



Foreword

APPLICATIONS OF GREY LITERATURE FOR SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

The title of GL2020 Conference, “Applications of Grey Literature for Science and Society,” draws the attention of scientists, experts, citizens, and policymakers to the principal capacity of grey literature: its implementation for the benefit not only of a single community of practice but for the society as a community of people.

Grey Literature embraces all sectors of government, academics, business, and industry. Its long-standing tradition has collected a mosaic of different documentary types: from scientific papers to a broad range of technical or administrative materials produced by public or private institutions, associations, industries, and foundations at the local, national, or international level.

In the age of Open Science, Grey Literature becomes crucial in expanding the boundaries of knowledge and make it accessible to the general public. Indeed, it is inclusive of a wide choice of documentary materials that are not always easily accessible. Thus, it contributes to discovering and developing a variety of primary interest topics for the citizenry (e.g., environmental protection, health, and justice) and highlights urgent social needs and priorities.

In this view, this edition of the GL conference represented a significant opportunity to gather experts in the developments of Grey Literature and stakeholders of different areas of interest. It emerges in the titles of the three main conference sessions: “Areas of study with applications to Grey Literature”, “The influence of Grey Literature on Open Access”, and “New developments in the field of Grey Literature”, which followed the Panel Session organized by FAO representatives and dedicated to the employment of GL in crucial areas such as agriculture and fishery.

This perspective has been somehow favored by the actual circumstances, which forced us to organize this year’s appointment remotely. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we had to move the meeting online and learn how to make it successful despite the organizational challenges we had to face. Nevertheless, we tried to take vantage of a complicated situation and turn it into an opportunity to enlarge the GL community and reach people from all over the world. Based on the number of registrants and those who joined online, we may reasonably believe that we played a successful strategy. Participants logged on from Japan and California, from Africa as well as from Northern Europe and China.

The twenty-second edition of the GL conference should represent an innovation: after twenty-one successful years with GreyNet, its organization passed to the Italian National Research Council (CNR), seeing the cooperation between CNR Central Library “G. Marconi” and CNR-ISTI. We accepted gladly and concentrated our efforts to allow the organization to work in full swing. Thus, we thank Dominic Farace and GreyNet for the opportunity: it has been a pleasure for us to give a substantial contribution to the growth of the GL community. We also express our gratitude to the conference authors for their involvement and cooperation in making this edition a success. Last but not least, we thank all participants who joined the conference for their interest in GL2020.

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FEBRUARY 2021