

DIRECTIONS

A NEWSLETTER OF THE DATA DOCUMENTATION INITIATIVE

Volume XIV, Number 4, December 2016

From the Director

In this issue, we highlight recent conferences and workshops, including the European DDI User Conference and two Dagstuhl DDI workshops. We also note the open comment period for the Q2 2016 Development Draft of DDI 4.

Jared Lyle, Director, DDI Alliance, lyle@umich.edu

European DDI Users Conference on Dec. 6-7, 2016

The [8th Annual European DDI User Conference \(EDDI\)](#), jointly organized by [GESIS](#) - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences and [IDSC of IZA](#) - International Data Service Center of the Institute for the Study of Labor, is being held in Cologne, Germany, Dec. 6-7, 2016.

Conference presentations cover a wide range of topics relating to DDI:

- Case studies
- Mature implementations
- Early implementations
- Interplay of DDI with other standards or technologies
- Projects in early phases in which DDI is under consideration
- Critiques of DDI

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Dagstuhl Workshops

Two weeks of DDI metadata workshops were held in October at Schloss Dagstuhl - Leibniz Center for Informatics.



Twenty-one participants attended the [first week](#), which was devoted to collaboration and insuring interoperability between DDI and other metadata standards. Representatives came from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and RDF community, Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX), Research Data Alliance (RDA), Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM), health standards, DDI, and other related standards. Goals of the workshop included:

- A shared understanding of the metadata standards for research data in terms of their commonalities and successful practices
- Clarification of points of interaction between standards both in their current forms and in their future development
- Improved communication across disciplines
- Identification of any possible options for the collaborative work



The [second week](#) brought together twenty-four members of the DDI community to review the next version under development, DDI 4, a [model-based specification](#) that will enable documentation of a broader spectrum of data. Work was focused in the following areas:

- *Re-usable Structured Documentation*: Work concentrated on developing both high-level and field-level documentation to assist archives, libraries, and statistical agencies, migrating from an older version of DDI to DDI 4.
- *Integration of Data Capture*: The integration of data capture into the full DDI Views model using real world examples for documentation.
- *Validation of Data Description*: Validation and quality assessment of the data description model using a range of real world examples.
- *Controlled Vocabularies*: A closer working relationship with the Controlled Vocabularies Group since Controlled Vocabularies are used throughout the model.
- *Funding Opportunities*: Exploring opportunities and creation of re-usable documentation for potential funding proposals, scope is local, national and international.
- *Long-term Metadata Infrastructure*: A long term plan for how the DDI Alliance fits into the larger social science research community.



This year marked the 10th anniversary of DDI workshops held at [Schloss Dagstuhl](#) - Leibniz Center for Informatics, an internationally renowned informatics center in Wadern, Germany. Participants at the [second week](#) workshop (described above) celebrated the occasion with drinks and a presentation by Joachim Wackerow highlighting past workshop topics, accomplishments, and attendees.

Dagstuhl provides a unique forum for DDI training and expert workshops, supporting the process of building a community of qualified DDI users and specification developers. Special thanks to Schloss Dagstuhl – Leibniz Center for Informatics for past and continued support of GESIS and DDI Alliance workshops on DDI and metadata. A special issue celebrating DDI's 10th Anniversary in Dagstuhl is forthcoming.

New Members



The DDI Alliance welcomes Blaise - Statistics Netherlands as a Full Member! Harry J.A. Wijnhoven, Deputy CIO of Statistics Netherlands/CBS and CEO Blaise, is the Member Representative and Lon Hofman is the Scientific Representative.

DDI at the 17th International Blaise Users Conference

Blaise is a powerful and flexible software package developed by Statistics Netherlands (CBS), and used for data collection and scientific research worldwide. The International Blaise Users Conference (IBUC) is a conference for users of Blaise software which takes place roughly every 18 months. The conference is mainly targeted at developers, system staff, survey methodologists, survey operations personnel and their managers.



This year at IBUC, Dan Smith and Jeremy Iverson of Colectica presented their new tools, the Blaise Colectica Visual Survey Designer and the Blaise Colectica DDI Connector, both developed in partnership with CBS.



DDI also had a marketing presence at the conference. [Read more information on Blaise.](#)

DDI Scientific Board Chair presented at Sixth Session of OIC Statistical Commission

Joachim Wackerow, Chair of the DDI Scientific Board, presented at the [Sixth Session](#) of the Statistical Commission of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC-StatCom), a supra-national organization of fifty-seven Islamic countries. The conference was held 5-6 November 2016 in Konya, Turkey. Representatives of the National Statistical Institutes of 35 Islamic countries and of 12 international organizations participated. The conference had altogether 65 participants. Wackerow's presentation, titled ["DDI and Its Role on](#)

Modernizing Official Statistics", was included in the session on "Modernisation of National Statistical Systems through Architectural Models and Skill Set Expansion of Human Resources."



Review of DDI 4 Q2 Development Draft In Progress

The DDI Technical Committee opened the comment period for the Q2 2016 Development Draft of DDI 4 in October 2016. Comments will be accepted through December 31st. Information on the review process is available from the [DDI4 - Comment and Review page](#), which contains a link to comment instructions and to the release package itself (see the box labeled Current Review in the middle of the page). This release is one of several iterative releases, each of which builds on previous releases. The Q2 Draft includes the class descriptions and diagrams for several of the basic parts of the model, XML Bindings, and high level documentation. We are currently working out issues with the RDF/OWL implementation. The Technical Committee is eager to obtain feedback from the DDI community and they look forward to hearing from you!

Background: DDI is transitioning to a model-driven specification to support new content and domains, to provide needed flexibility in rendering and packaging, and to ensure a sustainable development process for DDI going forward. The model will enable use-case driven "functional views" of the full model so that prospective DDI users can receive only the subset of DDI classes they need for a specific task or function (e.g., create a simple codebook). The transition also includes moving to a fully automated production framework to create the specification, bindings, and documentation. More information about the DDI [work products](#) and how they all fit together is available.