‹ddi› DIRECTIONS
A newsletter of the Data Documentation Initiative

From the Director

As an increasing number of groups and conferences focus on research data, we are hearing more about the importance of metadata. The DDI community understands how critical metadata are to intelligent data use. This issue of DDI Directions showcases a variety of activities taking place to advance the cause of DDI with the goal of promoting good metadata practice.

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In This Issue

Meet the Scientific Board Chair

Adam Brown is the new Chair of the DDI Alliance Scientific Board. Adam's day job is Manager of Information Management at Statistics New Zealand, where he manages a team responsible for providing library services, document and data management advice, and metadata tools and standards. Adam has held several roles in the eight years he has been at Statistics New Zealand but most recently has led the design and implementation of a new suite of metadata infrastructure systems. Adam is also involved in the international statistical community, being a key contributor to the development of the Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM) and a member of the UNECE Modernisation Committee on Standards. In his roles Adam has been an evangelist for DDI and other metadata standards and has a good technical understanding of DDI Codebook and Lifecycle. Adam hopes to bring some clarity to the activities the Scientific Board is undertaking and ensure that DDI 4 is targeted to meet user needs across the entire community. Outside of his professional life Adam is proud father of a two-year-old and is a keen handyman around the house.

Controlled Vocabularies Group Releases New Content

The DDI Controlled Vocabularies Group (CVG) has recently published five new vocabularies and translations of existing ones. New vocabularies are now in place to cover Aggregation Method, Data Type, Date Type, Numeric Type, and Time Zone, as well as new versions of Mode of Collection (v 1.1) and Summary Statistic Type (V. 2.0). German and Finnish translations of AnalysisUnit and TimeMethod are also available.

New DDI Collaboration Tools in Progress

The DDI Alliance has adopted the Atlassian suite of OnDemand products, which includes Jira for issue tracking, Confluence for collaboration and sharing, and Bitbucket for hosting code (Bitbucket uses Git as a revision control system). More information on working with these tools will be available soon.

EDDI to Take Place in London in December

The 6th Annual European DDI User Conference (EDDI14) will be held on December 2-3, 2014, at the IOE - Institute of Education, University of London.

Organized jointly by the IOE - Institute of Education, University of London; GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences; and IDSC of IZA - International Data Service Center of the Institute for the Study of Labor, EDDI 2014 offers 30 presentations as well as tutorials and co-located events. The keynote speech will be delivered by Peter Knight (Deputy Director, Head of Research Information and Intelligence, in the Department of Health's Research and Development Directorate, United Kingdom government).

The detailed draft program including abstracts is now available, and registration for participants and accommodation booking are open. The deadline for the early bird registration fee is November 2, 2014. The reduced rates of the hotels are available on a first-come, first-served basis. For questions or any other correspondence regarding EDDI14, please send an email to eddi14@googlegroups.com.

Institute of Education, University of London

International Colectica Users Conference (ICUC) to Follow EDDI

Co-located with the EDDI meeting in London, the International Colectica Users Conference (ICUC) will take place on December 4. The focus of the conference is practical approaches to DDI metadata management, innovative research, successful implementations and lessons learned, and Colectica extensions and tools developed by and for the community.

Both conferences are hosted by the Institute for Education, University of London. Registration for the events is separate, and you can attend either or both.

Wellcome Trust Report on Data Discoverability Highlights DDI

In July 2014 the Wellcome Trust issued a report summarizing findings related to the current discoverability of public health and epidemiology data sets and barriers to access. Several recommendations in the report relate to the use of DDI.

DDI Training to Be Held at Dagstuhl

A DDI training workshop on "Facilitating Process and Metadata-Driven Automation in the Social, Economic, and Behavioural Sciences with the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI)" will be held October 13-17, 2014, at Schloss Dagstuhl - Leibniz Center for Informatics, Wadern, Germany. Course instructors are Arofan Gregory (ODaF - Open Data Foundation, Tucson, Arizona, USA); Wendy L. Thomas (MPC - Minnesota Population Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA); and Joachim Wackerow (GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Mannheim, Germany).

The focus of the workshop will be on the Lifecycle branch of DDI, Version 3.2, which

provides a detailed model of the metadata needed to support both human-driven and automated processing. The workshop will be organized in a task-oriented manner, with participants actively documenting real-world use cases in order to learn how best to employ the DDI model and associated technology. The use cases produced can be published as the final output of the workshop, as a resource to the broader DDI community. Participants are encouraged to bring their own organizational use cases.

Schloss Dagstuhl, Leibniz Center for Informatics, in Wadern, Germany

New DDI Trainer Selected

The Alliance is pleased to announce that Jon Johnson, University of London, International Education Office, has been selected as the new DDI trainer. Jon brings to the position a wealth of experience in managing and documenting longitudinal data as well as an extensive network of audiences for DDI training.

