

DDI Alliance Executive Board Meeting

March 16/17, 2015

Minutes

Present: Gillian Nicoll (Chair), George Alter, Mari Kleemola, Steve McEachern, Ron Nakao, Anita Rocha, Leanne Trimble, Mary Vardigan

Review of Action Items

The group reviewed action items from the meeting of December 17/18, 2014, and all were complete.

Current Business

Update from Advisory Group

The pilot plan and timetable for soliciting and approving sprint funding requests were discussed. They appeared to be working out so far.

The EB reviewed several requests for funding for the Minneapolis sprint in May 2015, with a cover memo from the DDI4 Advisory Group (AG). The memo recommended that all of the nine requests, totaling approximately \$8500, be fully funded and that additional expenditures be explored to further the goals of the sprint. These additional expenses included funding for one or two methodologists to attend the sprint for one or two days in order to provide more expertise in the methodology area. These individuals should supply specific methodology use cases for testing. It was also recommended that the Alliance provide support for a Sprintmaster. The EB approved the additional expenditures, which should total a few thousand dollars.

Action item: Director to contact potential Sprintmaster. Scientific Board Vice Chair to contact methodologists.

The Project Coordinator position for DDI4 was advertised but as yet there were no volunteers. Given that reality, the AG was attempting to take on new responsibilities related to project coordination, e.g., meeting with Team Leaders, communications, etc. The Project Coordinator position should be on the agenda for the June Meeting of Members, when we can encourage people to help out in this way.

Action item: Director to add Project Coordinator position as a discussion item for the June Meeting of Members.

Agenda for June 2015 Meeting

EB Chair Gillian Nicoll noted that at the June 2015 Meeting of Members, she was planning to present what the Executive Board sees as the state of the Alliance in the context of the [Strategic Plan](#). This would include recent achievements and what still needed to be done as well as how achievements accorded with what was planned. The Plan emphasized restructuring (implementing new Bylaws, Scientific Board, etc.); marketing and partnerships (formation of group to work on this); and standards work (DDI 4 and current standards).

Related to this, we need a discussion on what the Alliance should try to achieve in the next three years with respect to:

- Training plans and priorities
- Marketing/Partnership plans and priorities
- Budget

We will want to have detailed materials around each of these items for members to review. To support new training and marketing needs, we will need additional revenues.

At last year's Meeting of Members, we agreed to ratify out of session the Revenues document describing a tiered membership model with a minimum fee of \$3000. Members had agreed that a tiered model makes good sense as it reflects a more diverse membership with new kinds of members and will lead to greater revenues.

The EB advised that we should send the Revenues document out to members soon to get their comments, and instead of ratifying out of session should vote on this during the June meeting. The Board agreed that for FY2016 (beginning July 1, 2015), we should hold membership fees constant (\$2750) but that we should adopt the \$3000 fee starting in FY2017.

For the meeting we will need clear budget materials and a forward-looking budget going out three years. This will reflect the completion of DDI4 and a reduction in costs for sprints but at the same time a need for increased funding to support new training and marketing activities as well as migration tools.

We will also want to ask members about the optimal amount of reserves for the DDI Alliance to maintain. The EB was in agreement that this amount should ideally be about half of the annual expenditures or \$50K.

The DDI Collective Mark project is drawing to a close and by May should be complete with the Mark registered for DDI in all Alliance member countries. This should also be on the agenda for the Meeting of Members.

Action item: Director to begin to prepare the agenda for the June meeting, including the items discussed above.

Training

It was reported that the DDI Training Committee (Amber Leahey, Dan Smith, Jane Fry, Jon Johnson) was meeting every other week and developing a vision for training-related projects. The goal was to complete the first three deliverables below by Summer 2015 for the new DDI website.

- **Online DDI Training Center on redesigned Website.** This training center will pull together everything currently on the site related to training and present it in a well-organized way.
- **Online introductory module.** This may be a set of slides or a Camtasia video. The focus will be very high-level: what DDI is and why it is important to you to use it.
- **Audience-focused introductory pages on DDI.** The group has developed DDI for Librarians, Managers, Archives and Repositories, Researchers, and Developers.
- **DDI lifecycle tools list.** This will be an interactive version of the lifecycle diagram. The group will assemble tools and resources grouped by components of the life cycle, linkable from the stages of the life cycle diagram.
- **Set of use cases.** This will be a set of use cases related to incentivizing researchers to document data. We can use a small survey as an example to demonstrate what DDI can offer to the researcher. We also want the “wow factor,” showing how to generate a readable codebook that can accompany a dataset.

