

FAIR & X4L Programme Meeting 23rd and 24th June 2003 Warwick Hilton Hotel Meeting Report

Monday 23rd June

1.00-1.20 *Introduction*

The meeting opened with a broad overview from the Programme Managers of the FAIR and X4L programmes, Chris Awre and Susan Eales respectively, highlighting the progress achieved during the last twelve months and future objectives and issues to be faced in the coming year. Individual projects within the FAIR and X4L programmes may tackle a diverse range of issues within the HE and FE sectors, but each share a common theme of innovation and enhancement of products, processes, and services. This programme meeting allowed project staff to be kept up to date with the latest advancements and to forge links and exchange ideas between projects in other cluster groups and programmes.

1.20-2.00 Ruth Jenkins. *Effecting cultural change.*

After the introduction, Ruth Jenkins presented a retrospective view of the BUILDER project (<http://builder.bham.ac.uk/>) at the University of Birmingham. The initial aims, structure and outcome of the project were given, but the main thrust (and coincidentally most interesting part) of the talk dealt with the real practical issues that the project team dealt with. Advice was given about how to avoid the same mistakes that the BUILDER team made in areas such as academic liaison, technical developments and the 'real world' (see separate handout).

2.00-2.20 Paul Davey. *Raising the profile of your project within your institution.*

Paul Davey followed on with a generic presentation, which highlighted some of the benefits good marketing can bring to a project. Specifically, the talk presented the audience a framework, based on established marketing principles that could be used to raise project profiles within host institutions and beyond. More information about marketing can be found at the Chartered Institute of Marketing website (<http://www.cim.co.uk/cim/index.cfm/>).

2.20-2.45 Robin Gadd. *Case study of internal marketing.*

To highlight an exemplar model of internal marketing in action, Robin Gadd presented the approach that the X4L Music project took to raise the awareness at Brockenhurst College. One of the main problems faced was how to disseminate content to a mix of full-time and part-time staff. Their approach was to engage the upper management of the institution by creating a MLE Strategy Group chaired by the Principle. With this support, a hands-on approach was taken to raising awareness, training and embedding of the project. The main medium through which this was achieved was an extensively promoted training day (E-Day), which encompassed introductory seminars and hands-on workshops for the staff. The 'take-home' message from the presentation and the question session afterwards was that a successful avenue to effecting change lies in promoting ownership of the product to users by giving them a good product that fits in with their everyday routine.

3.15-4.15 Afternoon Forums.

Greg Newton-Ingham. *Project Management.*

The afternoon workshop began with an open forum discussing common issues encountered during management of JISC projects. Themes brought up for debate on the floor included; people, money, control, rule braking, communication and managing JISC.

Veronika Sekules. *Addressing Users needs.*

The forum continued with a presentation on the importance and methodology of addressing users needs, especially focusing on defining stakeholders, clarifying formative issues, user authority and testing/evaluation. Discussion on the floor brought up the importance of early identification of users needs, the value of visual aids when presenting technical issues to a non-technical audience and the importance of identifying and dispelling myths.

4.15-4.45 Peter Brophy. *Follow up on EFX.*

After the forum sessions, Peter Brophy continued the conference with a presentation on evaluation support for the X4L and FAIR programmes (EFX). The talk indicated the need to achieve a balance by focusing on evaluating the process, product and impact of the project. It was suggested that as a *very rough* estimate, the average project should devote around 10% of its resources to evaluation. A special mention was given to the value of ensuring an element of impartiality in the evaluation process by nominating an independent evaluator. More details of evaluation support for the X4L and FAIR projects can be found at the EFX website (<http://www.cerlim.ac.uk/projects/efx/index.html>).

4.45-5.25 Tom Franklin and Rachael Heery. *The Learning and Teaching Portals Project (LTP) and The Subject Portals Project (SPP).*

The final presentations of the day introduced the LTP and SPP portals projects. Each talk focused on the projects background, content and future directions.

Tuesday 24th June

The joint programme meeting on Tuesday morning devolved into separate strands to focus on the individual X4L and FAIR programmes. Unfortunately, both of the speakers who were booked to talk about preservation did not attend the programme meeting, so the first session concentrated solely on project delivery.

9.00-10.00 FAIR: Presentations/discussion on Delivery

Liz Pearce. *Delivering content user requirements for Institutional portals.*

In the first talk of the day, Liz Pearce introduced the PORTAL project based at the University of Hull (<http://www.fair-portal.hull.ac.uk/deliverables.html>), paying particular attention to users requirements as determined by stakeholder work carried out by the project. General awareness of the PORTAL project was low, yet enthusiasm was high. Potential users wanted internal and external sources and the product to be intuitive and accessible. In general, FE staff wanted different features to HE staff and UG/PG students.

Kate Fernie. *OAI Harvesting: a service provider's perspective.*

This presentation highlighted the work of the Archaeology Data Service (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk>) in relation to the FAIR programme, the main work in progress being in conjunction with the Harvesting the Fitzwilliam project. Kate Fernie presented a case study of how OAI is being used to link services developed for Numismatists and Archaeologists using an enhanced Dublin Core metadata schema. OAI compliant records are rare in the Museum sector, so this presentation was extremely encouraging in that it showed interoperability is achievable across the entire board regardless of subject matter.

10.00-10.30 *Open floor discussion for FAIR projects*

Before the coffee break, Chris Awre chaired an open session for discussion of current issues relevant to the FAIR programme. The main topic of conversation centred on metadata, specifically preservation, provenance and enhancement.

11.00-12.30 *eFAIR cluster meeting*

The full minutes from the eFAIR cluster meeting are available on the Theses Alive website (http://www.thesesalive.ac.uk/arch_events.shtml).

12.30-1.00 *Plenary session*

Each FAIR and X4L cluster gave a brief synopsis of the main points of discussion from their respective group.

*Theo Andrew and Richard Jones, **Theses Alive! Project***

1 July 2003