Jon will spend a week in Mannheim in October with the other Dagstuhl trainers -- Arofan Gregory, Wendy Thomas, and Joachim Wackerow -- and will then participate in the training workshop at Dagstuhl the following week (see above). The goal is for Jon to gain expertise in the training arena so that he can then run DDI workshops himself in other venues.

There were 10 applicants for this training opportunity, which was a great response. The Alliance hopes to offer a similar opportunity in the future.

DDI Moving Forward Advisory Group Begins to Meet

There was an animated discussion at the Toronto meeting in June about an Advisory Group (AG) to oversee DDI 4 development and govern the project. This AG has been set up and has held several meetings so far. The Advisory Group [terms of reference and minutes of past meetings](#) are available on the DDI wiki.

Scientific Board Chair Adam Brown notes that he sought nominations from the community to ensure a wide range of representation. The AG group membership consists of:

- Adam Brown (Chair), Statistics NZ
- Joachim Wackerow, GESIS
- Larry Hoyle, University of Kansas
- Dan Gillman, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Arofan Gregory, Metadata Technology

Wendy Thomas, Minnesota Population Center
- Steve McEachern, Australian Data Archive
- Mary Vardigan, ICPSR
- Kelly Chatain, Survey Research Operations, University of Michigan

Upcoming Sprints Announced

Plans are in place for the next two DDI sprints, to be held at Schloss Dagstuhl on October 20-24, 2014 (Sprint 5), and at the Institute of Education, University of London, on November 24-28 (Sprint 6). The Dagstuhl sprint, which will include 10 people funded by an NSF grant on enhanced citation, will focus on data citation, and on finalizing Simple Data Description and Simple Instrument with additional work done on Simple Codebook. Complex Data Description and Complex Instrument will also be addressed as will Qualitative Data and Methodology.

The London sprint will be dedicated to technical work with a focus on refining the renderings to XML and RDF; refining the production framework; technical modeling of new content; production of packages for review; and presentation tools (XSLT) for producing documentation.

In keeping with the Agile approach to development, there are targeted deliverables for each sprint, and the Advisory Group has endeavored to invite people with the requisite skills to ensure completion of the work. Please get in touch with Adam Brown, Chair of the DDI Scientific Board, if you have any questions or comments.

NADDI Conference Dates Announced

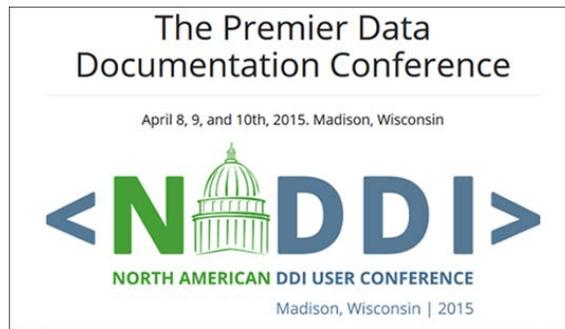The 2015 North American DDI Users Conference, with the theme "Research Data Management: Enhancing Discoverability with Open Metadata Standards," will take place in Madison, Wisconsin, on April 8-10, 2015. The host of the conference is the Institute on Aging (IOA) of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The North American Data Documentation Initiative Conference (NADDI) is an opportunity for those using metadata standards and those interested in learning more to come together and learn from each other. NADDI 2015 will be a three-day conference (April 8-10) with invited and contributed presentations, and should be of interest to both researchers and data professionals in the social sciences and other disciplines. A full day of training sessions will precede the conference (April 8th).

Follow @NADDI2015 on Twitter!

Key Dates:

Open registration:	10/1/14
Open call for papers:	11/1/14
Submissions closed:	1/31/15
Acceptance notifications:	2/8/15
Early Bird registration ends:	3/15/15
Final versions of papers due:	3/31/15

The Premier Data
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April 8, 9, and 10th, 2015. Madison, Wisconsin

<NADDI>

NORTH AMERICAN DDI USER CONFERENCE

Madison, Wisconsin | 2015

Two New DDI Groups Forming

Training Group. At the Toronto meeting of DDI members, training was discussed with the goal of forming a group to address training issues. Subsequently the DDI Executive Board developed some recommendations related to the DDI Training Principles, and a small group has begun to meet. If you would like to join the team, please contact the [Director](#).

Partnerships and Marketing Group. The need for a group to focus on marketing and partnerships was also discussed in Toronto with the objective of investigating and implementing new strategic alliances. To that end, a group has been formed with responsibility for such partnerships and for the broader area of marketing in general. To join this group, please contact the [Director](#).

Open Data Packaging

Metadata Technology North America (MTNA) announces [Open Data Packaging Services](#), designed to help transform datasets or databases into an open data package, ready for publication, analysis, long term preservation, or other purposes.

Leveraging MTNA technology and expertise, MTNA data and technology experts convert proprietary files or databases into open data packages, holding the information in ASCII text format, accompanied with core documentation and all necessary scripts and program for reading the data back into commonly used statistical software or analytical engines.