

Australia to join JES & Co.'s Achievement Standards Network

Washington, DC – November 19, 2009 - At the annual National Science Distributed Learning conference sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF), participants learned how JES & Co.'s Achievement Standards Network (ASN) framework is being used by Australia's Curriculum Corporation in an effort to link educational resource data globally. Representing Australia's nationally funded Learning Federation Initiative was Jillian Dellit, for 9 years Director of The Learning Federation Secretariat. Diny Golder, the executive director of JES & Co., the home of the ASN, has been working with Ms. Dellit for over 10 years in an effort to launch an international exchange of learning resources, discoverable by learning objective or achievement standards. Stuart Sutton, the lead scientist for the ASN project, has worked closely with Curriculum Corporation's Steve Sunter and Les Kneebone to align Australia's rich educational vocabularies to existing ASN properties.

Presented to the National Science Distributed Learning community was a demonstration of the ASN configurable Resource Description Editor (RDE) developed in cooperation with Zepheira that has been configured to meet Australia's unique educational needs. Many in the area of education publishing are familiar with resource metadata, but the notion of describing learning goals is fairly new. The ASN is both an open source framework for the description and encoding of achievement standards and an open resource, Web-accessible repository of all historical and current U.S. K-12 standards. The ASN was partially funded at its start by NSF through its National Science Digital Library (NSDL) initiative. The repository of U.S. K-12 standards has APIs that enable cataloging tools to link to the repository in order to search, browse and assign identifiers (URI) for fine-grained achievement assertions to learning resources. All identifiers so assigned are then resolvable over the Web, yielding related metadata and the text of the achievement assertion identified. Ms. Dellit explained to the audience the opportunities in the current Australian context and the ways in which the ASN will leverage some of the Australian digital resource work of the last decade.

To quote Sutton, "The configurable RDE is the first complete RDF editor architecture for the description of entities and the relationships among those entities in a way that supports Linked Data and Semantic Web goals by catalogers and metadata generators without the need for those people to understand XML or RDF." JES & Co. plans on joining the Linked Data community with a focus on CyberLearning; a networked world of open source standards, digital tools, services and resources. International collaboration is providing a stimulus and an incentive to reap the benefits of CyberLearning. For more information, contact Bruce Walker at BruceW@JESandCo.Org.