DDI ANNUAL REPORT

DDI Alliance Publishes Statement of Shared Principles for Survey Metadata Reusability and Exchange

A meeting in London last June on "Survey Metadata: Barriers and Opportunities" brought together data producers, Computer-Assisted Interviewing (CAI) survey firms, software suppliers, and archives to discuss the challenges of working in a more harmonized climate to avoid the many hours of manual effort spent on creating high-quality survey data documentation. Participants agreed to support a set of principles and to define a minimal metadata standard via a designated DDI profile for stakeholders to adhere to. This resulted in a Call to Action on the DDI website to endorse the principles, which make it easier to re-use survey metadata across the data lifecycle.

Data Documentation Initiative

www.ddialliance.org

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The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) is an international effort to create a standard to describe statistical and social science data. Documenting data with DDI facilitates interpretation and understanding — both by humans and computers. The freely available international DDI standard describes data that result from observational methods in the social, behavioral, economic, and health sciences. DDI can be used to Document, Discover, and Interoperate.

Fiscal year 2015 was a notable year for the Alliance in many ways, and below we highlight a sample of the year's important events:

- An Advisory Group (AG) to oversee development of the next-generation model-driven DDI specification was formed. Scientific Board Chair Adam Brown sought nominations to ensure a wide range of representation. The group consists of: Adam Brown (Chair), Statistics NZ; Dan Gillman, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Arofan Gregory, Metadata Technology; Larry Hoyle, University of Kansas; Jared Lyle, ICPSR; Steve McEachern, Australian Data Archive; Wendy Thomas, Minnesota Population Center; Mary Vardigan, ICPSR; and Joachim Wackerow, GESIS.

- Kelly Chatain, Survey Research Operations, University of Michigan, led an effort to redesign the DDI website. Revisions include simplified navigation, additional content on getting started with DDI, more accessible information regarding the specification itself, and better presentation of information in general for easier browsing. The site was rolled out in October 2015. Others on the development team included Michael Iannaccone (ICPSR), Olof Olsson (Swedish National Data Service, SND), Stephanie Roth (SND), Mary Vardigan (ICPSR), and Jingjing Wu (University of Mississippi Libraries).

- The first draft release of the new model-based DDI was put out for comment in May of this past fiscal year, with the review period extended through mid-June to allow members to complete their review and submit issues. A total of 74 issues were filed during the review, and the Technical Committee began addressing the comments to ensure a good foundation for the specification.

- At its June meeting the Alliance adopted a tiered membership model based on organization size and membership benefits, with members self-selecting into a category. The model includes Contributor and Premium Memberships as well as a way to make a Directed Contribution to the Alliance. The membership agreed to invest additional amounts in training, marketing and partnerships over the next three years, with success evaluated annually.

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Alliance Members

- University of Alberta, Canada
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
- Australian Data Archive (ADA)
- University of California, Berkeley — Computer-Assisted Survey Methods Program and UCDATA
- Centre for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education, University of London *(Associate Member)*
- Centro De Investigaciones Sociologicas (CIS), Spain
- Colectica *(Associate Member)*
- Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research (CISER)
- Danish Data Archive
- Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS), The Netherlands
- Epidemiology France, Aviesan — ITMO Santé Publique
- Eurostat
- Finnish Social Science Data Archive
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- German Institute for International Educational Research (DIPF)
- German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP)
- GESIS — Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences
- University of Guelph
- Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)
- Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA)
- Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)
- University of Kansas, Institute for Policy and Social Research (IPSR) *(Associate Member)*
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- University of Minnesota, Minnesota Population Center
- National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE)
- Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD)
- Open Data Foundation *(Associate Member)*
- Research Data Centre of the German Federal Employment Agency, Institute for Employment Research (IAB)
- Stanford University
- Statistics New Zealand
- Survey Research Operations, University of Michigan
- Swedish National Data Service (SND)
- Swiss Foundation for Research in Social Sciences (FORS)
- United Kingdom Data Archive
- University of Toronto Libraries
- University of Toronto Scholars Portal
- University of Washington, Center for Studies in Demography & Ecology (CSDE)
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics *(Associate Member)*
- World Bank, Development Data Group (DECDG)

Membership and Finances

The DDI Alliance had 34 paid memberships during FY 2015, providing a funding stream to support the activities of the Alliance. The balance sheet of the Alliance shows that expenditures for the year slightly exceeded revenue, with the ending fund balance totaling $137,223.

Statement of Revenue and Expenses, Fiscal Years 2011 — 2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Revenue	$79,882	$72,417	$84,807	$79,815	$87,419
Total Expenses	$95,242	$89,652	$61,521	$59,038	$88,306
Revenue Over / (Under) Expenses	$(15,360)	$(17,235)	$23,286	$20,777	$(887)
Ending Fund Balance	$111,282	$94,047	$117,333	$138,110	$137,223

Why Join the Alliance?

The DDI is a standard developed by and for the research community. Through membership in the Alliance, you and your organization can influence the development and the direction of this important metadata standard. Membership means that you have the opportunity to participate with colleagues in shaping the content and structure of the DDI specification. Representatives from the member institutions lend their unique talents and expertise to ensure that the standard meets the needs and expectations of the community.

Become a Member

To join the Alliance, complete a membership form at www.ddialliance.org, and obtain appropriate signatures at your institution. Send the form to the DDI Secretariat at ICPSR/ DDI Secretariat, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248, Fax: 734.647.8200. After the form is received, your institution will receive an annual invoice.

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