



*The Creative Commons-Attribution-Noncommercial License 4.0 International applies to all works published by IASSIST Quarterly. Authors will retain copyright of the work and full publishing rights.*

## Editor's notes: Yes, we are international

Welcome to the second issue of IASSIST Quarterly for the year 2023 - IQ vol. 47(2).

I am very happy with the 'International' in IASSIST. It is important to learn from outside your own center. In this issue we have a focus on the United States and some African countries with a special focus on South Africa. The first article investigates LibGuides across the many states of the United States. The second article is centered on one of the data resources often found in the LibGuides pages, but the data itself is about all of the United States. In the third article we shift to the African continent and the described project has a base in South Africa with a connection to the United Kingdom - still part of Europe although not of the EU - and with research being conducted in several African countries. We can't promise to cover the whole world in each IQ issue – but this issue is quite international.

The first article is 'Taking count: A computational analysis of data resources on academic LibGuides in the U.S.'. Cody Hennesy, Alicia Kubas and Jenny McBurney have undertaken the task of collecting links to data and statistical resources from over 10,000 LibGuide pages at 123 R1 research institutions in the United States. The LibGuides platform has become the universal resource discovery platform in academic libraries in the U.S. LibGuides not only support researchers, they also help librarians in orientation among the many resources. The authors reach the conclusion that freely available resources from U.S. government agencies are the most widely used. Resources requiring paid licenses or memberships (like ICPSR) are also frequent. The analysis suggest traditional licensed statistical resources are more likely to be shared than complex microdata resources. Data cleaning of the nearly 200,000 links from the 10,000 guide pages was an essential part of the analysis. The authors cite the data scientist joke that 90% of the work is data cleaning, and they find that the actual number for the cleaning and normalization in this analysis was even larger, performed through Python and OpenRefine. The data process included accessing the LibGuide pages based on the keywords of 'data' and 'statistic' and then extracting the content links. The links were then cleaned, filtered and further normalized. The data cleaning showed a high degree of inconsistency and dead links, leading the authors to suggest a more centralized management of data resources. The most frequently found links to resources are through ICPSR and data.gov, and a table with the 20 most common resources shows that even the most uncommon resource among these 20 are included in more than 73% of the institutions. This demonstrates a high consistency across the institutions. However, the authors remark that they believe that the very few institutions that didn't include a link to the popular [data.gov](https://data.gov) would benefit from having information about this resource available for their researchers. Cody Hennesy and Jenny McBurney are the Journalism & Digital Media Librarian and a Social Sciences Librarian at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and Alicia Kubas is a librarian at the U.S. Government Publishing Office.

The second article concerns metadata from IPUMS projects at the Institute for Social Research and Data Innovation (ISRDI) at the University of Minnesota (note, these are among the central sources of data LibGuides, mentioned several times in the first article). The authors are Diana L. Magnuson, curator and historian at the Institute for Social Research and Data Innovation, and Wendy L. Thomas, now retired curator from the same institution. The title is 'Expanding our perspective: building a sustainable metadata culture'. The article describes the learning obtained by ISRDI through the submission of an application for certification to the Core Trust Seal (CTS). When applying for certification the institution must document that it follows the standards and guidelines for the certification. In the case of the CTS - as in many other cases of certification - the building of a portfolio of documentation of procedures makes the applicant more self-aware of its history, as well as of the routines delivering the final products. The conclusion is also that the certification process has led to a better internal understanding at the ISRDI that can support future development as well as preserve the work done. IPUMS has over the last thirty years created the world's largest accessible database of census microdata starting with the 1880 Historical Census Project that has been extended in both time directions and now covering more than a hundred years. Naturally, processing of data has changed over the years and keeping track of the documentation proved difficult. The decision to use digital object identifiers (DOIs) led to a persistency and uniqueness that supported the users. This also had internal benefits as references and publications were more easily trackable and the preservation work more accurate and complete for each product version. Among the figures of the article, you will find the workflow using the open archival information system (OAIS) model as well as the IPUMS business process model.

The third article concerns the dilemma of personal data protection versus the benefit of using data for life improvement. The title of the submission is 'Data management instruments to protect the personal information of children and adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa' and concerns health research in this group. On the one hand the researchers naturally must follow the data regulations as they appear in the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act in South Africa and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union, and with special attention to high-risk and vulnerable groups such as children and adolescents. On the other hand, these vulnerable groups are also at risk from a health viewpoint, especially from infectious diseases like infantile paralysis, measles and pneumococci. Research and data collected from children has contributed to the development of vaccines, which has led to a dramatic reduction in child mortality and improvements in the quality of life. The project described is a large-scale one that involves many countries and many researchers, making governance and data management crucial to achieving data availability and data security. The article discusses the strategies and instruments used, and addresses the many considerations from both ethical sides and when building a data management plan and decisions on sharing data. The authors behind the article are Lucas Hertzog, Jenny Chen-Charles, Camille Wittesaele, Kristen de Graaf, Raylene Titus, Jane Kelly, Nontokozo Langwenya, Lauren Baerecke, Boladé Hamed Banounin, Wylene Saal, John Southall, Lucie Cluver, and Elona Toska. Many of these are affiliated to the Centre for Social Science Research at the University of Cape Town in South Africa and some are connected to the University of Oxford. It is important to mention that in addition to the central participation from South Africa and the UK, the project is based on partnerships with researchers in Zambia, Malawi, Nigeria, Lesotho, Tanzania, and Kenya.

Submissions of papers for the IASSIST Quarterly are always very welcome. We welcome input from IASSIST conferences or other conferences and workshops, from local presentations or papers especially written for the IQ. When you are preparing such a presentation, give a thought to turning your one-time presentation into a lasting contribution. Doing that after the event also gives you the opportunity of improving your work after feedback. We encourage you to login or create an author profile at <https://www.iassistquarterly.com> (our Open Journal System application). We permit authors to have 'deep links' into the IQ as well as deposition of the paper in your local repository. Chairing a conference session or workshop 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 limited number of session participants and will be readily available on the IASSIST Quarterly website at <https://www.iassistquarterly.com>. Should you be interested in compiling a special issue for the IQ as guest editor(s) you can also contact the IQ. Take a look at the instructions, layout, and contact at:

<https://www.iassistquarterly.com/index.php/iassist/about/submissions>

On a personal note, I have since 1997 been the editor of the IASSIST Quarterly. All good things must end. New people will take over and improve the journal. I find there have been many improvements in the IQ during my tenure. Special thanks to my good friends Walter and Jane for their work on the journal. For many years, Walter Piovesan helped with layout and production, and he established contact with the Open Journal System staff before retiring from the IQ editorial team. Jane Roberts turned my Denglish into English in my IQ editorials. I am very happy to quit now, especially because you IASSISTers will have very competent replacements in Michele Hayslett and Ofira Schwartz. They have already for long worked behind the scenes at IQ, and have also edited the recent special issue on Systemic Racism. The IQ is in good hands.

Karsten Boye Rasmussen - June 2023