DCAT Meeting November 2016

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Date & Time

- November 8th **16:00** UTC/GMT - **11:00** EST

Dial-in

We will use the international conference call dial-in. Please follow directions below.

- U.S.A/Canada toll free: 866-740-1260, participant code: 2257295
- International toll free: http://www.readytalk.com/intl
    - Use the above link and input 2257295 and the country you are calling from to get your country's toll-free dial in #
    - Once on the call, enter participant code 2257295

Agenda: Forming a DSpace 7 UI Outreach Group

Current progress on DSpace 7 UI

At the Open Repositories conference, the community formalized the decision to move ahead with Angular 2 as the new technology for the DSpace UI, replacing both JSPUI and XMLUI in DSpace 7.

The organization of the development work is currently underway, in recent meetings that took place in the last weeks.

Priority 1: existing featureset in the new UI by Open Repositories 2017

The primary goal is to have a product that is convincing enough to both the JSPUI and XMLUI communities to abandon the old UIs and to seriously consider migrating to the new user interface.

The challenge to overcome here is that feature-wise, the vast majority of the features that are in active use by the JSPUI and XMLUI communities should be present in the new product. Adopting the new UI should ideally mean no loss of functionality.

This is why the replication of current functionality has been selected as the top priority towards Open Repositories 2017.

Priority 2: Consistency

The existing features of DSpace today often have differences in XMLUI and JSPUI. The aforementioned “replication” should not inherit weaknesses or bad design choices from the older platforms. Instead, each of the features will be reimagined in order to bring the overall set of features to the user in a consistent way.

One concrete example is the representation of search and browse results. Even without looking outside of XMLUI, you already see that there is a mix of “item listings” if you compare browse pages, discovery results pages, or the recent submissions pages.

Therefore, consistency in the functionality, both in terms of back end design and representation towards the users is the second priority.

As an outcome of this work, formal guidelines will be created for future developments. These guidelines will facilitate extension and customization of both the UI and the REST API. During these DSpace 7 developments, the developers will agree on a set of design and development principles to ensure there is a solid definition of what it means to develop in a “consistent” way.

Priority 3: Sticking to priority 1 and 2

Because of the limited time and resources, it will already be an amazing achievement if priorities 1 and 2 can be realized by Open Repositories 2017. It's therefore key that we keep the scope limited and resist the urge to overload the developers in this project with additional priorities.

Responsibilities

Two subgroups are currently being formed to take on the development work.

REST API

Because the UI will interact with DSpace through the REST API, the REST API will be redeveloped and extended in order to offer all of the functionality that the UI needs.

The REST API developments are led by committer Andrea Bollini, who is one of the key stakeholders in the JSPUI community.

Angular 2

The actual angular 2 front end implementation is led by Art Lowel. Art Lowel is Atmire's head of research and development. He was responsible for Atmire's efforts in the UI prototyping challenge. In the past, Art was also the driving force behind the Mirage 1 and Mirage 2 XMLUI themes.

Developers

Both Art and Andrea are actively looking for developer contributions in their respective subgroups. In the period leading up to Open Repositories, they will work in a sprint model with concrete development goals scheduled out in periods of a few weeks.

Interested developers or institutions that want to contribute developer resources are requested to reach out to Art (art@atmire.com) or Andrea (Andrea.Bollini@4science.it) directly.

Role of DCAT and the repository manager community

At certain points in the development process, when specific sets of features of DSpace are being replicated in the new Angular 2, there will be an opportunity to provide feedback.

In order to keep the development teams focused on development, there is substantial added value in a role that can organize and process the feedback of the community at large.

This is why the development groups are issuing a call for a DSpace 7 UI Outreach group

During the Nov 8th meeting, we will talk about the organization of this outreach group, including:

- Responsibilities
  - Organizing feedback phases and prioritizing the feedback points that are submitted to developers
  - Assisting the developer team in communicating progress to the community
- Commitment sought of interested members
  - First estimate 1~2 hours per week on average, in the period leading up to open repositories
- Communication between the outreach group and the developers
  - …
- Communication between the outreach group and the DSpace repository community
  - DCAT mailing list in combination with the general mailing list for specific feedback phases?
- Communication within the outreach group
  - Weekly/bi-weekly contact?

Preparing for the call

Please read the agenda and consider to which extent you or your institution would like to be involved in the DSpace 7 UI work.

If you can join the call, or are willing to comment on the topics submitted via the meeting page, please add your name, institution, and repository URL to the Call Attendees section below.

Meeting notes

Interest of DCAT members in the new User Interface

The main concern of DCAT members is the inclusion of currently included functionality on which their institution relies. This of course, will be the key requirement the UI development team will focus on. The goal is to first create a prototype version of the Angular 2 UI which contains all functionality from both current user interfaces. This prototype should not contain any new functionality. In a later stage this version can be extended with new flagship functionality.

Next to the inclusion of current functionality, it should also be the case the new user interface is as user friendly as possible.

During the meeting many DCAT members expressed interest in volunteering for the UI development project, be it as a developer, analyst or tester. The DSpace steering group is currently also working on a document expressing the necessity of a new unified UI. This document can be used to justify time spent on the project towards management.

Current progress on the Angular 2 User Interface

Tim Donohue will not have much time to spend on DSpace for the remainder of the year. Two people stepped up to start up and lead the DSpace 7 development team. Art Lowel from Atmire will be in charge of the UI developments, while Andrea Bollini from 4science will lead the API developments.

As mentioned above, Art and Andrea will commit to port the current functionality from out of DSpace JSPUI and XMLUI to the new User Interface.

Next to this, they will also try to enhance DSpace's consistency to the maximum possible.

The reason why consistency is high on the priority list, is that even when staying within one User Interface, there are still multiple ways of doing the same thing. The goal would be to create a set of development guidelines for DSpace developers to create new functionality and customizations. This should facilitate the integration of such functionality in the standard DSpace code, as well as it should make DSpace's source code more comprehensible for all.

The current goal is to have a consistent prototype containing all currently included features by the Open Repositories 2017 conference in June. It is not required for people contributing to the development of DSpace 7 to attend this conference.

DCAT members willing to contribute can use the DCAT mailing list for internal communication. For general messages towards the entire community the DSpace general mailing list can be used.

It would be considered as a best practice this DSpace 7 outreach group holds meetings at least bi-weekly.

New functionality

The question arose whether it would be interesting to include new flagship functionality in DSpace 7. This would make it easier for repository users to defend the migration to DSpace 7 with their management.

Although this is certainly a good argument to include new functionality in DSpace 7, the idea is that leaving out current functionality would impact the migration to DSpace 7 in a negative way. For this reason including current functionality has a higher priority than developing new features.

Angular 2

The decision of using angular 2 as the javascript framework to use for the development of the new user interface was preceded by a prototype challenge. During this challenge many technologies were put to the test to use as the core technology for the new User Interface. The main reason Angular 2 had the preference is because of the expected community around this framework. Considering the large success of the first version of Angular it is likely Angular 2's developer community will substantially grow in a short time period. This should make it easier for institutions to find developers for their DSpace project.

Call Attendees

- Bram Luyten (Atmire)
- Luiz Claudio Franca dos Santos
- Felicity Dykas (University of Missouri)
- Ignace Deroost - Atmire
- Monica Rivero (Rice University)
- Mariya Maistrovskaya (University of Toronto)
- Allen Clayton (UT Dallas)
- Pauline Ward (University of Edinburgh)
- Elias Tzoc (Miami University)
- Terrence W Brady (Georgetown University)
- Suzanne Chase (Georgetown University)