

MINUTES OF JULY 2020 MEETING  
RDA Steering Committee  
Asynchronous Meeting  
6-9 July 2020

**Attending:** Linda Barnhart, RSC Secretary  
Renate Behrens, Europe representative  
Thomas Brenndorfer, North America representative  
Ahava Cohen, Europe back-up representative  
Gordon Dunsire, Technical Team Liaison Officer  
Kathy Glennan, RSC Chair  
James Hennelly, Director, ALA Digital Reference  
Damian Iseminger, Technical Team Liaison Officer-Elect  
Ebe Kartus, Wider Community Engagement Officer  
Honor Moody, RDA Example Editor  
Daniel Paradis, Translations Team Liaison Officer  
Melissa Parent, Oceania representative

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### Executive Session

**226 Catching Up**

**227 Planning for the October 2020 RSC Meeting**

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### Public Session

#### RDA Discussion Topics

**229 RDA conformance**

229.1 The briefing paper [RDA conformance](#) discusses aspects of the conformance of metadata to the RDA standard. The RSC was asked for feedback on three questions and for approval of draft text for an expansion of a Toolkit guidance chapter on conformance. Each of the three RSC regions submitted written responses from their constituencies, and one set of individual comments was received. The RSC thanks contributors for the valuable feedback compiled in these responses.

229.2 **Question #1:** Should the RSC offer conformance certification in addition to the passive guidance included in the Toolkit?

This topic generated significant RSC discussion, with nearly every member raising questions about what certification means; concerns were also consistently expressed about the purpose and potential workload of a formal certification process. Whether and how RDA constituencies would benefit from a certification process remains unclear. A spectrum of possibilities from passive to active certification was floated. Glennan suggested that RDA could be viewed as an “anchor” for metadata description sets, with the variability between community approaches acceptable as long as everything is anchored in the standard. There was brief discussion about the usefulness of examples of conformance, with the

suggestion that conformance examples could be an extension of full set, in context examples. The RSC agreed that it is not feasible for the RSC itself nor its Technical Working Group to actively participate in conformance certification; the RSC should not become conformance police. Automated data validation is not possible for the foreseeable future. The frontrunning outcome for RDA certification seemed to be an explanatory statement in Toolkit with a self-service checklist of conformance conditions. There was also the suggestion that the Technical Working Group would be willing to act as a consultant upon request by an RDA community.

- 229.3 **Question #2:** Should the Toolkit include content for assessing conformance for specific application communities? Content might include examples, alignments and mappings for parsing metadata statements, and decision trees.

Several RSC members noted that the first three questions all work together; it doesn't make sense to do just one. There was general consensus that the Toolkit should include conformance content, but as with question #1, questions were raised. It will be important to know who would use this information and how it would be used.

- 229.4 **Question #3:** Should the RSC offer additional technical guidance and support for conformance, interoperability, and mappings between RDA metadata and non-RDA applications?

As with questions #1 and #2, it was noted that more needs to be understood before going down this path. Glennan supported developing guidance between RDA and non-RDA applications. Parent suggested that the bar for RDA conformance is low and is set out in minimum description guidelines. If specific communities are unable to see that low bar, the role of RSC may be to support communities in understanding the guidelines. Parent suggested that one approach might be to help communities themselves develop content, along with the technical guidance and support for conformance, interoperability and mappings.

- 229.5 **Question #4:** Does the RSC approve the draft text suggested here to replace the "Data elements" section of Guidance: Introduction to RDA?

The RSC approved the draft text with some changes:

- The addition of text proposed by Iseminger relating to disjointedness
- The new text on Data conformance as a separate chapter, possibly titled "Well Formed RDA"
- The existing text on Data elements remains with that title as a subsection of the Introduction to RDA guidance chapter.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dunsire will make these agreed-upon changes and amendments to RDA text in the CMS, to be published in the September 2020 release.

## 230 RDA entity boundaries

230.1 The briefing paper [RDA entity boundaries](#) is a follow-up to the paper on [Work boundaries](#) discussed by the RSC at its meeting in October 2019 (see minutes for [agenda item 181](#)). Following informal discussions early in 2020, the scope was widened to include the boundaries of all RDA entities. The briefing paper asked the group to address four questions; the topic was then broadened with an additional four questions relating to fictitious place of publication. The RSC was asked for decisions on five recommendations. A paper was submitted by one individual and written comments were received from NARDAC. The RSC thanks contributors for the valuable feedback compiled in these responses.

230.2 **Question #1:** Should all boundary criteria be associated with one or more specific elements? That is, should the general criteria specify the elements to which they apply?

The RSC generally agreed.

230.3 **Question #2:** What level of granularity of boundary conditions should the Toolkit offer? (Three choices were offered in the briefing paper.)

There was a slight preference for the choice to use a combination of single-element and multiple-element conditions to reflect the presentation of an optional boundary in the current beta Toolkit. Behrens emphasized the need for flexibility and suggested a boundary “framework.” There was concern from several members that multiple condition/option boxes could be overwhelming. Kartus recommended general criteria and then list of elements but not going down to individual element level unless it made strong logical sense.

230.4 **Question #3:** Are there any mandatory boundary conditions missing from Appendix 2?

The RSC discussed item boundaries and agreed to expand guidance both in the “Describing an item” section and in the Item entity page. Additional text will come from discussions of relative and absolute/mandatory boundaries and from discussion of the element Work: transformation by policy of.

230.5 **Question #4:** Are there any optional boundary conditions missing from Appendix 2?

Brenndorfer noted that the Family entity boundaries were missing. Dunsire responded that these would be the same as Collective Agent and will be added.

