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## Reporting back: Beyond the PDF 2

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## Section 7: Reporting back

Beyond the PDF2

Daphne van Weijen & Mike Taylor

In a recent issue of [Research Trends](#), we featured a piece by Anita de Waard and Maryann Martone on [FORCE11](#), an international, multidisciplinary group trying to shape the future of Scholarly Communication. In the [piece](#), De Waard and Martone described some of the key proposals from the [FORCE11 Manifesto](#):

- (a) Defining new publishable objects;
- (b) Collating innovative publishing tools;
- (c) Creating access to research data online;
- (d) Collectively developing new business models for scholarly publication;
- (e) Exploring new metrics of impact.

Since its formation in 2011, the group has worked towards achieving these aims, both online and offline. The latest offline activity was the organization of the [Beyond the PDF2 Conference](#) (#btpdf2) in March. Around 200 participants gathered for two days in Amsterdam to listen to presentations on topics related to the Manifesto and to discuss ways to keep moving forward. Thanks to the live stream of the event and an onsite twitter wall, which provided a live feed of all tweets containing the hash tag #btpdf2, the discussion was also picked up online, resulting in nearly 3700 tweets from 678 different accounts (see the archive (1), or the Storify (2)). The event clearly got people's tongues wagging and got them tweeting, but who were the participants, what were the main topics of discussion, and, most importantly, what's next?

### Participants

The conference drew around 200 participants from across the research continuum, including librarians, researchers, publishers, technical developers, and policy makers. They came from many different fields, including the Humanities, Social and Life Sciences, although the biomedical fields were somewhat overrepresented (3).

### Conference Content

The conference program clearly reflected FORCE11's main aims, providing a great mix of presentations, flash talks, discussion sessions, and break-out sessions related to innovative publishing & communication tools, sharing research data, new business models for scholarly publishing, defining publishable objects and exploring new metrics for measuring impact (see [Figure 1](#)).

Day one of the conference had 'State of the Art' as its central theme. The day started with an excellent keynote by Kathleen Fitzpatrick (Director of Scholarly Communication, Modern Language Association), who provided input from a humanities perspective. Her presentation, entitled '[Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy](#)', focused on the fact that academics need to learn to see the benefits of new potential forms of scholarly communication, instead of sticking with outlets they're familiar with, such as books and print journals. The other presentations and sessions focused on new models of content creation & dissemination, on business cases and the day was rounded off with a 'Demos & Dinner' session.



**Figure 1:** Wordle based on the content of 4 different discussions of the BTPDF2 conference found online (3, 4, 5 & 6).

The second day's theme was 'Where are we going?' and started with another keynote. Carol Tenopir (Chancellor's Professor at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville) gave another excellent presentation from a humanities perspective, entitled '[Shaping the Future of Scholarly Communication](#)'. Tenopir's talk generated a lot of interest and quotes on Twitter related to her research on academics' reading behavior.

The other presentations and sessions that day focused mainly on tools, data access and sharing, and included sessions entitled '[Making it Happen](#)' (with lots of 3-5 minute flash talks on topics such as ORCID and PDF Metadata) and '[New models of Evaluation for Research & Researchers](#)'. This last session included a panel with different roles (publisher, researcher, dean, and funding body representative), who held a dynamic discussion/live action role play, well led by Carol Goble, on who should be the first to lead the change. The day ended with a '[Visions for the Future](#)' session.

Other themes that resonated with us as attendees included:

- The '[eScholarship in Context](#)' session, hosted by Laura Czerniewicz and Michelle Willmers, focused in part on internationalism. Michelle Willmers

provided input from an African perspective and spoke of the challenges faced by the Scholarly Communication in Africa Program.

- Traditional forms of publication take too long to get the content out there. One of the main problems involved is peer-review delays. Alternatives offered included tools for facilitating peer-review, and Carol Goble's suggestion: Don't publish, release!
- We need standards for publication, data-sharing, citations etc. But according to NISO's Executive Director, Todd Carpenter, the problem is that: "Standards are like toothbrushes, everybody has one, but no one wants to use someone else's" (7).
- In a discussion on data sharing and data reuse, Carol Goble suggested that: "there is no reproducible science". In order to help science move forward, we need to develop and implement tools to host datasets online so others can re-use them.

#### So now what?

So, you may wonder, now what? Was the meeting a success? Well, based on the response on Twitter (#btpdf2), the number of summaries of the event that appeared online shortly afterwards, and the soldiers of the Scholarly Revolution (#scholrev) we'd say yes, it was a great success. But now it's up to everyone who attended to help support the FORCE11 movement and keep the ball rolling in the right direction...

#### Links:

1. Twitter archive for #btpdf2: <http://glimmer.rstudio.com/bodong/btpdf/>
  2. Storify for #btpdf2: <http://storify.com/mcdawg/beyond-the-pdf-2>
- See also: [http://figshare.com/blog/Beyond\\_The\\_PDF\\_2\\_-\\_Resources\\_and\\_Highlights/76](http://figshare.com/blog/Beyond_The_PDF_2_-_Resources_and_Highlights/76)
3. Paul Groth's blog: <http://thinklinks.wordpress.com/2013/03/21/beyond-the-pdf-2-quick-recap/>
  4. Van Korlaar, I, Riese, C, (2013) "Beyond the PDF2 (#btpdf2) challenges status quo of #ScholarlyCommunication", <http://elsevierconnect.com/beyond-the-pdf2-btpdf2-challenges-status-quo-of-scholarlycommunication/>
  5. Lukas Koster's blog post on the conference, March 22 2013: <http://commonplace.net/2013/03/beyond-the-library/>
  6. Peter Brantley's Conference Report: <http://publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/libraries/article/56519-conference-report-beyond-pdf-2.html>
  7. Source: Tweet by @Tac\_Niso.