

# DIRECTIONS

A newsletter of the Data Documentation Initiative

This issue of *DDI Directions* finds the DDI Alliance poised to publish DDI 3.0 after years of hard work and contributions from many, many individuals and organizations. This community-based effort has resulted in a specification that not only responds to the substantive needs of social science research but also provides a foundation for innovative functionality and tools. We applaud in particular the Technical Implementation Committee (TIC), chaired by Wendy Thomas and Joachim Wackerow, whose dedication to the project has been amazing, and also sincerely thank the working groups and other contributors who have put in so many hours to make the DDI the best it can be. Hearty congratulations and thanks to all.

Mary Vardigan, Director, DDI Alliance

## Timetable to DDI 3.0 Publication

Official publication of DDI 3.0 is drawing near! The timetable below summarizes the schedule for voting on the final version of DDI.

Final Version Available: April 3  
Review Period: April 4–20  
Alliance Vote: April 21–27  
Official Publication: April 28

Note that this timetable provides a month between publication and the **IASSIST meeting** at Stanford University, which will feature several DDI workshops and papers.

## Upcoming Training and Presentations on DDI

Joachim Wackerow, GESIS-ZUMA, is authoring a presentation with Larry Hoyle, University of Kansas Institute for Policy and Social Research, at the **SAS Global Forum** to be held March 16–19, 2008, in San Antonio, Texas. The presentation, titled

“Exporting SAS Data Sets to DDI 3 XML Files: Data, Metadata, and More Metadata,” will focus on the SAS to DDI exporters that Larry and Joachim are creating. Joachim has also created an **SPSS exporter** (beta state) for DDI 3.0.

Following on the heels of the successful DDI 3.0 workshop in Dagstuhl, Germany, last October, two workshops are being planned for Fall 2008 in Germany, tentatively in November:

- “The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) XML Standard: Supporting Preservation, Management, Access and Dissemination Systems for Social Science Data.” This workshop is aimed at individuals working directly with DDI 3.0 documents in support of social science data production, preservation, and dissemination. Activities will focus on creating, managing, and integrating DDI documents to support an organization’s mission.
- “The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) XML

Standard: Working Meeting on Advanced Topics in Usability and Interoperability.” This week could accommodate several meetings. One goal would be to produce draft training and documentation materials to support two major user groups: individuals training others in the use of DDI and technical staff implementing DDI in their organizations.

## DDI Tools Update

The DDI Foundation Tools Program (FTP) officially started last September with eight member institutions participating. The

## DDI Alliance Meetings at IASSIST

- Expert Committee: Saturday, May 31, 9am–5pm
- Steering Committee: Wednesday, May 28, 7pm

goal of the DDI-FTP is to provide application developers with a set of reusable components, operating in a harmonized environment based on open source technologies, to manage DDI metadata and their related data and resources.

Impressive progress has taken place. The DDI-FTP program has created a [new Web site](#) dedicated to DDI Tools. The site is intended for DDI users and developers and provides access to applications, software libraries, documentation, example files, and XSL transformations that support the DDI XML specification.

Also available is the [DDI-FTP Road Map](#), a document that describes and prioritizes the different components of the DDI-FTP Toolkit, to be used by contributors to focus and coordinate their development efforts.

## New Alliance Member

We are pleased to welcome a new member into the DDI Alliance. The [Institute for the Study of Labor \(IZA\)](#) in Bonn, Germany, is a private, independent research institute, focusing on the economic analysis of national and international labor markets. The institute conducts extensive research in all relevant areas of labor economics and also advises policymakers on current labor market issues. IZA Deputy Head of Information Technology Dr. Nikos Askitas is the DDI Alliance representative to the Expert Committee.

## New DDI Publications

The use of DDI by institutional repositories is the topic of a briefing paper by Luis Martinez, London School of Economics, written for the DataShare project, funded by the JISC Digital Repositories and Preservation Programme. As part of this same project, Ann Green, Digital Life Cycle Research and Consulting, has authored a PowerPoint presentation that presents an overview of DDI.

[View new publications.](#) ■

## Survey Visualization Tool in Development

Algenta Technologies is developing a DDI-compatible survey instrument documentation tool tentatively called Surveyviz. The software currently reads Blaise, CASES, and CSPro instrument source code and then automatically generates flowcharts, codebooks, and DDI. The user interface is modeled after common Interactive Development Environments (IDE), and the software permits the user to view trends in the collected data as well as an individual respondent's path through an instrument. A public beta launch will occur in March. Jeremy Iverson (formerly of the University of Wisconsin) and Dan Smith (formerly of the University

of Minnesota), both active members in the DDI project, are leading this project. The software was partially supported by a grant from

the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health.

[More about this project](#)

### Survey Flowchart View

