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The GreyGuide Repository and Web-Access Portal: GreyNet's Response to the Pisa Declaration

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Abstract

In December 2013, the GreyGuide was launched and in early 2014 GreyNet welcomed far reaching developments in its resource management. These developments are in line with the “Pisa Declaration on Policy Development for Grey Literature Resources” published on May 16, 2014. In compliance with this 15-point roadmap, a selection of GreyNet’s web-based content is currently in the process of migrating to the GreyGuide, thus allowing for seamless browse, search, and retrieval across its collections.

Keywords:

GreyGuide, Pisa Declaration, Policy Development, Grey Literature, Open Access

Introduction

I'd like to ask you a question. How many towers are there on this earth that do not have the fame of Pisa? Its leaning and scientists and technical engineers have for centuries sought solutions to shore-up and preserve this world heritage. Scientists and technicians since the mid-20th century have also been engaged with yet another phenomenon "how on earth to deal with grey literature"¹? In April of this year, information professionals from Europe's finest academic and research centers met in Pisa to address issues dealing with the policy and management of grey literature resourcesⁱ. This meeting resulted in the formulation of the Pisa declaration on grey literature – a 15 point roadmapⁱⁱ, which serves as a guide for organizations involved in the production, publication, access and use of grey literature well into this 21st century.

Such an initiative is truly innovative – for it has found a new way to deal with a growing wealth of knowledge across disciplines and fields of industry and government that impact our global information society. What was not possible a couple of decades ago when the First International Conference on Grey Literature met in Amsterdam, is today manifest.

The Pisa Declaration much like the Budapestⁱⁱⁱ, Bethesda^{iv}, and Berlin^v Declarations are neither inventions of the mind nor improvements in doing the same things better. Instead, they offer a different approach in dealing with information and data to meet the market needs and requirements of today.

Policy Development for Grey Literature

Until now, the problem was the lack of cooperation and coordination between and among organizations dealing with grey literature. However, the time of going it alone is now ended. The Pisa Declaration marks the close of an era of *ad hoc* policy and decision making with regard to grey literature resources. In fact, the term Declaration says it – We call for, We endorse, We the international grey literature community, the authors and researchers, the information practitioners and professionals working now for years in this field of library and information science.

If I may take a few moments to recap the main points set out in the Pisa Declaration by addressing them in five categories:

First, the organizational commitment to open access, to further cooperation and coordination between and among grey literature communities, sharing open data standards.

Second, the commitment to research and education, where recognition and reward is associated with quality grey literature, and where attention is given to good practices in the field.

Third, the commitment to address and safeguard legal issues inherent to grey literature by exploring the various types of licensing agreements now available and by fostering constructive relations with commercial publishers.

¹ "Grey Literature is a field in library and Information science that deals with the production, distribution, and access to multiple document types produced on all levels of government, academics, business, and organization in electronic and print formats not controlled by commercial publishing i.e. where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body." Luxembourg, 1997 - New York, 2004 – Prague, 2010

Fourth, a commitment to sustainability linked to a financial prerequisite. Identifying funding and grants for special collections and repositories, commitment to long term preservation, and investments in new technologies.

And Fifth, a firm technical commitment, a guarantee to continued online services and further crosslinking of textual and non-textual content. A commitment, which ranges from tackling broken links to facilitating interoperability - regardless of the system or portal in which grey literature and its accompanying data are housed.

GreyNet Compliance

It is in this way that the Pisa Declaration can revel in the strengths and opportunities that grey literature offers, while at the same time exposing the weaknesses and threats facing our community. No longer are we resigned that grey literature is hard to find, but instead how can we best search and access it. No longer hold in question its worth and value, but instead set out the review process it has undergone. And, no longer hesitate as to whether it is published or not, but instead cite and reference grey literature – make it openly public – isn't that what published means?

Colleagues, I could not stand before you here today as a representative of GreyNet – one of the already more than 100 signatories^{vi} to this document - if our own organization were not prepared to implement the points set out in the Pisa Declaration. In the remainder of this paper, I would like to focus on the organizational and technical commitments GreyNet has laid out for itself.

Regarding GreyNet's organizational commitment, a committee established earlier this year seeks to further coordinate GreyNet's collections in the OpenGrey Repository^{vii}, the DANS Data Archive^{viii}, and the GreyGuide Repository^{ix}. And, as to its technical commitment - *certainly the most ambitious at the moment* - GreyNet has reached agreement with the National Research Center in Pisa, the service provider for the GreyGuide Repository. GreyNet collections and content that are as yet only accessible either via its website^x or allied conference site^{xi} will now migrate to the GreyGuide Repository. In this way, the GreyGuide will function as GreyNet's web access portal. This will allow for combined search, browse, and retrieval capability - where standardized metadata and full-text can be online harvested.

