[**ETD 2016 "Data and Dissertations"**](http://etd2016.sciencesconf.org/)

19th International Symposium on Electronic Theses and Dissertations

*11-13 July 2016 Lille (France)*

**Welcome Address by Pr Ilse Depraetere, Vice-President in charge of Scientific Research of the University of Lille, Social Sciences and Humanities**

Welcome to ETD2016, the 19th International Conference on Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

The University of Lille is pleased to host the conference this year on its Social Sciences and Humanities Campus. The Northern part of France has always been at the crossroads of history, in the heart of Europe, a melting pot for people from many different countries. Lille is renowned for its hospitality, and the University of Lille is one of the most international universities in France, with many partnerships all around the world.

NDLTD, the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations was established in 1996 at Virginia Tech in the United States. In 1998 interested institutions began meeting annually for what would become a series of symposia on electronic theses and dissertations sponsored by NDLTD and designed to help universities initiate ETD projects.

The first symposium was held at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, and since then, the gatherings have taken place at universities in North America, Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe, with the first European venue being Humboldt University in Berlin, in 2003. The last conferences have been at Cape Town, Lima, Hong Kong, Leicester and New Delhi.

This year, ETD comes for the first time to France. France launched a national infrastructure for electronic dissertations ten years ago, with a national preservation policy, open repositories and a national portal for PhD dissertation. At the University of Lille, the deposit of electronic dissertations became mandatory in 2012. Also, we are engaged in open access and research data management.

As the former events of the series, ETD2016 will again provide delegates the unique opportunity to learn from each other, discuss new projects and initiatives, share experiences and good practices from around the world, and provide perspectives for further research and development.

The special theme of the conference is "Data and Dissertations", because of the growing importance of research data management for the scientific work. We started to train our own PhD students in research data management since last year and we are looking forward to discuss our experiences and projects with you.

We are honoured with the presence of Ron Dekker, Director of Institutes at the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research and project leader Open Access in during the Dutch EU Presidency, in behalf of the Dutch Government. Welcome to Lille!

We are also honoured with the presence of Laurent Romary, Director of the European Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities, Directeur de Recherche at the French National Institute for computer science and applied mathematics and associated scientist at the Academy of Sciences in Berlin, Germany. Bienvenue à Lille!

I am particularly pleased to welcome the Board of Directors of NDLTD who have honoured us by choosing Lille for this year’s conference and who helped us to prepare the event. Thank you to all of you!

I would like express my hearty greetings and thanks to all academic librarians, scientists and students who have found the way to Lille. I know that many of you have travelled from quite a distance and I'd like to acknowledge the participants from India, Taiwan and Thailand, from Kenya, Zimbabwe, Cameron and Senegal, and from Brazil, who have made this long trip to participate in our conference. Some of you joined the conference series for the first time. Welcome!

The objective of this symposium is to analyse and discuss the processing of electronic dissertations in the context of open science, open access and cyber-infrastructures. This morning one part of you already participated in three workshops. During the conference, you will have the opportunity to learn more about several topics, from technology, workflows and skills to national projects, ethics and law. I believe that this conference can become an opportunity for better insight and progress, for France and Europe as well as for other regions and countries.

Tonight is our conference reception at the town hall of Villeneuve d’Ascq. Tomorrow, we have the gala dinner at the former Saint-Sauveur railway station. On closing day some of you will visit two of the most famous Art Museums here in the Northern region of France.

To all of you, thank you for being here, welcome, and enjoy the conference!