

International Society for Knowledge Organization (ISKO)

# **Scientific and Technical Advisory Council (STAC)**

Observing knowledge organization scholarship and applications

## **Annual Report 2023/2024. Work plan for 2024/2025**

ISKO Annual Meeting 2024-07-22

### **Dagobert Soergel, chair**

Professor Emeritus,  
Information Studies,  
University of Maryland

For

**Jonathan Furner, chair**, 2023-09 - 2024-06

Professor, Information Studies, UCLA

### **Aida Slavic, vice-chair**

Editor-in-chief,  
Universal Decimal Classification  
UDC Consortium, The Hague

Adjunct Associate Professor  
Dept. of Information &  
Communication. Sciences  
University of Zagreb

<https://www.isko.org/stac/>

# Call for participation in STAC work

**STAC advises the ISKO membership and the ISKO Board of Directors on ongoing developments in KO research and technology and on areas where more research and development is needed.**

**All are welcome, encouraged, and very much needed to participate in ways put forth in this report**

**These slides have more depth than a five-minute presentation allows. They were sent to ISKO members and will be posted on the STAC website.**

**<https://www.isko.org/stac/>**

# Call for participation in STAC work

STAC's mission requires more scholarly work than STAC alone can do.

STAC is looking to work with scholars and practitioners whose professional work addresses problems that fall in STAC's mission.

**STAC can help scholars publish and get grants and help practitioners apply knowledge organization ideas.**

**STAC can provide interesting topics for students to work on and learn:** course projects and individual courses. Student work can help STAC and get students credit, help them network, and enrich their CV

**Anyone can join STAC working groups** or informally collaborate. Email <ds@dsoergel.com> or <aida.slavic@udcc.org>

As you contemplate the topics in the STAC mission

**Ask not how you can help STAC, ask how STAC can help you.**

# STAC's Mission

## From the STAC Terms of Reference

Keep under constant review the status and evolution of the Knowledge Organization field, its scholarship and applications, and to advise the Board of Directors and the membership on how these can best be reflected in the Society's activities and products.

# STAC's broad cross-disciplinary scope

## From the STAC Terms of Reference

- 2 In line with ISKO's mission (<https://www.isko.org/about.html>), the Council is concerned with the scholarship, theory, principles, and applications of the pervasive subject of Knowledge Organization**
- **as dealt with by, among others,**
    - Information Studies (including knowledge organization systems in all domains),
    - Philosophy,
    - History,
    - the Ontology community,
    - Psychology and Cognitive Science, Linguistics,
    - Computer Science (Data Modeling, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning),
    - Taxonomies in the Sciences and the Humanities (Chemistry, Biology, Medicine, Literary Genres, Museum Objects, etc.) and
    - all kinds of data schemas and formats, including those used on the Web.

# From the STAC Terms of Reference

- **applied in many contexts, including**
  - **libraries**, bibliographic information systems and related services, publishing, the Web, archives, museums,
  - **cultural heritage** preservation and access across domains and institutional contexts;
  - **(digital) humanities**, natural language understanding systems (including information extraction), education, instructional design;
  - **process modelling** (including business processes, production processes, etc.) and **story grammars**;
  - **information systems**: enterprise information systems, government information systems, financial information systems, legal information systems, health information systems, etc.

# From the STAC Terms of Reference

This broad area of concern includes three cross-cutting issues of particular note:

- The **cultural, social, political, and economical impact** of Knowledge Organization and, reciprocally, the impact of thinking and developments in the social, political, and economical sphere on Knowledge Organization.
- The **technology** that supports the development of Knowledge Organization Systems and the application of Knowledge Organization.
- The preservation, integration, transfer, and advancement of the **corpus of knowledge of the subject of Knowledge Organization**.

# Organization of STAC

Membership committee puts out wide calls for new members.  
Broaden scope by looking beyond present ISKO membership.

More detail on membership and officers in slides at the end.



# STAC Activities Overview

## Working groups

**Three active STAC working groups** and more in formation looking for additional members from ISKO and beyond. Email the working group chair or the STAC chair if you are interested or know someone who might be interested.

