

## Multi Nation Program



**Isabella Splendore** | Rome, ITALY

Head, Legal and International Affairs

FIEG (Italian Federation of Newspapers and Magazines Publishers)

An expert in media and corporate law and creator of FIEG's legal and international affairs office, Dr. Isabella Splendore is the legal adviser to FIEG's management, as well as Italian publishing companies. In addition, she coordinates publishing policies at the national and international levels, and represents Italian publishers before European institutions and international associations. During her fellowship, she explored challenges faced by the publishing industry and, more generally, by information providers in the face of the quickly evolving digital revolution.

She categorized her meetings as falling into three topic areas; those that focused on innovative business models for publishers, copyright protection, and fair competition and transparency in the digital world. Regarding innovative business models, Dr. Splendore visited a broad range of news publishers, including *The Seattle Times*, *The Boston Globe* (with the help of USA Fellow Richard Chacon), *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* (with the help of USA Fellow Joel Millman), The Associated Press (AP), and paidContent. At each meeting she discussed strategies for funding continued news production, and found differing models being implemented, all still in an experimental stage.

Many of her meetings concentrated on copyright protection, including a visit to Creative Commons, where she enjoyed discussing their collective management copyright-licensees' system. With respect to fair competition and transparency, she found most of her interlocutors interested in her views on the European antitrust case against Google, currently pending before the European Commission in Brussels. Both Europeans and Americans hope to achieve the same goal, namely non-discriminatory and fair access for digital publishers to mobile platforms (e.g. tablets) as well as transparent and fair search engines in order to develop attractive and sustainable content. However, she found that while Europe aims to limit Google's online advertising activities to encourage competition from other entities, American publishers and academics work to develop commercial relationships with Google and other internet players.

Upon her return, Dr. Splendore expects to join executives from AP's News Licensing Group (NLG) in presenting a proposal to European and Italian newspaper associations to expand the use of NLG's new common infrastructure for managing content and copyright protection. In addition, she will work with Microsoft to arrange a meeting in Brussels between Microsoft representatives and the European Associations of Publishers in order to speak about the Italian antitrust case against Google.

She concluded, "the Eisenhower fellowship experience has been a period of personal introspection, skill development, and intellectual growth. Over the past ten years I have had opportunities to travel in Europe and pursue my interests in media information policy through my involvement with the European Association of Publishers. The network of colleagues and the skill sets developed during those experiences allowed me to look at the world, and my role in it, in a different way. The fellowship experience proved to be an even more enriching opportunity than I had imagined. The interaction with a broader community of people for an extended period of time creates a much different dynamic than a quick visit as a tourist or a brief stay for a meeting. The chance to spend seven weeks in different neighborhoods, shop for daily supplies, commute with public transportation, and for a brief moment blend into the social fabric creates a much deeper association with a place and its social community. The amazing conversations throughout each day with publishers, journalists, public officials, academics, shopkeepers, and cab drivers left me each evening with memories that will stay with me forever. Many of the Eisenhower Fellows described their experience as life changing, and I certainly will not quarrel with that notion. While I don't know what future challenges or opportunities lie ahead, I know that I look at the world in a much different and enriched way."

**Leaders bettering the world around them.**