

**Open government data – the long and winding road** Debbie Rabina, Pratt Institute, School of Information and Library Science, United States

**Abstract Keynote Address**

On May 9, 2013, President Obama signed and Open Data Executive Order and released and Open Data Policy memorandum. The new policies have been widely applauded as a mean to promote transparency. The information community is focused on two elements of the new policy, first, that all newly generated government information will be released by default in open and machine-readable format, and second, the definition of information life cycle and open data from a data curation perspective. While the new policy will have both immediate and long term effects on transparency, it is limited to information newly created by the United States government. Researchers in need to data sources that predate the memorandum, or that is created by other governments, non-governmental organizations and international governmental organization, still have to struggle to find ways to access and use such data. Scholars are applying digital research methods to unearth new meaning and transparency from government information. Three disparate projects demonstrate current approaches to mining and using official data for research purposes. The first described a web harvest of social media used by the U.S. federal government at the end on the 2012 presidential term, the second is a data extract project regarding funding of the United Nations Peacekeeping missions, and the third, a data visualization of case law relation the First Amendments rights.