



DDI Scientific Work Plan

July 2024 – December 2026

v1.0 Last updated 16 May 2024

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This work plan follows and supersedes the DDI Scientific Work Plan 2021 - 2023¹

This document is a synthesis of discussions held at the DDI Scientific Board face to face meeting in Bergen in October 2023, subsequent discussions between members of the Scientific Board and Working Groups, and discussions between with the DDI Executive Board. We have also incorporated feedback from the Annual Meeting in 2023. Details of the the composition and purpose of the DDI Scientific Board can be found in the DDI Alliance Bylaws².

The Scientific Plan for 2021-2023 focused on the need for the Board to solidify its internal processes as well as providing oversight to the on-going scientific work of the DDI Alliance. This also encompassed clarifying relationships with the Executive Board, and the Scientific Board's relationship to the Technical Committee and to other Working Groups of the Scientific Board.

Introduction

In Q2 2024, the Executive Board developed a Strategic Plan for 2024 - 2027.³ This lays out the strategic priorities for the DDI Alliance over the next three years and on which areas work should be focused. The purpose of the Scientific Work Plan is to complement this document by outlining more concrete outcomes, which should cascade down to Working Groups for specific, local implementation. The DDI Technical Committee has a special approval and QA role in this apparatus, in that it takes responsibility for ensuring technical alignment and best practice for DDI products, both for consistent product development practices and harmonised infrastructure.

Having defined these concrete goals, the Scientific Board's primary purpose is to be a proactive enabler for their implementation by Working Groups. Each Working Group shall

¹ <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13306757>

² https://ddialliance.org/system/files/DDIBylaws_20201031.pdf

³ <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13306674>



have a named contact within the Scientific Board. As well as providing support to the working group, each contact should formally report back to the Scientific Board on a quarterly basis on the status of each Working Group's activities and how their work is helping deliver on the Scientific Work Plan.

In summary, the philosophy of approach is that the Executive Board sets the tone and the priorities for the DDI Alliance (as well as having special responsibility for Finance and Marketing); the Scientific Board defines and supports the delivery of concrete goals by the Working Groups; Technical Committee oversees standards and technical best practice across all working groups and products; finally, working groups implement the Scientific Work Plan and should have the freedom to progress those goals in ways that work for their local community of interest.

Goals

The Executive Board has defined three 'pillars' or strategic priorities: Engagement, Expansion and Alignment. The Scientific Work Plan is explicitly intended to align with these pillars.

Strategic Priority 1 - ENGAGEMENT

-Build community through products and events

-Renew active and engaged membership at the institutional level

#	Goal	Timescale
1.1	Develop recommendations for better signposting and marketing of products for DDI Alliance technical outputs so it is easier and more transparent for users to identify the product they need for their use case.	By end of 2025 expansion
1.2	Develop stakeholder map and single sources of truth for audiences, stakeholders, contacts, and external representation	Mid-2025
1.3	Deepen connection with W3C and explore the possibilities of a W3C recommendation for DDI components, such as the variable cascade.	2025
1.4	Broaden scope and opportunities for DDI tools development by promoting the work of the DDI Developers WG and engaging third parties.	2025-2026



Strategic Priority 2 - EXPANSION

-Understand DDI users

-Develop audience-specific training materials

-Build partnerships with other standards

#	Goal	Timescale
2.1	Improve usage and awareness of the DDI Alliance registry and actively promote best practice for PID usage and resolution mechanisms, particularly URNs and use of URIs for CVs.	2025
2.2	Develop and enable community submission of more practical markup examples for all products in the DDI suite.	2024-2026
2.3	Proactively engage with and explore possibilities for DDI adoption in cross-domain initiatives and standards, including FAIR and CDIF.	2024 - 2026
2.4	Engage with SDMX community and UNECE community to identify future collaborations with the DDI Alliance.	2024-2025
2.5	Increase visibility of the Alliance beyond traditional audience regions (i.e. North America, Europe and Australia) e.g. outreach to audiences in Africa and South America.	2025-2026
2.6	Produce feasibility and scoping report for ISO certification for DDI product(s) and/or components	Mid-2025
2.7	Support the further development of implementation guides to help software architects and developers i.e. recommending the appropriate subset of a specification. Ideally, implementation guidelines should include code snippets or examples and have a consistent presentation across the product line.	2025-2026
2.8	Proactively pursue appropriate funding opportunities in the various geographies in which the DDI Alliance has members.	2025-2026



Strategic Priority 3 - ALIGNMENT

-Alignment of product lines

-Improve documentation

-Support tools development

#	Goal	Timescale
3.1	Align and standardise technical documentation practices including field-level documentation.	2024-2026
3.2	Develop a formal Information Architecture and Content Management Strategy for the DDI Alliance, leading to better alignment of content across multiple products and re-development of DDI website	2024
3.3	Support development of a new integrated Training Platform and Media Library	2026
3.4	Liaise with Executive Board to develop a more formal Communications strategy and apparatus, including social media, newsletters, and other channels	2025
3.5	Improve collaboration and communication between the Scientific Board and Working Groups, including more formal periodic reporting.	2024
3.6	Support Technical Committee in infrastructure consolidation and harmonisation: this includes cloud infrastructure, code repositories and CI/CD pipelines.	2024-2025
3.7	Support development of RDF serialisations for DDI products that do not currently have them.	2024-2026
3.8	Support development and release of new products and versions of products in the DDI Product Suite.	2024-2025