feel free to share your views ~ see the article below to find out how to do that. Thanks to everyone who has been part of the process.

Mary Vardigan, Director, DDI Alliance

DDI External Review Under Way

In October 2010, the DDI Alliance contracted with [Breckenhill Inc.](#) to review the DDI Alliance with a special focus on intellectual property protection and governance. Ned Eustace, a consultant with Breckenhill, has been conducting interviews with various DDI stakeholders to elicit their views, and he attended EDDI in Utrecht to speak with a broad group of individuals involved with DDI. The review will culminate in Interim and Final Reports, to be delivered in 2011 in advance of the meeting of the Expert and Steering Committees at IASSIST in Vancouver in May.

Input from the community is greatly valued. If you would like to share your thoughts, please feel free to contact Ned at ned.eustace@breckenhill.com.

DDI Expert Committee to Meet in Vancouver in May

The DDI Expert Committee, comprised of representatives from each of the DDI Alliance member institutions, will meet in Vancouver in conjunction with the IASSIST meeting on Monday, May 30, 2011. More details on the meeting will be made available soon.

Successful European DDI Users Conference Held

The second annual European Users Group meeting (EDDI) was held in at the SURFfoundation in Utrecht, The Netherlands, on December 8 and 9 with nearly 70 people from 13 countries attending.

[Peter Wittenburg](#), Technical Director of the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics gave a keynote address on data-intensive science in Europe.

Wittenburg is a member of the European High-Level Group on Scientific Data and one of the authors of the recent report [“Riding the Wave - How Europe Can Gain From the Rising Tide of Scientific Data.”](#)

EDDI 2010 was organized jointly by [CentERdata](#) - Institute for Data Collection and Research; [DANS](#) - Data Archiving and Networked Services; [GESIS](#) - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences; [IZA](#) - Institute for the Study of Labor; [SURF](#) - the collaborative organization for IT innovations in higher education in the Netherlands; and [Library and IT Services of Tilburg University](#).

DDI Developers Group Convenes Before EDDI

Sixteen individuals working on DDI implementations met

together on December 7 in Utrecht just before the EDDI conference. This meeting, chaired by Jeremy Iverson of [Algenta Technologies](#), marked the first time that DDI developers had met as a group.

Developers agreed to set up an online collaboration platform to enable the exchange of DDI instances for the purpose of interoperability testing and enhancements.

Wendy Thomas, Chair of the DDI Technical Implementation Committee (TIC), presented information on upcoming changes in 3.2 and the TIC process to refine the schemas. Response was very positive regarding access to the development schemas and the bug database now available.

Developers all gave demonstrations of their tools. This was helpful for understanding what others are working on and for generating new ideas.

A brainstorming session took place regarding what sorts of new DDI tools would be beneficial with several good suggestions.

Developers also planned to meet again in 2011 in Vancouver around the IASSIST meeting in early June.



Participants in the October 2010 Dagstuhl workshop on DDI and Longitudinal Data

Dagstuhl Workshops Scheduled for September

Two advanced workshops will be held at [Schloss Dagstuhl, Leibniz Center for Informatics](#), in Wadern, Germany, in 2011, during the weeks of September 11-16 and September 18-23.

The topic of one of the workshops will be “Semantic Statistics for Social, Behavioural, and Economic Sciences: Leveraging the DDI Model for the Web.”

There are two alternatives for the second workshop: “DDI and Qualitative Data” and “DDI: Managing Metadata for Longitudinal Data ~ Best Practices,” a follow-up to the 2010 workshop on the topic.

To communicate your interest in these workshop topics, please contact [Joachim Wackerow](#).

Papers on DDI and Longitudinal Data to be Published

In October 2010, a workshop on [DDI and Longitudinal Data](#) was held at Schloss Dagstuhl (see photo above). Deliverables from the workshop include four papers soon to be published:

- Block, William C., Christian Bilde Andersen, Daniel E. Bontempo, Arofan Gregory, Stan Howald, Douglas Kieweg, and Barry T. Radler. “Documenting a Wider Variety of Data Using the Data Documentation Initiative 3.1: Best Practices, Examples, and

Recommendations for Extending the Standard.” DDI Working Paper Series, Longitudinal Data Best Practices, Number 1, 2011.

