

# DDI Alliance Executive Board Meeting

## 16 March 2021

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

### Privacy Policy

In response to concerns about GDPR and other worldwide privacy regulations, Jared consulted with University of Michigan privacy experts and drafted a new DDI Alliance privacy policy (see Appendix A). The Executive Board reviewed and approved the policy. As a next step, Jared will post the policy on the DDI Alliance web site.

It was noted that several DDI groups, including EDDI and NADDI, contact users about upcoming events and that they should be informed about the privacy policy. The Marketing group will coordinate communication about this topic.

### Strategic Plan

The Board reviewed the [draft strategic plan](#).

- Strategic Priority Area One: The DDI User Community (Maggie and Barry)
  - No updates yet.
- Strategic Priority Area Two: The DDI Alliance as an Organisation (Steve and Bill)
  - The Board reviewed ideas about refreshing membership, succession planning, and new revenue streams (see Appendix B).
- Strategic Priority Area Three: Standards and Work Products (Achim)
  - See Appendix C for the updated section.

# Appendix A

# DDI Alliance Privacy Policy

*Last Revision Date — March 2021*

## Overview

The DDI Alliance recognizes and values the privacy of its community members and guests.

This privacy policy provides more specific information on how the DDI Alliance collects and processes your personal information.

## How Your Information is Collected

We generally collect personal information when you or your organization directly provide it to us, including when registering as new DDI Alliance members and/or to designate member, scientific, and technical representatives.

When visiting <https://ddialliance.org/>, we use “cookies” to enhance your user experience. Cookies are files that store your preferences and other information about your visit to our web site. See details about [Google’s usage of cookies](#)

## What Information is Collected

Personal information we collect may include:

- Name
- Email address
- Mailing address
- Telephone number

We may contact you via email and ask you to verify/update your information. Individuals subscribed to e-newsletters and marketing communications may opt-out using the prompts in those communications.

When visiting our website, we automatically collect and store the following information about your visit:

- The IP address of the computer you used to access our website (for example, 141.211.92.1). This IP address is often translated into a domain name, such as stanford.edu, if you are connecting from Stanford University's domain.
- Geographic coordinates based upon your IP address. These coordinates usually describe the location of your provider (such as Stanford University) rather than the actual location of your computer.
- The date and time of your visit
- The pages you visited
- The address of the website you came from when you visited our site
- The operating system of your computer

- The version and type of Web browser you use when you visit our website

You can adjust your session cookies through your [browser settings](#) to accept or refuse these cookies. You can opt out of Google Analytics tracking here:

<https://tools.google.com/dlpage/gaoptout>.

## How Your Information is Used

We use the personal information we collect to support:

- Administrative tasks, such as responding to service requests
- Engagement, such as managing event registration and promotion
- Planning and reporting, such as tracking impact of activities
- Website performance, such as making improvements to site navigation and content.

## How Your Information is Shared

The DDI Alliance does not sell your information to third parties, and does not share it with third parties for purposes other than supporting the legitimate interests and operations of the DDI Alliance.

## How Information Is Secured

The DDI Alliance recognizes the importance of maintaining the security of the information it collects and maintains, and we endeavor to protect information from unauthorized access and damage. The DDI Alliance strives to ensure reasonable security measures are in place, including physical, administrative, and technical safeguards to protect your personal information.

## Privacy Policy Changes

This privacy policy may be updated from time to time. We will post the date our policy was last updated at the top of this privacy policy.

## Whom to Contact with Questions or Concerns

If you have any questions about our practices around the use of personal information, please [contact us](#).

## Appendix B

# Organisational structures and revenue and expenditure streams

Steve and Bill

# Long term strategy vs Interim direction

- We established three broad areas for consideration
  - Organisational structures and revenue and expenditure streams
  - Member needs and stakeholder management
  - Technical direction and standards development
  
- Where are we at?

# Where are we at?

- Organisational structures and revenue and expenditure streams
  - Scientific Board re-established
  - ...?

# Priorities

- Increasing professionalization and formalization of activities
  - E.g. additional project officer
- Changes in personnel (volunteers)
- Expanding revenue base to encompass new expenditure
  - Alignment of core activities

# Professionalisation and formalisation

- Increasing need for regular (paid) staff roles:
  - Project officer recently approved
  - Marketing officer has been discussed
  - Training officer??
- All of these are recurrent expenditure
  - Allow for a core “professional staff”
  - Under the direction of the DDI Executive Director

# Changes in personnel (volunteers)

- Retirements
  - Achim, Wendy
  - Larry Hoyle, Jay Greenfield
- Growing role for the Scientific Committee
- Additional working groups?

# Expanding the revenue base

- Core expenditure over past several years has been relatively stable
  - Closely aligned with available revenue
  - Some growth in reserves (unspent revenue)
- Professionalisation brings with it additional expenditure
- Also growing number of products and activities
  - Thus a need for revenue growth

# Revenue and expenditure alignment

Activity	Revenue source
Core staffing for operations	Member funds
Standards maintenance	Member funds
Standards development	Grants, sponsored development
Marketing	Member funds, conference funds?
Training	User pays

Activities would also be fundable from other sources, but we would aim to fund each activity from a primary source

# Appendix C

# DDI Alliance Strategic Plan - Standards and Work Products [DRAFT]

Draft 2021-03-16, Joachim Wackerow

## Overview of Current Products

The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) is a suite of products that describes metadata about both quantitative and qualitative research data in the social, behavioral, economic, and health sciences. The DDI suite is a set of free standards that document and manage different stages of the research data lifecycle, including conceptualization, collection, process, distribution, discovery, and archiving.

