DDI Alliance Executive Board Meeting
23 September 2019

Present: Bill Block, Cathy Fitch, Maggie Levenstein, Jared Lyle, Steve McEachern, Dana Mueller, Joachim Wackerow

Electing Executive Board Chair and Vice Chair

The DDI Alliance Bylaws specify that "The Chair and Vice Chair of the Executive Board will be elected by the Board soon after the regular biennial At-Large member elections for a term of two years and each may serve no more than three consecutive terms. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Executive Board will also serve as the Chair and Vice Chair of subsequent Annual Meetings of the Membership Representatives."

The current Executive Board Chair is Steve McEachern, with Bill Block as the Vice Chair. Steve has served two terms as Chair. Bill has served one term as Vice Chair.

The Board discussed term limits and the value of the Vice Chair learning from the Chair so they can eventually transition into that role. It was noted that the Executive Board should think about transitions and succession planning, including for the next Board member elections.

A member of the Board nominated Steve as Chair and Bill as Vice Chair to serve another term. Another member seconded the nomination. All six voting members in attendance voted in favor of Steve and Bill. Barry Radler was not present to vote.

DDI URN Registration at IANA

The Board revisited a FY2020 budget decision to zero out the "DDI URN registration at IANA" line item. Steve proposed to add this back into the approved budget.

Joachim explained the purpose of the IANA work. DDI specifications use an identification for each metadata item. Each item can be identified by a persistent ID. DDI is using a URN persistent identifier. The URN then gets registered by IANA (Internet Assigned Numbers Authority). This makes it possible to build on and make a resolution system, taking DDI URNs and resolving them to DDI metadata items. This is a system to exchange and reuse DDI metadata objects in the network.

Joachim explained this work was postponed several years ago due to disagreement. He noted there is no longer disagreement.

The plan is to submit this RFC (Request For Comment) with IANA. Thereafter, a DNS record can be assigned.

It was noted that Scientific Board funding requests for Dagstuhl workshops currently are underspent, so there is flexibility in the budget for the IANA work.

Board members did not disagree with the proposal to add the $4,000 item back to the FY2020 budget.

Setting Topics for FY2020

The Board discussed possible topics for the next year, especially in light of what received Alliance funding. Proposed topics include:

- Fundraising
- Feedback and membership engagement discussion
    - Membership benefits
- DDI 4 Core sprint outcomes
- Training
- Strategy
- Budget
- Annual meeting preparation

Jared will send Board members a FY2020 meeting schedule with proposed topics.

Member Feedback Research

The Alliance has solicited cost proposals from two academic survey research centers to conduct semi-structured interviews for the member feedback research. The FY2020 budget allocated $30,000 for member feedback research.

Both survey research centers provided similar cost estimates, stating they can conduct the interviews for close to the budgeted amount but that analysis would be an additional $20,000 USD or so.

The Board discussed the use of semi-structured interviews – i.e., qualitative interviews with very structured questions that allow open-ended responses. It was recommended that the interviews include quantitative questions that everyone answers (e.g., use of DDI) that would provide context to the qualitative responses and allow comparison of responses among the membership.

The Board discussed whether to expand the survey to include non-members, including those using DDI and those using other metadata standards. It was noted that the Alliance needs to engage with non-members but that engagement should start with members. If the budget is constrained, it was suggested to interview members first.

Concern was raised about the analysis phase. The survey research organizations would not provide analysis as part of the $30,000 budget. The Alliance would need volunteers to analyze the data and provide a report. It was emphasized that the goal of the project should be to have something in hand that helps create and focus future strategic plans.

The Board ran out of time to complete discussion. It was proposed to move the discussion to email and revisit, as needed, during the next meeting.