Keynote Address: Annotations as a means for enhancing collaboration in eScience infrastructures

Maristella Agosti,

University of Padua, Italy

Abstract

Digital Libraries have moved from being monolithic systems to become component and service-based systems, where configurable and deployable services can be plugged together and re-used in order to create a new type of information infrastructures that can be used by different types of users and to face different types of user requirements. Information infrastructures of this sort are designed to be user-centred, and to support content management tasks together with tasks devoted to communication and cooperation. Therefore, an information infrastructure becomes a common vehicle by which every user can access, discuss, evaluate, and enhance information of all forms.

The key components of this sort of information infrastructures are services that foster the cooperation among users and the integration of heterogeneous information resources. A service of this kind is an annotation service that can provide users or groups of users with the possibility of adding personal content on information resources managed by the infrastructure.

Digital annotations allow users to naturally merge and link personal contents with the information resources provided by an information infrastructure and to create new relationships among existing contents, by means of links that connect annotations together and with existing content.

When information infrastructures are conceived to enhance collaboration in eScience they have to support advanced annotations and collaboration functions in order to constitute a place where storing and accessing scientific results and where users can enrich the managed information with their own contents. Design elements of an information infrastructure devoted to evaluation are going to be presented as a sort of use case of an eScience infrastructure.