Policy on Developing and Approving NSDL Policies

Metadata

- Title: Interim Policy on Public Statements for the NSDL
- Sponsoring Committee: NSDL Policy Committee
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- Category: Draft Discussion
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- Abstract: This Public Statement provides the goals, principles, and procedures for developing and approving Public Statements for the NSDL community
- Relation: Replaced by PC-1-Draft2 [PC-1-Draft2.pdf]

Body

1.000 Introduction

1.100 Definition: Public Statements provide the NSDL guidelines and processes to progressively advance the mission of the NSDL in ways that are informed and acceptable to the NSDL community. Public Statements provide a single set of documents that describe the agreements that enable the partners to work together.

1.200 Goals: Developing Public Statements is intended to lead to greater effectiveness in organizational development and strategic planning of how the NSDL will function within the larger intellectual, social, and economic environment. Through the systematic analysis of the NSDL’s current and future opportunities in the context of its historical commitments and current capabilities, developing Public Statements should produce more informed and successful NSDL program decisions.

1.300 Principles Underlying the Policy on Developing Public Statements

- a) Public Statements should be collaboratively developed by, communicated to, and accepted by the working members of the NSDL community.
- b) Public Statements should be a continuously visible activity and must be perceived as being supported by the leaders of the NSDL.
- c) Public Statements should be linked to the people and communities served by the NSDL.
- d) Public Statements should be linked to the assessment of the NSDL’s mission-related activities.
- e) Public Statements should be guided by disciplined and consistent processes that are appropriate to the academic culture.

2.000 Organization
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2.1 Interim Governance Policy adopted by the NSDL Assembly 12/4/01 defined the organizational structure of the NSDL governance. The NSDL organization is composed of:

- Policy Committee
- Full Assembly
- National Visiting Committee
- Topical Standing Committees
- Taskforces
- Spontaneous Interest Groups

2.200 The Policy Committee advises the CI team, other NSF grantees, and NSF on operational strategies, policies and implementation priorities. Among these policies are ones that define the NSDL "community" and determine any constraints on NSDL usage and contents that are necessary to ensure that its mission is fulfilled. The Policy Committee acts on behalf of the Assembly to work with NSF and the CI team in coordinating the activities of the Standing Committees, Subcommittees, Taskforces, etc., and individual projects.

3 Procedures

3.1 Overview: The procedure for creating a Public Statement includes the following steps:

- (a) the Policy Committee or one of its committees identifies a topic,
- (b) the sponsoring committee circulates a discussion draft by for public comment,
- (c) guided by the comments received, the sponsoring committee reviews the draft.

As a result of the review, the sponsoring committee may decide to table the topic, to have further drafts circulated, or to recommend it to the Policy Committee for approval as a Public Statement.

3.2 Format for NSDL Public Statements. This section describes the information that must be included in every draft and every Public Statement.

3.2.1 Title: The title is a one-line description. The word "Interim" may be included in the title if there is an expectation that it will be revised in the near future.

3.2.2 Sponsoring committee: The name of the committee that is sponsoring the document.

3.2.3 Identifier: Public Statements are numbered sequentially in the order that the Policy Committee approves them. Drafts are identified by a code that identifies the sponsoring committee (usually the initials of the committee), the word "draft" and a sequence number, separated by hyphens.

3.2.4 Category: Documents will be allocated to one of the following categories:
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- a. Discussion Draft: A paper submitted to a committee for public discussion until it is either tabled by the committee or approved by the Policy Committee.
- b. Policy: A policy that all partners in the NSDL are expected to observe. A policy constitutes a threshold that is necessary for participation in some aspect of the NSDL.
- c. Guideline: A recommendation that NSDL participants are encouraged to observe. Observation of a guideline is not necessary for participation.

3.2.5 Additional metadata: This is optional information used to clarify the status of a paper.

3.2.6 Author(s): The author(s) will be described by name, affiliation and email address.

3.2.7 Date: The date on a Discussion Draft is the date when it was written. The date on a Policy or Guideline is the date on which the Policy Committee approved it.

3.2.8 Abstract: Every Policy should have an abstract. Although there is no strict limit on the length, authors are encouraged to keep abstracts short, preferably to less than 100 words.

3.2.9 Body: The main body follows the abstract. There are no requirements on how the body is structured, but here are some suggestions.

- a. Public Statements are intended to be readable by anybody who is interested in the NSDL.
- b. Public Statements may remain current for many years.
- c. Public Statements must assume that the readers are not necessarily knowledgeable about the topics that are discussed.
- d. Most Public Statements will therefore begin by describing the context.
- e. As far as possible, Public Statements should be self-contained.
- f. In general if a document needs to be modified, it is better to replace it, rather than to present a set of changes that have to be read in conjunction with the original.

3.2.10 Format: Public Statements should be written as text with no special formats until a format is approved. Printable ASCII is recommended. It is probable that a future Public Statement will recommend a specific format for Public Statements, e.g., an XML schema, with tagged metadata that follows Dublin Core, and a style sheet for rendering it. Such a format would also specify how to incorporate material other than raw text, e.g., diagrams.

3.3 Sources of Proposals for NSDL Public Statements: Proposals for NSDL Public Statements can originate from a variety of sources within the NSDL Community. These sources are:

- Policy Committee
- Full Assembly
- National Visiting Committee
- Topical Standing Committees
- Taskforces
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- Spontaneous Interest Groups
- Core Integration Team

3.4 Procedure for submitting, reviewing, and accepting Public Statements

- 3.4.1 To initiate the process for proposing a Public Statements, the proposal must be submitted to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee will identify a member of policy committee who agrees to be the liaison for the proposal through the process. The Policy Committee could provide preliminary feedback to authors at this time.
- 3.4.2 Proposed Public Statements will typically receive significant informal review by the communities concerned with the issues addressed by the Public Statement. When the authors decide to initiate the formal review process, the author(s) submit the proposal to the Policy Committee for the first reading.
- 3.4.3 The Policy Committee posts the proposal for open review for a specified length of time. The open reviews can include reviews by the Core Integration Team, Standing Committees, Task Forces, Interest Groups, individuals, legal review teams, NSF, and any other person wishing to provide comments and reviews.
- 3.4.4 Upon completion of the open review period, the Policy Committee will conduct a second reading of the proposal, informed by the reviews provided during the open review period and the revisions developed by the authors.
- 3.4.5 After second reading and discussion, the Policy Committee will vote on the approval of the proposal.
- 3.4.6 If there are significant disagreements on the proposal present in the community, the Policy Committee can establish a decision procedure that would include voting on the proposal by the entire NSDL assembly.

3.5 Policy committee announces Public Statement and implementation process.