The Training Committee has not yet put costs around what is needed for an effective training program but will be working on this in coming weeks.

The EB was impressed and excited by the quick progress of this group and asked that their thanks be communicated to the group. The Board asked whether the Training Committee could consider the types of training that might be required after DDI4 is released. We could ask members at the June meeting which of these would be useful.

Action item: Director to work with Training Group on costs for training activities.

Marketing and Partnerships

It was reported that the Marketing and Partnerships group (Chuck Humphrey, Kelly Chatain, Ron Nakao, Steve McEachern, Wendy Thomas, Arofan Gregory, Barry Radler) had been meeting monthly and that a small group would meet at NADDI in Madison in April to cost out the proposed marketing activities. These activities would include things like conference attendance to meet new audiences. The group had also been involved in plans for the new DDI website and graphic identity.

The group had developed a list of strategic partners and marketing targets and requested the EB's prioritizations. The goals of the outreach are:

- Increase DDI membership
- Increase use and adoption of DDI and get new DDI users
- Encourage new people to become involved in DDI stewardship
- Work with other research standards bodies to integrate and exchange information between DDI and other standards

The EB provided some prioritizations for marketing targets:

General Stakeholder Groups

- National statistical institutions
- European infrastructure projects, including CESSDA
- Academic libraries
- Health sciences
- Large research projects (MIDUS, HRS, PSID, ELSA, IPUMS, WLS, VETSA, National Children's Study, etc.)

Strategic Partnerships

Standards-developing organizations

- W3C
- Dublin Core
- ISO

Standards-setting organizations (community-based)

- CASRAI (research administration metadata)
- DataONE/EML (Ecological Metadata Language)
- CDISC (Clinical Data Interchange Standards Consortium)
- Research Data Alliance

It was pointed out that approaching different audiences through the larger organizations, e.g., Eurostat, was the most effective way to gain attention.

The Board also discussed the fact that the social science community has defined what is needed in terms of metadata standards while other disciplines are still struggling with this.

In terms of effective marketing, we need to find ways to demonstrate successful applications of DDI and make the business case for using it to different communities. One such effort is the World Bank project helping NSIs in Africa and other locations to set up repositories using software based on Nesstar, which uses DDI. We should publicize this more.

Another marketing target is the projects that are working on federating data discovery services, which requires metadata. We should try to ensure that we are in on those discussions.

Action item: Director to work with Marketing and Partnerships Group on costs for marketing activities.

Sponsorships

The EB gave approval for the Alliance to sponsor the upcoming ESRA and IASSIST conferences. For ESRA, we will supply a leaflet/brochure for conference delegate packs (500 euro). For IASSIST, we will again be a Platinum sponsor (\$2000). For IASSIST, while the cost of the Platinum sponsorship has gone up since last year (was \$1500), the EB felt that given the historic relationship between IASSIST and the Alliance, we should continue to support the organization at the highest level since we have gained so much from them.

Action item: Director to prepare a brochure with assistance from the Marketing Group.

For Information

New Website

It was reported that a small group was working on culling content on the current site and creating new content (for example, the training center). A content analysis of the site was done and assignments were made for reorganizing current content and creating new material. Also, work was under way on a new design for the site and a new graphic identity with a refreshed logo.

Nominating Committee Report

The informal nominating committee comprised of the EB members stepping down in July met in January and discussed potential nominees to contact. Some follow-up contacts were made, with the caveat that this would be an open election and seats on the EB could not be guaranteed. In April a call for nominations will go out to members, with the vote taking place shortly after the June meeting so that the new EB is in place by the start of the 2016 fiscal year (July 1).

Action item: Director to put out call for nominations in April.

Attendance at Modernization Committee Meeting in Geneva (Mary)

Joachim Wackerow was invited to attend the UNECE Statistics Workshop on International Collaboration for Standards-Based Modernisation on in Geneva, Switzerland on 5–7 May 2015. This was approved.

Copyright Issues

George Alter was working on a project to create software to capture data transformations in DDI and the question arose about the type of license that would be most appropriate for such a tool. Accordingly, George had a conversation with the University of Michigan copyright

officer, who advised using a copy-left license, which requires that when code is modified, the modifications be made open and public.

It was noted that this is consistent with the policy for CSPA software. This is a complicated topic and we may need to discuss it further at future meetings.