

Editor's notes

Data bring maps, archive brings data, and accreditation brings research

This issue (volume 36-1, 2012) of the IASSIST Quarterly (IQ) is the first of the 2012 issues. This editorial is written in March 2013 when many IASSIST people have received acceptance for their papers at the upcoming conference IASSIST 2013 in Cologne. I am certain there will be many interesting presentations at the conference. However, presenters can reach a greater audience by having their paper published in forthcoming issues of the IQ.

The three papers in this issue bring reports on the presentation and availability of data in a geographical portal for geospatial data, the collection and dissemination of holdings in a data archive, and on access to trans-national data and the accreditation involved..

The first paper is *Scholars GeoPortal: A new platform for geospatial data discovery, exploration and access in Ontario universities*. The authors are Elizabeth Hill and Leanne Trimble (formerly Hindmarch) of University of Western Ontario and Scholars Portal, Toronto. The paper was presented at the IASSIST 2011 conference Data Science Professionals: A Global Community of Sharing at Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, in the session Power of Partnerships in Data Creation and Sharing. Sharing was the theme for the conference, the session, and certainly also the paper on the Scholars GeoPortal. Data collections are no longer only numeric data collections. This paper focuses on the use of geospatial data for learning, reporting a project carried out for universities in the province of Ontario on the initiative of the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL). The paper describes the background - the need and the vision - and the components of the Geospatial Portal Project. The project needs to have very good metadata handling in order to provide valid results and the paper demonstrates how the GeoPortal presents the various different types of data. The portal is also used for research and has further involved policy makers and legal experts.

The second paper was presented at the IASSIST 2012 conference *Data Science for a Connected World: Unlocking and Harnessing the Power of Information* in Washington, DC hosted by NORC. In the session *National Data Landscapes: Policies, Strategies, and Contrasts*, the paper *Strategies of Promoting the Use of Survey Research Data Archive* was presented by the Meng-Li Yang from the Center For Survey Research, RCHSS, Academia Sinica, in Taiwan. The paper is a report from the largest data archive in Asia: the Survey Research Data Archive, Taiwan, whose collection includes government statistics raw data. The data archive was established in 1994 and now has 1400 members who can draw on the facilities of the archive including direct downloading of datasets. In 2011 a survey showed that about 20% of a relevant group of researchers were members of the data archive. This result and other findings led to strategies on improving the search facility and active promotion of the service. The paper goes

into details on the tasks that were necessary to improve the search facility. These details and other observations and experiences are provided for others in the data archive arena

Paola Tubaro, University of Greenwich and CNRS has, with Marie Cros, Université de Lille and Roxane Silberman, CNRS - Réseau Quetelet, written the paper *Access to official data and researcher accreditation in Europe: existing barriers and a way forward*. The authors perceive that the barriers against trans-national access to data in Europe are based upon accreditation and that there are major inconsistencies across the countries. One obvious barrier is that some descriptions are available only in the national language, other barriers are at the policy-level and will require negotiation and coordination. The paper presents the information collected on European accreditation procedures based on the trio: eligibility, application, and service. Accreditation is found to involve the criteria of eligibility (who is a researcher etc.), the procedure of application (how to request access etc.), and the level of service (who approves applications etc.). This work is part of the *Data without Boundaries* project in the EC 7th Framework. The positive conclusion is that almost all European countries provide research access to micro-data, enabled by the Open Data movement and other factors. But there still remain areas where improvement is needed for better trans-national data access..

Articles for the IASSIST Quarterly are always very welcome. They can be papers from IASSIST conferences or other conferences and workshops, from local presentations or papers especially written for the IQ. Authors are permitted "deep links" where you link directly to your paper published in the IQ. Chairing a conference session with the purpose of aggregating and integrating papers for a special issue IQ is also much appreciated as the information reaches many more people than the session participants, and will be readily available on the IASSIST website at <http://www.iasistdata.org>.

Authors are very welcome to take a look at the instructions and layout:
<http://iasistdata.org/iq/instructions-authors>.

Authors can also contact me via e-mail: kbr@sam.sdu.dk. Should you be interested in compiling a special issue for the IQ as guest editor(s) I will also be delighted to hear from you.

Karsten Boye Rasmussen
March 2013
Editor