GreyNet Collections via GreyGuide alongside Good Practices

Alongside the collections of published^{xii} and proposed^{xiii} good practices in grey literature, five of GreyNet's in-house collections have been identified and are in the process of migrating to the GreyGuide Repository. These include:

BIO Collection (Who is in Grey Literature)

WHOIS^{xiv} in the field of Grey Literature is a compilation of over 200 biographical records provided by authors in the International Conference Series on Grey Literature. This online resource is maintained by TextRelease, the GL Program and Conference Bureau. Records in this directory appear in alphabetical order by last name of author and each record contains a current email address. In early October 2014, the metadata record format^{xv} used in the migration of content to the GreyGuide became operational and the authors in the GL-Series are requested to complete their own online record entry.

GL16 Collection (Conference Proposals)

Participants who seek to present a paper at GL16 were invited to submit an English abstract between 350-400 words. The abstract is required to deal with the problem/goal, the research method/procedure, an indication of costs related to the project, as well as the anticipated results of the research. The abstract should likewise include the title of the proposed paper, theme(s) most suited to the paper, name(s) of the author(s), and full address information. Abstracts are the only tangible source that allows the Program Committee to guarantee the content and balance in the conference program. In previous conferences in the GL-Series these abstracts were accessible on the conference site, however this content is now deposited in a standardized metadata format^{xvi}, where it will remain housed in the GreyGuide.

GSI Collection (GreySource Index)

The GreySource Index^{xvii} comprises a collection of over 70 web based resources in grey literature. This index was originally intended to expose grey literature to the average net-user and in so doing profile organizations responsible for their production and/or processing. Only web-based resources that explicitly refer to the term grey literature (or its equivalent in any language) are listed. GreySource identifies the hyperlink directly embedded in a resource. The migration of content for this collection in the GreyGuide began in the 3rd quarter of 2014 with the first release of its standardized metadata format^{xviii}.

GFS Collection (GreyForum Series)

The GreyForum^{xix} is a series of onsite and online courses, seminars, and workshops where grey literature provides common ground for information professionals in the process of knowledge transfer. The migration of content to the GreyGuide is scheduled to commence in the 1st quarter of 2015.

IDGL Collection (International Directory of Organizations in Grey Literature)

The International Directory of Organizations in Grey Literature^{xx} provides a list of over 200 organizations in 36 countries worldwide that are currently associated with GreyNet either via partnership, membership, sponsorship, or authorship in the field of grey literature. Entries are alphabetical by country and each entry has an embedded link to the corresponding organization's website. GreyNet International is proud to serve a global grey literature community and welcomes additions and revisions to this Directory. The migration of content to the GreyGuide is likewise scheduled to commence in the 1st quarter of 2015.

In Closing

This new approach in channeling GreyNet's diverse web-based content will no doubt better meet the needs and requirements of today's international grey literature community. A community just like other knowledge based communities, where users choose to rely ever more on one point of entry for relevant information and data.

Colleagues, you can provide a significant contribution to this initiative in two ways: first of all, by contributing content to one or more of the collections in the GreyGuide Repository; and secondly by endorsing the Pisa Declaration scheduled for ratification during the Sixteenth International Conference on Grey Literature^{xxi} this December at the Library of Congress. Thank you for your attention, hopeful for your endorsement^{xxii}.

Web References

ⁱ <http://www.greynet.org/greyforumseries/policydevelopment.html>

ⁱⁱ <http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it//include/pisadeclarationmay2014.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/>

^{iv} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethesda_Statement_on_Open_Access_Publishing

^v <http://openaccess.mpg.de/Berlin-Declaration>

^{vi} <http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it//pisadecla/listaiscritti.php>

^{vii} <http://www.opengrey.eu/search/request?q=greynet>

^{viii}

<https://easy.dans.knaw.nl/ui/?wicket:bookmarkablePage=:nl.knaw.dans.easy.web.search.pages.PublicSearchResultPage&q=greynet>

^{ix} <http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/>

^x <http://www.greynet.org/>

^{xi} <http://www.textrelease.com/>

^{xii} <http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/listtitoli.php?authority=GreyGuide&collection=Published&langver=en&RighePag=100>

^{xiii}

<http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/listtitoli.php?authority=GreyGuide&collection=Proposed&langver=en&RighePag=100>

^{xiv} <http://www.textrelease.com/whois2014.html>

^{xv} <http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/linkdoc.php?idcode=2014-B01-001&authority=WhoIs&collection=BIO&langver=en>

^{xvi}

<http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/listtitoli.php?authority=GLConference&collection=GL16&langver=en&RighePag=100>

^{xvii} <http://www.greynet.org/greysourceindex.html>

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<http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/listtitoli.php?authority=GreySource&collection=GSI&langver=en&RighePag=100>

xix <http://www.greynet.org/greyforumseries.html>

xx <http://www.greynet.org/internationaldirectory.html>

xxi <http://www.textrelease.com/gl16conference.html>

xxii <http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/pisadecla/iscrivi.php>