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Report back about activities by the South African Digitisation Initiative (SADI)

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2013 WORKSHOP

- February 2013 – workshop held at Wits on Standards, Best Practices, Policies and Technical Requirements for Digitisation & Digital Libraries.

- Initiated by several Gauteng-based institutions: Wits, UP, the NRF and the Goethe Institute.

- Aimed at reaching representatives from South African institutions involved in digitisation projects to provide a forum and mechanisms for:
  - Exchanging knowledge and experiences;
  - Fostering discussion, cooperation and collaboration;
  - Creating standardised metadata and digital collections;
  - Building a national platform and aggregator.

- Attended by 48 participants from 20 South African Institutions and focussed on:
  - Local Experiences;
  - Potential areas of alignment and collaboration;
  - Proposals for the establishment of a collaborative national initiative.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

- A national initiative under the name 'South African Digitisation Initiative' – (SADI).
- SADI – open forum, consisting of institutions and individuals who are prepared to contribute, assist and offer expertise.
- SADI to provide leadership in terms of digitisation guidelines, standards and processes.
- A national resource of digital heritage materials through a searchable interphase should be created.
- SADI to build and host an information resource for digitisation processes, best practices, expertise, etc.
- SADI projects to speak to draft National Policy on the Digitisation of Heritage Resources.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES (cont.)

- SADI to coordinate various functions such as training and lobbying.

- SADI Working Group formed to deal with:

  Structure, Membership and Fundraising;

  Standards, Benchmarking, Metadata and Interoperability;

  Training and Skills Development;

  Lobbying and Advocacy.

PILOT NATIONAL AGGREGATOR PROJECT

- A need for such a project from a research and access perspective;
- Would bring together and help address all the identified themes;
- Would enable participants to work to standards within their own environments;
- Would allow stakeholders and SADI to identifying problem issues around digitisation and suggest solutions;
- Formalisation of SADI could be implemented parallel or as continuation of the Pilot project;
- Initial Pilot Project participants:
  - Mayibuye Centre (UWC/Robben Island)
  - NLSA
  - Wits Historical Papers Research Archive
  - Tutu Foundation
  - UCT Special Collections

SADI'S ROLE

- Helping to get digitisation done and assisting in building capacity and expanding skills to support digitisation activity;

- Building a national digital resource through a national platform and aggregator – a National Digital Library – which will also help to develop institutional skills, promote research and development and support national metadata standards and interoperability.

- Building best practice methodologies and metadata production standards within participating institutions themselves.

WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED

- How do we fund the national project and what are the fundraising possibilities?
- How do we build institutional capacity for metadata standardisation and creation using XML
- How do we build the hybrid skills necessary to do this?
- What other projects and activities do we prioritize for the next 3 to 5 years?
- Unpacking the cost and budget implications at both institutional and project implementation level.

WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED (cont.)

- Governance and sustainability of SADI.
- SADI's relationship with government bodies such as the NRF and DAC? Main proposals in this regard:
  - A consortium under the chairmanship of or hosted by the NRF
  - An entity supported by DAC, such as that of the South African Institute for Digital Heritage.
- Or does SADI operate independently on a membership basis, where participating institutions would pay a membership fee.
- Sustainability, long-term curation and access to, digital resources that we create – and have been created – collaboratively and nationally.
- Issues of duplication of effort.

RESULTS OF TRAINING SURVEY

- 14 institutions responded to the Training Survey
- All respondents interested in attending digitisation training workshops
- Most would like to participate in the pilot national aggregation project
- Institutions are at different levels in terms of digitisation. In order of highest to lowest demand:
  - Metadata schemas and encoding;
  - Management systems, repositories and search engines;
  - Digital Preservation systems;
  - Hands-on Training;
  - Managing Digital Projects and policy formulation;
  - Imaging Preservation standards and colour management;
  - Setting up a Digitisation Centre;
  - Selecting Content for digitisation;
  - Collection Development;
  - Copyright.


Thank You!