

ESTA Newsletter I
[18-10-2018]

Dear all,

At our very fruitful kick-off workshop in Amsterdam we came to several important pointers for the way forward. In this email we provide an update and list the conclusion of the workshop. We are looking forward to an exciting continuation of our collaboration.

Deposit existing datasets

The IISH-supported repository for datasets is now open for the durable storage of datasets on slave trade, slavery and related topics in the wider Indian Ocean, Indonesian Archipelago and (maritime) Asian worlds. It can be found here:

<https://datasets.socialhistory.org/dataverse/iomastd>.

To deposit datasets that contribute to the database-initiative you can submit and manage the data yourself through a simple procedure, or you can send your dataset to us and we will deposit the data for you. To submit and manage your data on dataverse, choose 'Sign Up' at <https://datasets.socialhistory.org/> and create an account. You will then be assigned the role of 'Contributor' by the administrators of the dataverse. After this, you can log in and go to our collective dataverse (<https://datasets.socialhistory.org/dataverse/iomastd>). Choose the button to 'Add Data'. Now you can add your dataset, and provide information on the author, short description and title (please indicate the topic, scope and period in the title). Finally, set the sharing settings of your dataset – it is possible to restrict access to the public, to fully open the data, or to select an 'upon request'-option.

We are also happy to help you at every stage. Please don't hesitate, just contact us!

For every dataset, it is important to provide clear documentation that explains the underlying sources, the procedures that have led to the creation of the database, and information on the content and conventions of every variable. (See for example the documentation attached). Please add/submit this documentation at a later stage if this requires too much work now.

Recover research data

Research data or datasets of colleagues who are no longer active are important to recover and preserve. The IISH offers to secure and curate the data or collections. At the workshop, we discussed that it would be good to reach out through our network and contacts to explore if there are collections of research data or datasets of colleagues who have retired, passed away or are in other ways no longer active. Try to contact those currently responsible or in possession of the collections, or provide their names and contact information to us, in order to make sure the data can be secured. Originals or digital copies of the data or collections can be sent to the IISH. Depending on the state of the material,

there is also some budget to process data relevant for the initiative. Again, don't hesitate to contact us.

Project

We will set up an initial project page for our collaborative database-initiative as soon as possible (we have sent in the text and are waiting for it to be put up). As requested at the workshop, this project page will provide a list of participants to the initiative, including amongst others everyone who attended the workshop (let us know if you think otherwise). Please let us know if you have thoughts for additions to the information on the website once it is up (information on events, or received grants; links to personal webpages; etc). As we are in the starting phase of the initiative, there will be space to expand the network, discuss its name, structure and possible funding applications. Our next meeting will be combined with the Lyon-conference.

The first steps decided upon during the workshop were to start with a pilot that will prioritize the cluster of datasets on the Southwestern Indian Ocean slave trade voyages, and if possible will additionally test the cluster of datasets with slave trade voyages derived from VOC-sources. To initiate the pilot, it is important to have the respective data involved deposited in the collaborative dataverse. The aim of the pilot is i) to provide a provisional proposal for the data structure, ii) to cross-check and verify the collected data for the SW-IOW (and VOC) cluster, iii) to start processing this into the integrated data structure. At Lyon we can discuss the intermediate results of the pilot and the provisional proposal for the data structure.

Wider network

Every scholar or student interested in contributing to the initiative and/or providing data contributions is more than welcome. We will set up an email-list of participants, contributors and interested colleagues. So if you meet colleagues or students who are interested to contribute or participate, please let them contact us. The same applies to the scouting and discussing of sources and methods – all additional information will be added to the current overview of sources and datasets (see paper Merve Tosun) – and to ideas on collaborative funding of data processing and research.

Warm regards,

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For questions or suggestions with regard to the project, data or sources, please contact Matthias van Rossum (mvr@iisg.nl) or Merve Tosun (merve.tosun@iisg.nl).