

# Steering Committee Meeting

Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA  
Wednesday, May 28, 2008

## Participants

- Myron Gutmann, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) (representing ICPSR, a host institution)
- Hans Jorgen Marker, Danish Data Archive (DDA) (chair of and representing the DDI Alliance Expert Committee)
- Ekkehard Mochmann, German Social Science Infrastructure Services, Central Archive for Empirical Social Research (GESIS-ZA) (representing the International Federation of Data Organizations [IFDO], a host association)
- Ron Nakao, Stanford University (vice chair of and representing the DDI Alliance Expert Committee)
- Kevin Schurer, United Kingdom Data Archive (UKDA) (representing the Council of European Social Science Data Archives [CESSDA], a host association)
- Mary Vardigan, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) (Alliance Director)
- Melanie Wright, United Kingdom Data Archive (UKDA) (representing the International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology [IASSIST], a host association)

## DDI Tools Update

The Steering Committee discussed a new project to create a suite of editing tools for DDI as an augmentation of the DDI Foundational Tools Program (FTP), which is a project to build a library of open source components that can be used to build DDI applications. A Memorandum of Understanding governs the FTP, which includes seven organizations as partners in the effort. Each partner provides either a monetary or an in-kind contribution to the project. The new project already has several interested partners and a meeting of the potential partners was scheduled for Friday, May 30, at the IASSIST meeting.

A review of the financial position of the Alliance showed that the Alliance has the funds to contribute to this project. The Steering Committee

recommended that such a contribution be made.

The point was made that this type of cooperative arrangement for building tools is a good model because no one organization can do all of the tools development it needs. In the future we might see a larger federation of tools builders and users that has a mandate to create open source tools across the data life cycle.

The project to create editing tools is important because we need DDI 3.0 tools to be delivered as soon as possible. Version 3.0 of the standard was just published this spring, and now we need to facilitate its use and adoption by making tools available. It is important that we are transparent about this process of tools development and that the Alliance, as a standards body, is seen as separate from tools creation. We should announce on the DDI Web site the position of the Alliance vis-à-vis tools and should advertise that any organization interested may bid on the project to produce the editing tools.

#### Migration from DDI 2.\* to 3.0

Many organizations have DDI markup in Version 2.1 or earlier and all will need assistance in migrating to 3.0 because the underlying data model is very different. One way to facilitate migration is to create an interim transitional version of the DDI specification that has some of the characteristics of 3.0 and will make it easier to eventually move to 3.0. The fear, however, is that some users may adopt this interim version and then not move to 3.0. The advice of the Steering Committee was that the Alliance not create such an interim version of the specification. People who need the features of 3.0 should adopt the new specification. We need to provide a migration path to streamline and expedite this activity.