**STAC working groups will produce publications authored by members** with the benefit of review by the entire STAC.

## ISKO conferences

Oversee the programmatic organization of the ISKO biennial conference in collaboration with the local host chapter (as specified in the ISKO conference manual) and be available for advising ISKO chapters on their conference programs.

## ISKO publications

Consider the design of ISKO publications as a unified system with a common intellectual foundation — the journal *Knowledge Organization* (KO), the *ISKO Encyclopedia of Knowledge Organization* (IEKO), ISKO conferences, the *ISKO Database KO Literature*, and the ISKO website. Communicate with and advise the editors and editorial boards especially with respect to thematic focus and evaluation criteria for contributions. Assist in the operation of the publications, especially by reviewing submissions.

# STAC working groups

# Business rules for working groups

## Next steps

Need to develop.

Cover membership, output, meeting requirements, reporting to STAC

Establish ad-hoc committee to do this.

# Education in Knowledge Organization across disciplines

Initial focus on collecting and unifying competencies and KO concepts students should learn for a range of professions and specializations, taking a global view.

Outgoing chair Marcia Zeng <mzeng@kent.edu> prepared an excellent plan for this work (pptx available)

## Next steps

**Needs a new chair** and a group of active members to work on this. But too much work for a group of volunteers,

**Developing a cross-disciplinary international KO competency knowledge base may well be fundable by IMLS or NSF**, especially if it involves international collaboration. **Needs someone to spearhead** and submit a grant proposal through their institution with much support from the group.

Collaborate with IFLA WG on training for subject access.

# Annual cross-disciplinary Review of Knowledge Organization (ARKO)

**Goal: Publish an *Annual Review* of the global literature in the field of *Knowledge Organization*, broadly defined (**

The review will consist of

- sections on KO concepts as they are treated in the literatures of several disciplines
- sections focusing on specific national/regional literatures written by local experts

The review will be edited and compiled by an international board of co-editors working with two co-editors-in-chief. It will be submitted

- to *Knowledge Organization* for publication in English
- to a journal TBD for publication in Mandarin

## **Co-editors-in-chief:**

Jonathan Furner (University of California, Los Angeles) <jfurner@ucla.edu>

Junzhi Jia (Renmin University of China, Beijing) <junzhij@163.com>

## **Possibly an associated project: Knowledge Organization Pathfinder**

Dagobert Soergel <ds@dsoergel.com>

Global team of students working under faculty supervision for academic credit.

# Annual Review of Knowledge Organization 2

- Content and process refined in working group discussions
- Regional editors appointed to ensure global coverage

## Next steps

Publish 2023 Review in English (KO Journal) and Mandarin in late 2024.

Consider other publication venues, such as the *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology* (now published as a section in JASIST)

Consider parallel publication (possibly of longer versions) in the SKO Encyclopedia of Knowledge Organization (IEKO)

# Annual Review of Knowledge Organization 3

**Possibly an associated project: Knowledge Organization Pathfinder**

Dagobert Soergel <ds@dsoergel.com>

## **Next steps**

The general idea is to have a global team of students working on sections of the pathfinder under faculty supervision for academic credit.

Related to the ISKO bibliographic database and IKEO.

Needs a second coordinator

# Metadata structure, function, and uses

Jian Qin <jqin@syr.edu>

## with an active subgroup working on

*Guidelines for the effective use of subject metadata in discovery systems*

- Co-chairs David Haynes<D.Haynes@napier.ac.uk>, Claudio Gnoli <claudio.gnoli@unipv.it>
- Focus groups conducted with vendors;
- Journal article submitted to *KO*; ISKO-UK conference paper

## Next steps

Activate the larger working group

Needs members

Produce a definition of scope

One idea to include: Explore connections between metadata, ontologies, knowledge representation, reasoning



# Suggested: Joint working group with DARIAH-EU

J

## Next steps

- DARIAH = Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts & Humanities: “the pan-European infrastructure for A&H scholars”; an ERIC (European Research Infrastructure) Consortium
- STAC Contacts: Koraljka Golub, Widad Mustafa El-Hadi, Douglas Tudhope

# Knowledge Organization and Social Justice

## Next steps

There is some interest in establishing this

## Contacts

Widad Mustafa El Hadi <widad.mustafa@univ-lille.fr>

Natalia Bolfarini Tognoli <nataliatognoli@id.uff.br>

# More ideas for working group topics

If interested in any, email [ds@dsoergel.com](mailto:ds@dsoergel.com) and [aida.slavic@udcc.org](mailto:aida.slavic@udcc.org)

