

# DDI Alliance Executive Board Meeting

## 27 June 2018

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

### FY2019 Budget

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and vote on the FY2019 budget.

Jared reviewed the budget report presented at the annual meeting, along with the overall budget spreadsheet. He noted that the “draft FY2019 budget” is really an aggregation of all known requests with estimated dollar amounts. He also noted that the marketing group included larger expenses not included in the spreadsheet since specific dollar amounts were not included and they were recommended to be considered on a longer timeframe.

Steve ran through scenarios of adjusting the budget. Do we cut 25% or specific items? He referenced a spreadsheet he created with different scenarios. He asked the board members to consider:

- Where should we make cuts?
- What is an acceptable level of cuts?
- How to prioritize based on the strategic plan?

He then asked each board member to comment on the budget.

Board member 1 suggested we could remove Sprint 2019 since it would be in Australia and hit the 2020 budget. They also suggested a 25% cut to the Dagstuhl workshop on interdisciplinary metadata, as well as to merge the Berlin sprint with the Technical Committee meeting (hold two meetings in parallel). This would cut costs by \$10,000, making the total \$18,000 (instead of \$29,780). The Board member believes the RDF consultant should be retained for another year.

Board member 2 discussed the idea proposed at the annual meeting to hire a dedicated marketer, but feels that the idea is a stretch and won't fit with this budget. They are against dipping into reserves and feels it should be used for emergencies (and they don't feel we're in an emergency). They believe we should talk more about generating revenue and not just what we are spending. There are a number of NSF and NIH grants for collaborative meetings. They feel grants could be used to fund Dagstuhl-type meetings. Board member 2 also noted “Is this budget an expression of our strategic directions? If so, we're undercutting marketing and promotion.”

Board member 3 is uncomfortable with deficit spending that will be 1/3 of the fund balance. Have we asked participants to pay for their own travel, etc.? They feel an across the board cut

is a rough way to do things. They feel we should be budgeting based on strategic priorities. They agree we should write grant proposals to fund more activities. Board member 3 noted “The science side is fundable, the marketing is not. If anything, we should use DDI funds to support marketing.”

Board member 4 asked for clarification on the RDF consultant. It was clarified that RDF work is strictly DDI 4 related. Another Board member asked if it would make sense to assess in November whether to continue RDF and project manager work. Two Board members responded. One indicated that we would need to make a provision for the potential expenditure. Another explained that integration of other RDF vocabularies into DDI is halfway. This is crucial, otherwise the DDI ontology won't be accepted into RDF world. It's reusing existing ontologies. They indicated that the Board already discussed a proposed \$24,000 cut to technical and scientific funding. They felt since we are following multiple tracks at the same time, we could justify reserve spending of \$48,000.

Board member 4 noted that we should be aware of unexpected needs in case they come up. Another member noted this as a good point, although they can't think of requests that will come up out of the blue.

Board member 5 feels we should reassess priorities when the DDI4 prototype release comes out, and that they wouldn't want to say they're signing on for the specific uses that have been outlined. They feel we should conduct an evaluation assessment before we expend the funds. However, they noted that if \$42,000 is a reasonable amount for the Scientific Board to use for their activities, that amount seems reasonable.

Board member 6 suggests we should allocate certain amount of money for the Technical Committee and the Scientific Board, but that it shouldn't be allocated until after the DDI4 prototype is released and reviewed. They agree with Board member 3's notion that it doesn't make sense to have 25% across the board cuts. The Board member would not reduce marketing funds since they feel we need to remain proactive in marketing the Alliance and the standard. They suggest approving a budget of \$38,000 for the Technical Committee and the Scientific Boards, and have the Scientific Board return to the Executive Board to request the additional RDF funding.

Board member 7 reviewed the draft spreadsheet and indicated that the alternative budget with a deficit of \$20,000 is their preferred mode. They also wondered if the Alliance could ask members for more money. Grant proposals are another option. The Board member does not feel income is going to rise rapidly in terms of membership income.

As a next step, Steve will create a revised document that reflects the discussion and then share it with the Executive Board before the next call.