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To: "Dr. Baruch Fischhoff - Chair, National Academy Committee on Improving Intelligence" <baruch@cmu.edu>, "Dr. Craig Calhoun" <Calhoun@ssrc.org>, "Dr. Kenneth Prewitt - Chair, Committee on Social Science Evidence for Use" <kp2058@columbia.edu>, "Dr. Michael Goodchild - Chair, NSF-SBE Advisory Committee" <good@geog.ucsb.edu>

From: Lloyd Etheredge <lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net>

Subject: 143. Good ideas from the Wolfram Data Summit; new NSF \$5,000/year Global Trends Data grants? DALLAS

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues (and Dr. Prewitt and Dr. Goodchild):

This is the first of several messages about exciting ideas, that you might be able to use, via last week's (www.wolframdatasummit.org) high-level meeting in Washington of leading thinkers re data/learning and organizers of the world's largest curated/computable databases:

The Q4 "Dallas" (Codename) launch

Microsoft and Wolfram Alpha et al. will launch, in Q4 of this year, the new DALLAS initiative to do, for all of the other world's computable data systems, what iTunes has done for music. Many of the largest computable data systems will be available online, at a single marketplace/portal, with a new generation of integration and analysis tools that also will get underway. An important innovation is that using and integrating data from databases that charge for access (e.g. Lexis Nexis media databases) can be handled quickly and straightforwardly via the site.

This represents a breakthrough in Open Access systems for behavioral sciences research on global trends. If the US intelligence community wants access to all of the electoral + polling data in the world, for example, an efficient solution might be the rapid growth of "Dallas" capabilities in this fields.

The NSF \$5,000 Global Trends Data Grant Experiment

For example, a good idea might be to suggest a 5-year experiment in which a simple application by any researcher can acquire a \$5,000/year NSF award for the acquisition of data. This funds could support access and use of the new Dallas system and be a catalyst to accelerate data mining/integration and analysis about global trends.

The funds also could be pooled so that a group of ten researchers interested in India

could, for example, organize and underwrite new national probability samples in India to answer key questions or support the development of new content analysis tools, via contract, with one of the 3,000+ developers already signed-up to develop new analytic tools [or from other new startup companies].

The new NSF Global Trends Data Grants can only be used for data that must - if new data - eventually be put into the public domain (in one of the standard public formats for these kinds of data); or for research that is in the public domain.

The funds could not be used to pay for salaries, research assistants, publications or (beyond minimal administrative charges) siphoned for university overhead. They have to support the development and use of new data systems for understanding global trends and issues. The new Dallas marketplace could be an important, innovative, "public goods" tool to provide data, more quickly and efficiently, for the highest research priorities of US behavioral scientists interested in global trends and issues.

This could unleash a new world of creativity and fast discovery. I'd suggest a generic grant from the DNI to NSF for a fast startup, 5-year experiment: Spend \$2 million+/year for each of the next five years and then see if we are happy with the results and cost-effectiveness of what is being catalyzed. [If this is too complicated, perhaps SSRC or a willing research university could receive the funds and administer the experiment?] [Would \$2 million/year be enough?]

Redefining "National Intelligence"

The Open Source strategy for rapid learning is similar to the British government's "national" intelligence strategy which uses funding for the BBC news services (from reports at the conference, their data systems are astonishing), the Economist, and the Economist intelligence units, etc. The British government does not think of "national intelligence" coming only from secret reports by MI-5 but as truly a national characteristic, across institutions.

I am attaching a brief description of DALLAS. Notably, it also includes a lot of text data - although perhaps not Google News, including Lexis-Nexis media (cited above), AP news databases, etc. Hopeful, perhaps, re opportunities for fast growth of global content analysis tools.

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WPC: Microsoft information marketplace Dallas coming in Q4

Posted by Sharon Pian Chan

WASHINGTON -- The Dallas information marketplace, which Microsoft said Monday will go live in the fourth quarter, will make available public and private information such as public health statistics and crime data.

Like iTunes, Dallas is an Internet marketplace, but for information instead of music.

Software developers can build apps based on the databases, and Microsoft is integrating the information databases into software such as Excel, SharePoint, Bing Maps, PowerPivot and Visual Studio, will remain free on Dallas.

Private companies have also made data available for software makers to build on, such as the Associated Press' news database, the National Geographic's database of hiking trails, the Lexis Nexis media database and the Wolfram Alpha search database. Information providers can choose to syndicate and charge for use of the information.

More than 3,000 developers have set up accounts on Dallas to build applications that can run on the iPhone, iPad, Silverlight on the PC or on the Web. Apps that use the information will be listed in the Dallas marketplace as well.

"As a developer, you [will] have all of this reach," said Moe Khosravy, group manager of Dallas. . . .

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