- Hansen, Sue Ellen, Jeremy Iverson, Uwe Jensen, Hilde Orten, and Johanna Vompras. “Enabling Longitudinal Data Comparison and Harmonization Using DDI.” DDI Working Paper Series, Longitudinal Data Best Practices, Number 2, 2011.
- Hoyle, Larry, Fortunato Castillo, Benjamin Clark, Neeraj Kumar Kashyap, Denise Perpich, Joachim Wackerow, and Knut Wenzig. “Metadata for the Longitudinal Data Life Cycle: The Role and Benefit of Metadata Management and Reuse.” DDI Working Paper

Series, Longitudinal Data Best Practices, Number 3, 2011.

- Kramer, Stefan, Randy Banks, Vicky Chang, Mary Vardigan, and Wolfgang Zenk-Möltgen. “Presenting Longitudinal Studies to End Users Effectively Using DDI Metadata.” DDI Working Paper Series, Longitudinal Data Best Practices, Number 4, 2011.

NSD Releases Upgrade to Nesstar and Makes the Publisher Freeware

The [Norwegian Social Science Data Services \(NSD\)](#) recently announced the availability of version 4.0 of the Nesstar software system for data publishing and online analysis.

Starting from this release, the Nesstar Publisher component, which produces DD markup, is a freeware product and can be downloaded from the Nesstar Web site. For more information, visit <http://www.nesstar.com>.

Finnish Data Archive Receives Grant to Work on DDI

The Academy of Finland has awarded the [Finnish Social Science Data Archive \(FSD\)](#) a million euro in a five-year project, which includes a focus on DDI.

There are two main DDI-related tasks: 1) to contribute to the development of qualitative data DDI, and 2) to utilize DDI 3 in managing longitudinal studies. More specifically, the FSD will work with others to create an international metadata standard for qualitative data and will explore the use of the DDI 3 metadata format as a means of accessing, managing, structuring, archiving and disseminating longitudinal and panel studies in a multilingual environment.

More information is available on the [FSD Web site](#).



Attendees at the second European DDI Users Group meeting in Utrecht in December.

DDI Appears in Computerworld

DDI was mentioned in a December article in [Computerworld](#) about the [ABS use of DDI and SDMX](#) in the upcoming 2011 Australian census. The article was subsequently posted to Slashdot, a source for technology-related news with an emphasis on open source issues.

DDI Tools Catalog Undergoing Redesign

A DDI Working Group is creating a Tools Catalog to describe and promote DDI tools.

The [Tools Catalog Group](#) has created a new structure for the catalog, to be part of the DDI Web site and implemented using the Drupal content management system. Work is under way to integrate the restructured catalog into the site and to add information about tools. Functionality will then be added to allow DDI tools developers to request accounts to submit new tools for inclusion and update existing listings. Catalog editors will review submitted listings before they become public. Functionality may also be built to enable user comments/reviews on DDI tools listed in the catalog.

Members of the Working Group include Stefan Kramer, Cornell University (Chair); Katherine McNeill, MIT; Jannik Jensen, Danish Data Archive; and Andias Wira-Alam, GESIS. The group is accepting new members; interested individuals should contact [Stefan Kramer](#).

ABS Launches CodePlay

The [Australian Bureau of Statistics \(ABS\)](#) recently announced [CodePlay](#), a competition run by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as a Government 2.0 initiative to help drive collaboration between students, developers, and national and international statistical agencies.

CodePlay is a competition that rewards innovative ways of making statistical data more

appealing, relevant, and useful. Through this competition, ABS is encouraging the use of SDMX and DDI and has issued the challenge to assist ABS in meeting their commitment to open up their data and make ABS statistics more accessible by using these formats.

SDMX Conference to be Held in May

The [SDMX](#) Global Conference will be held on May 2-4, 2011, in Washington, DC, and will be jointly hosted by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The meeting will be devoted to making a business case to statistical managers, sharing SDMX experiences, SDMX advocacy, and capacity building.



Jeremy Iverson presenting a paper at EDDI 2010.