

## e-Framework Update September 2006

The e-Framework for Education and Research is a joint initiative of JISC (UK) and DEST (Australia)

For any questions or proposed input into future newsletters please email [The Editor](#)

### Breaking News: e-Framework forms alliance with IBM

As a result of a meeting in Los Angeles on 9-11 August, DEST representatives of the e-Framework Professor Neil McLean and Kerry Blinco brokered an understanding with representatives from IBM (Michael King, Director, Market Development, IBM Education Industry, and Chris Davia IBM Education Industry Architect) to further their respective interests by deploying IBM standards-based business process analysis tools in the context of the e-Framework.

The meeting was also attended by representatives from JISC, Cambridge University and Rice University who have an interest in adopting a service oriented approach to the building of institutional technical infrastructure.

Further information will be available in the next newsletter including news on e-Framework / IBM Presentation to the IMS meeting in Boston in 4-7 September

### DEST Announces Systemic Infrastructure Funding

July 31, 2006. The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, announced six new initiatives that will support greater collaboration between researchers, both domestically and internationally. The Australian Government has allocated \$15 million under the Systemic Infrastructure Initiative for six highly collaborative proposals as part of its ongoing commitment to strengthen innovation and improve research outcomes. The proposals will provide Australian scientists with access to research infrastructure that will enhance Australia's research capabilities and will:

- deliver improvements in access to distributed information, data resources, and research facilities;
- develop and implement innovative models of collecting, analysing and linking research results; and
- will fill significant gaps in the tools and resources available to researchers.

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## A Service Framework for Libraries

"Much progress has been made in aligning library services with changing (and increasingly digital and networked) research and learning environments. At times, however, this progress has been uneven, fragmented, and reactive. As libraries continue to engage with an ever-shifting information landscape, it is apparent that their efforts would be facilitated by a shared view of how library services should be organized and surfaced in these new settings and contexts."

To read more, see "A Service Framework for Libraries," D-Lib Magazine 12, no. 7/8 (July/August 2006). Available from <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july06/lavoie/07lavoie.html>

## IMS Releases Updated Metadata Specifications

August 28th, 2006. Finally, the long-awaited alignment of the IMS Metadata Specifications with the IEEE LOM data model and the XML binding has been approved as version 1.3. This comes at a time when the IEEE LOM data model will soon be due for an update. Looks like there is some important coordination between the various standardization and specifications bodies over this next year!

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## Service Modeling Language proposed

The big league in the IT industry has recently proposed a new language, called Service Modeling Language (SML) which "adapts and extends XML Schema to represent the elements and interdependencies of IT infrastructure and the resources that consume it. Until now, there has been no standard way of expressing the resources and infrastructure you need when you create a new service or implement a new application or database. ... The proposed standard does not specify the actual tags that would be used for identifying IT resources. Instead, it specifies how XML Schema would be modified to support it. That's similar to the way that web services are described in a WSDL document."

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## Registries: "the Intelligence in the Network"

August 20th: An interesting article from Lorcan Dempsey's blog about the role of registries and the broader role of metadata.

"Interaction between systems and services on the network requires intelligence. Intelligence about what is in the environment (search or resolution targets, for example), about how to interact with found entities (addresses or interface specifications, for example), about who is authorized to do what, and so on."

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## 2006 Middleware Forum and CAMP

The 2006 Middleware Forum and CAMP (Campus Architectural Middleware Planning) were held on 21-23 August 2006 at Macquarie University, Sydney. Both events were sponsored by the Australian Department of Education Science and Training. The purpose of the Middleware Forum was to provide a strategy and policy overview of middleware for the research and higher education sector including both national and international perspectives.

Professor Neil McLean, National Technical Standards Adviser to DEST and a member of the JISC-DEST Collaboration Partnership Board, gave a presentation entitled 'The e-Framework in Action'. He made a particular point that middleware in e-Research is not just about the deployment of Grid technology; any consideration of middleware requirements should take into account the diversity of research and teaching activities at the institutional level.

Presentations can be viewed at <http://www.middleware.edu.au/program-and-presentations>

## Upcoming Events

### IDEA 2006: Integrated Learning Environments -- Melbourne, October 9 - 12

As a follow-up to the very successful IDEA 2004 and IDEA Summer 2005 events, the Australian Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and Multimedia Victoria (MMV) would like to invite you to IDEA 2006, a series of e-Learning and academic research related events to be held at the Flinders Street Campus of Victoria University in Melbourne.

There is growing recognition that Australians need access to quality online educational resources and services to support learning and research. To meet this demand, educational resources and services are increasingly being used beyond the bounds of their original organisations. The IDEA 2006 events will focus on common integration and interoperability solutions that enable these types of integrated e-learning environments.

IDEA 2006 is a series of workshops and forums spread over four days, each catering for slightly different audiences. For event details, see: <http://www.adlaustralia.org/idea2006/>

### AWeSOMe -- Montpellier, October 29 - November 3

The Second International Workshop on Agents, Web Services and Ontologies Merging (AWeSOMe'06) -- in conjunction with OnTheMove Federated Conferences (OTM'06).

The AWeSOMe workshop is an interdisciplinary workshop based on research and applications of various subject areas that contribute to the development of an intelligent service Web.

Emerging ontologies are being used to construct semantically rich service descriptions. Techniques for planning, composing, editing, reasoning about and analysing these descriptions are being investigated and deployed to resolve semantic interoperability between services within scalable, open environments.

Agents and multi-agent systems can benefit from this combination, and can be used for web service discovery, use and composition. In addition, web services and multi-agent systems bear certain similarities, such as a component-like behaviour, that can help to make their development much easier.

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## LAMS Conference 2006: Designing the Future of Learning -- December 6-8

The first international LAMS (Learning Activity Management Systems) conference will focus on designing for the future. Where will Learning Design take us now? How is LAMS shaping up? What are the challenges for individuals and organisations? The conference wants to capture the experience of those who have used LAMS and share some of the lessons learnt in higher education, the K-12 sector, vocational and professional education.

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## Researching and Evaluating PDP and e-Portfolios -- October 9-11

In partnership with the Higher Education Academy, JISC, EPAC and SURF, the Centre for Recording Achievement is now pulling together an international seminar on the theme of researching and evaluating personal development planning (PDP) and e-portfolios for October 2006.

The seminar will be held at The Oxford Belfry, Oxfordshire, UK, on the 9th - 11th October 2006, and it both responds to the identification within the PDP and e-portfolio communities of the key importance of an effective evidence base and provides the start of opportunities for collaboration at international level on key research and evaluation questions.

Further details can be found at:

[http://www.elearning.ac.uk/news\\_folder/pdpconference](http://www.elearning.ac.uk/news_folder/pdpconference)

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