- **KO support for the movement for social justice** <nataliatognoli@id.uff.br>
- **Knowledge Organization for learning**
- **KO support for sustainability**
- **KO support for crisis management**
- **KO support for dealing with misinformation on social media**
- **KO support for information and education on healthy behavior**
- **KO support for team science, especially interdisciplinary teams**
- **Semantic technologies in publishing, sharing, and accessing KOS**
- **Terminology shifts in KOS and management of semantic shift over-time**
- **KOS representation standards and KOS ontologies**
- **KO and subject access in information retrieval**
- **Information behaviour in relation to KO**
- **KOS visualization/GUI**

# ISKO conferences

# ISKO 2024, Wuhan, China, March 20-22, 2024. Report

- Proceedings: <https://www.nomos-elibrary.de/10.5771/9783987400476/knowledge-organization-for-resilience-in-times-of-crisis-challenges-and-opportunities?hitid=01&search-click>
- Well-organized schedule and conceptualized. Important for the Society as there were many Chinese students and experts that otherwise don't participate.
- Hybrid format—some time zone issues, but good attendance overall.
- Besides KO, there are three other journals that will publish the output (panels, papers, etc.) from the conference.
- Conference exhibited nice balance of theory, methods, and applied/practical applications. How can we broaden outreach to include voices that are outside the established KO members, but also to promote KO. Perhaps we can invite keynotes from people “outside” of our members to attract more constituents.

# ISKO 2026

## **STAC had an initial discussion on themes and topics. Ideas that emerged**

- KO and AI; there is strong interest in AI. Ontologies and linguistics and KO.
- Ethics and KO
- A broad subject so that people not in AI can find inroads into the gathering. Perhaps highlight historical work in some way.
- The conference should always solicit papers in all areas, not only the theme.
- Avenues for focus on application and practice to augment theoretical discussions.
- KO in the medical domain. Medical KO systems (ontologies, thesauri, etc.)  
Applying these structures in complex technical environments.  
AI in the medical domain (diagnosis, recommending therapies.).  
Organize workshops with the Medical Library Association and others.

### **Next steps**

Reconstitute the conference committee for ISKO 2026 with strong representation from the host. Contact Thiago Barros <sean.vogel@gmail.com>

Conduct a survey to collect ideas from the ISKO membership and others.

Shape the call for papers.

# ISKO Publications

# ISKO Publications in General

## **Next steps**

STAC needs to review all publications

- Make sure coverage reflects the broad scope of KO.
- Review content organization is aligned across publications.
- Review ways in which content could be shared for mutual enrichment of publications.
- Consider ways to establish useful hyperlinks between publications.
- Consider all ISKO publications as one integrated system.

**This is a long-term task**

Specifics on the KO Journal and the Database of KO Literature on the following slides



# The Journal Knowledge Organization

STAC's role so far just some reviewing of submissions by individual STAC members

## Next steps

- STAC's Terms of Reference specify a bigger role in the managing of the journal. Stronger collaboration between STAC and the KO journal is necessary.
- Review thematic focus, editorial guidelines, and evaluation criteria - long term.
- More participation of STAC members in reviewing submissions to KO
- Propose / co-edit special issues of the journal, need some for 2025. A role for STAC working groups. Use STAC as a venue where authors interested in contributing to a special issue could come together in an ad-hoc working group to create a more cohesive special issue where papers closely relate to one another through conversation. **Ideas for special issues:**
  - KO in a discipline (linguistics, philosophy of science, etc.),
  - Role of KO in AI,
  - KO and social justice
  - KO in specific regions or countries.
- Review template for special issued proposals developed by N. Tognoli

# The Journal Knowledge Organization and the *Information Matters* Platform

## Next steps

Marcia Zheng suggested an excellent way to expose a broader audience to important concepts and ideas in KO and to promote the KO journal:

Encourage authors to submit summaries ("Idea Briefs") of papers in KO to this platform run by ASIST: <https://informationmatters.org>

