THE PISA DECLARATION
An Open Access Roadmap for Grey Literature

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▪ A l'occasion de la proclamation de la *Déclaration de Pise pour l'élaboration de politiques en faveur des ressources en littérature grise,* l'auteur revient brièvement sur le processus d'élaboration de ce texte innovant et en récapitule les points principaux.

▪ Ter gelegenheid *van de Pisaverklaring voor het uitwerken van een politiek voor grijze literatuur* komt de auteur even terug op het proces dat geleid heeft tot het uitwerken van deze vernieuwende tekst en vat de kernideeën samen.

I'd like to ask you a question. How many towers are there on this earth that do not have the fame of Pisa? Its leaning and scientists and technical engineers have for centuries sought solutions to shore-up and preserve this world heritage. Scientists and technicians since the mid-20th century have also been engaged with yet another phenomenon "how on earth to deal with grey literature"?

In April 2014, information professionals from Europe's finest academic and research centers met in Pisa to address issues dealing with the policy and management of grey literature resources. This meeting resulted in the formulation of the Pisa declaration on grey literature[1] – a 15 point roadmap, which serves as a guide for organizations involved in the production, publication, access and use of grey literature well into this 21st century.

Such an initiative is truly innovative – for it has found a new way to deal with a growing wealth of knowledge across disciplines and fields of industry and government that impact our global information society. What was not possible a couple of decades ago when the 1st International Conference on Grey Literature met in Amsterdam[2] is today manifest.

The Pisa Declaration much like the Budapest, Bethesda, and Berlin Declarations are neither inventions of the mind nor improvements in doing the same things better – no, instead, they offer a different approach in dealing with information and data to meet the market needs and requirements of today.

Until now, the problem was the lack of cooperation and coordination between and among organizations dealing with grey literature. However, the time of going it alone is now ended – the Pisa Declaration marks the close of an era of ad hoc policy and decision making with regard to grey literature resources.

In fact, the term "Declaration" says it - We call for, We endorse, We the international grey literature community, the authors and researchers, the information practitioners and professionals working now for years in this field of library and information science.

If I may take a few moments to recap the main points set out in the Pisa Declaration by addressing them in the five categories they are grouped:

▪ First, the organizational commitment is to open access, to further cooperation and coordination between and among grey literature communities, sharing open data standards.
▪ Second, the commitment to research and education, where recognition and reward is associated with quality grey literature, and where attention is given to good practices in the field.
▪ Third, the commitment to address and safeguard legal issues inherent to grey literature by exploring the various types of licensing agreements now available and by fostering constructive relations with commercial publishers.
▪ Fourth, a commitment to sustainability linked to a financial prerequisite. Identifying funding and grants for special collections and repositories, commitment to long term preservation, and investments in new technologies.
▪ Fifth and final, a firm technical commitment, a guarantee to continued online services and further crosslinking of textual and non-textual content. A commitment - from tackling broken links to facilitating interoperability - regardless of the system or portal in which grey literature and its accompanying data are housed.

Colleagues, it is in this way that the Pisa Declaration can revel in the strengths and opportunities that grey literature offers, while at the same time

exposing the weaknesses and threats facing our community.

No longer are we resigned that grey literature is hard to find, but instead how can we best search and access it. No longer hold in question its worth and value, but instead set out the review process it has undergone. And, no longer hesitate as to whether it is published or not, but instead cite and reference grey literature – make it openly public – isn't that what published means?

As a representative of GreyNet – one of the more than 100 signatories to this document – I could not endorse the Pisa Declaration, if our own organization were not prepared to implement the points set out in it.

Without going into minute detail:
Regarding the organizational commitment, a committee has recently been established to further coordinate GreyNet's collections in the OpenGrey Repository, the DANS Data Archive, and the recently launched *GreyGuide Repository*.

As to the technical commitment - *certainly the most ambitious at the moment* - GreyNet has reached agreement with the National Research Center in Pisa, the service provider for the *GreyGuide Repository*. GreyNet collections and content that are as yet only accessible either via its website or allied conference site will now migrate to the *GreyGuide Repository*. In this way, the *GreyGuide* will function as GreyNet's web access portal. This will allow for combined search, browse, and retrieval capability - where standardized metadata and full-text can be online harvested.

This new approach in channeling GreyNet's diverse web-based content will no doubt meet the needs and requirements of today's international grey literature community.

Now, alongside good practices in the *GreyGuide*, GreyNet's in-house collections on persons and organizations in the field of grey literature, on projects and conference proposals, as well as a number of GreyNet's own serial publications will become accessible via the *GreyGuide*.

Colleagues, you too can provide a significant contribution to this initiative![3], <http://greyguide.isti.cnr.it/pisadecla/iscrivi.php>

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Notes

1   *Pisa Declaration on Policy Development for Grey Literature Resources* [on line]. <http://greyguiderep.isti.cnr.it/Pisadeclapdf/Pisa-Declaration-May-2014.pdf> (consulted on 25 May 2015)

2   First International Conference on Grey Literature. RAI Congress Centre Amsterdam (Netherlands). 13-15 December 1993.

3   GreyGuide. *Endorse: Pisa Declaration* [on line]. <http://greyguiderep.isti.cnr.it/pisadecla/iscrivi.php> (consulted on 25 May 2015)