The content areas of DDI cover the following areas:

- Conceptual objects: concept, unit, unit type, universe, population, geographic structures, and representation
- Methodological objects: approaches to sample selection, data capture, weighting, quality control, and process management
- Processing: data capture, data processing, analysis, and data management
- Quantitative and qualitative data objects: concept, universe, representation, usage, data type, record, record relationships, storage, access, and descriptive statistics
- Data management: ownership, access, rights management, restrictions, quality standards, organization, agent management, relationship between products, versioning, and provenance

Products within the DDI suite differ in terms of their area of coverage within DDI, supported activities, and required level of infrastructure. From simple descriptive content for human understanding to structures that support metadata-driven statistics production and analysis, DDI addresses a broad area of data management needs. As a suite of standards, DDI provides a common means of identification for information objects, support for common cross-product content, and an informed means of transforming content between products.

## Current DDI Products

- DDI Codebook - Structured, descriptive documentation of the content, meaning, provenance, and access for a single data set.
- DDI Lifecycle - Lifecycle expands on the idea of Codebook in terms of content coverage, depth, metadata management over time, reusable metadata, and support for the planning, capture, processing, storage, discovery, and dissemination of data. It allows grouping and comparing related studies or series of studies.
- Controlled Vocabularies - A set of controlled vocabularies commonly used in social science and other disciplines to support systems designed to identify, locate, and access data for research purposes.

- XKOS - Extended Knowledge Organization System (XKOS) leverages the Simple Knowledge Organization System (SKOS) for managing statistical classifications and concept management systems. XKOS adds the extensions that are needed to meet the requirements of the statistical community.
- SDDL: Structured Data Transformation Language (SDDL) is an independent intermediate language for representing data transformation commands

#### Products under development

- DDI-Cross Domain Integration (DDI-CDI) - It is designed to be a model which can be used to connect disparate forms of data with each other. It can be used as a way of integrating new forms of data with more traditional, existing data, or with each other. Ultimately, the diverse types of data must be seen as an integrated whole, complete with a description of the structure, meaning, and provenance of each part. DDI-CDI is intended to meet this need.

Strategic actions on DDI Standards are intended to provide orientation on which standards and work products to develop and maintain, and why. There is need to be able to maintain the existing standards to ensure that we can continue to support small scale users such as academic libraries and research centers, while continuing to develop model-based standards and associated work products to support the expanding user base in communities such as statistical agencies and data producers.

#### STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

1. High-level goals
  - a. Make DDI specifications ready for being building blocks together in a global research data infrastructure (together with other specifications)
  - b. Cooperate with other standardization groups to build an efficient network of specifications
  - c. Align with FAIR principles and FAIR ecosystem
  - d. Provide means for efficient use of DDI specifications which comprehends robust specifications using state-of-the art technologies, good documentation including implementation and usage guides, support for a framework around the specifications including protocols and services
2. Maintaining multiple lines of specifications and controlled vocabularies
  - a. Offering stable specifications and controlled vocabularies (reference Work Products)
  - b. Ensuring portability of DDI metadata between specifications and to outside specifications (i.e. mapping between specifications, re-use of elements of other specifications)
  - c. Enable DDI specifications to adapt to changes in information technologies and languages (XML Schema, OWL/RDF-S, Schema.org, ...).
  - d. Improve modular approach of specifications to enable the use of functional parts of specifications (from monolithic to modular design). Enable use of parts of specifications together with third party specifications.
  - e. Production testing/validation for quality assurance

- f. Improve documentation. Integrate with examples and best practices guidelines. Make documentation usable from a training and self-teaching perspective
  - g. Providing test cases and an automated test framework for ensuring quality and robustness of main purposes of specifications
  - h. Maintaining a development and research project (like DDI Moving Forward) to explore new features and technical platforms. All specifications might benefit from such a laboratory environment. The idea is to separate concerns of development/research from the concerns of creating stable specifications.
- 3. Improvement of interoperable and distributed DDI infrastructure for use and reuse of DDI resources. Adding useful components around the specifications for users.
  - a. Guidance on which DDI specification and which parts of DDI for specific use cases
  - b. Introduce validation rules and related tools, testing support, and mechanisms for using specific subsets of specifications for the purpose of interoperability
  - c. Implementation guides to help software architects and developers i.e. choosing the appropriate subset of a specification
  - d. Maintaining a platform for specific subsets of specifications for main usage purposes
  - e. Technical DDI services, especially resolution of DDI URNs to the physical location of DDI resources (identified by URLs)
  - f. Standardized query/exchange protocol enables building repositories and reuse of DDI metadata in the web
  - g. Best practices for using all components together
- 4. Registries/-repositories
  - a. Specify DDI's vision of building DDI into Common Data Element registries (Strategic Plan & Vision)
  - b. Identify ways for establishing portals for supporting existing and growing DDI metadata repositories.
  - c. Leveraging technologies of topic 2 above, especially standard query and exchange protocols/interfaces