We need to

- Develop a standard template with a section on the practical and theoretical importance, implications, and applications of the paper.
- Encourage authors to submit an Idea Brief with the paper to KO so that it could be improved during the reviewing process.
- Idea Briefs should be written for a general audience but also entice specialists to go to the full paper.
- Offer assistance from STAC in writing idea briefs

# Database of Knowledge Organization Literature

Current chair Inkyung Choi

There were initial discussions in STAC

## **Next steps**

- Goal: Make recommendations to the ISKO Board of Directors on the scope of this database, implementation choices, and resources required.
- Discuss with Inkyung Choi in a STAC meeting and possibly form an ad-hoc taskforce to elaborate specifics

**Thank you**

**Questions**

**<https://www.isko.org/stac/>**

# STAC membership 2023 to 2025. View1

- **27 members of maximally 30. Eleven members continuing**
- **Eleven members re-elected for a four-year term 2023 - 2027**  
Wieslaw Babik, Thiago Barros, Jonathan Furner, Claudio Gnoli, Agnes Hajdu-Barat, Gercina Angela de Lima, Daniel Martinez-Avila, Widad Mustafa el-Hadi, Rosa San Segundo, Aida Slavic, Maja Zumer
- **Five new members elected for a four-year term 2023 - 2027**  
**Deborah Lee**, "Lecturer in Library and Information Studies, Dept. Info. Studies, University College London  
**Catalina Naumis Peña**, Professor and Tutor, Postgraduate Program in Library Science and Info. Studies, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).  
**Sayed Mahdi Taheri**, Associate Professor and Head of Central Library and Documentation Center, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran  
**Xiaoguang Wang**, Associate Dean and Professor, School of Information Management, Wuhan University, Wuhan, Hubei, People's Republic of China  
**Yejun Wu**, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science, Louisiana State University (LSU), Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

Appointments are voted on by STAC, considering diversity of expertise and representation across ISKO chapters, and confirmed by the ISKO Board of Directors

# ISKO STAC membership 2023 to 2025. View 2

Membership elections 2023. STAC voted 06-30, Board of Directors approved 07-05

## Continuing members

### [Term ending]

Koraljka Golub

Birger Hjørland[ex officio]

Junzhi Jia

Robert Montoya

Jian Qin

Pauline Rafferty

Dagobert Soergel

Natália Bolfarini Tognoli [ex officio]

Douglas Tudhope

Jonathan Ward

Marcia Lei Zeng

## Existing members re-elected to a new term ending July 2027

Wieslaw Babik

Thiago Barros

Jonathan Furner

Claudio Gnoli

Agnes Hajdu-Barat

Gercina Angela de Lima

Daniel Martinez-Avila

Widad Mustafa el-Hadi

Rosa San Segundo

Aida Slavic

Maja Zumer

## New members elected to a term ending July 2027

Deborah Lee

Catalina Naumis Peña

Sayed Mahdi Taheri

Xiaoguang Wang

Yejun Wu

**Next membership election June 2025**

# ISKO STAC Officers 2023/24 to 2024/25

In short: 2023-08 Jonathan Furner elected chair, Aida Slavic Vice-chair for terms ending 2025-07

2024-06-14 Jonathan Furner resigned as chair

2024-07-19 Dagobert Soergel elected as chair to fill the remaining term

After the ISKO Annual [Business] Meeting on 2023-07-10 the Council with its new members proceeded to elect STAC officers.

2023-07-30 Call for nominations, 2023-08-11 nominations due

2023-08-18 Nominees acceptance and position statements due

2023-08-21 Online ballot posted, 2023-08-28 Vote closed

Only one candidate for each office, both elected for two-year terms ending 2025-07.

**Chair: Jonathan Furner Vice-chair Aida Slavic**

2024-06-14 Jonathan Furner resigned as chair for personal reasons.

A special election to elect a chair to fill the second year of Jonathan's term was conducted. Only one nomination was received.

2024-07-19 Dagobert Soergel was elected as chair to fill in until 2025-07

Next election of officers: after the ISKO Annual [Business] Meeting 2025-07.

# ISKO STAC Meetings 2023/24

Meetings are held online, currently using Zoom

STAC met 3 times

December 11, 2023

February 12, 2024

April 15, 2024

The annual report 2023 - 2024 draws on the meeting minutes and email exchanges, among other sources.