- 230.6 **Question #5:** Is it sufficient that there are general instructions for the condition that the element value is not on the manifestation being described, to cover recording the actual value as an unstructured description?

The RSC was not completely clear on the meaning of this question. Iseminger stated that explicit guidance is required that a false value should not be entered. Glennan said that RDA should add explicit guidance to record a false or fictitious value only as an unstructured description. Brenndorfer prefers these instructions be included in the narrower elements (rather than the broader manifestation elements) alongside the instructions for fictitious values, to make clear when and where the actual value is recorded.

- 230.7 **Question #6:** Should specific instructions for using related entity elements be added in context? This would have to be for all elements for which manifestations may offer fictitious or false values. Or is this better left to policy statements?

There was general agreement that specific instructions do not need to be added in context.

- 230.8 **Question #7:** Is it worth completing the guidance on fictitious entities by addressing WEMI and Nomen?

There was general agreement that the guidance should be completed.

- 230.9 **Question #8:** What else have I missed?

Nothing was noted.

- 230.10 **Recommendation #1:** Remove the sections for describing a distinct entity from the guidance pages for describing a work, expression, and manifestation, and remove the section for Transformation boundary of a static work from the guidance on Diachronic works.

**Recommendation #2:** Add a specific guidance chapter on entity boundaries. The proposed content is given in Appendix 1.

**Recommendation #3:** Add the term ‘entity boundary’ to the RDA Terms vocabulary, with the definition “A set of criteria that is applied by an agent who creates metadata to determine if a new entity is being described.” Include the alternate term ‘boundary’ as a cross-reference in the Toolkit Glossary.

**Recommendation #4:** Add a specific section on entity boundaries to the instructions for each entity. The proposed content is given in Appendix 2.

**Recommendation #5:** Add content to the guidance chapter on Representative expressions to indicate their use in determining work boundaries. The proposed content is given in Appendix 3, with the preceding and succeeding paragraphs.

There was general agreement with all five recommendations by the RSC. Several members noted that the proposed text given in Appendix 2 will need to be adjusted based on the discussion at this meeting.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dunsire will change RDA text in the CMS to be consonant with the briefing paper and with the amendments and additions proposed during this discussion, in time for the September release.

230.11 A paper that was submitted for RSC consideration was loosely related to this topic and could not be considered as part of this meeting. [After the meeting, the Core Team agreed to encourage the author to submit this paper through their regional group so it could be considered at a future RSC meeting. The author subsequently declined to pursue this further.]

## 231 Revision of the beta Toolkit menu tab for Resources

231.1 The [briefing paper](#) proposes a further re-organization of the Resources menu of the beta RDA Toolkit, as part of the String Encoding Scheme (SES) Project. The final layout of guidance and instructions within this menu is dependent on discussions about the wider issues of incorporating and managing “community resources” in the Toolkit. The RSC was asked to respond to two recommendations. EURIG and NARDAC provided written feedback to the briefing paper. The RSC thanks contributors for the valuable feedback compiled in these responses.

231.2 **Recommendation #1:** Organize the guidance and instructions for SESs by specific language or script where possible, with standard sections for each string process or aspect of syntax, such as capitalization, initial articles, names of persons, etc.

The RSC generally agreed. Concerns were raised about the design and scalability of the Resources tab as more language-based SESs are added. Behrens proposed an organizational scheme focused on internationalization. She also suggested further policy-related discussion, including possibly the RDA Board, about the issue of languages in Toolkit--since it is not possible to include them all—and advocated for clear labeling of new and legacy content. There was broad discussion of the issues surrounding the difference between the language of a manifestation and the language of cataloging (which implicitly is the language used when viewing the Toolkit). Glennan suggested that to the extent that the RSC wants to support equal treatment of all languages, and that there is

international agreement on what the initial articles are for particular languages or capitalization practices for those languages, that this information does not need to be part of community resources and could live at the "RDA" level instead, and be included in each of the translations.

- 231.3 **Recommendation #2:** Move the general guidance on capitalization of transcriptions to the guidance on normalized transcription.

There was general agreement. Kartus noted similarities between the organizational scheme proposed by Behrens and the scheme described in the paper and as a practical matter suggested moving ahead with the paper's recommendation; the RSC can revisit this topic in a year. Paradis noted that it is particularly important to move forward with this to resolve some inconsistencies between the general guidance on capitalization and the instructions on normalized transcription. Paradis also described a problem in French if the list of initial articles was moved into the community resources area.

**ACTION ITEM:** Paradis will review the list of abbreviations in Latin script and split them into two categories, as he proposed. This information must be submitted to Dunsire by early August if it is to be included in the September release.

The RSC was asked for a quick decision on whether the term for this area (and dropdown) should be "community resources" or "community content." The RSC agreed upon "community resources."

**ACTION ITEM:** Dunsire will develop the tab in the CMS as indicated by RSC discussion for the September release. He may need to consult James Hennelly on the appropriate markup.

## 232 **Community vocabularies: governance and authorization**

- 232.1 This topic continued the discussion from the April asynchronous RSC meeting ([agenda item 222](#)). At that meeting, there was "general agreement that more detail is needed about how community content will be curated and how a community would be 'authorized.' There was consensus surrounding the urgent need to develop a governance model for community vocabularies." To address this urgent need, the RSC was asked for general feedback on seven governance and authorization questions. No briefing paper was developed. EURIG and NARDAC submitted written responses. There was general agreement that this was a difficult and more time-consuming conversation to have asynchronously. The discussion would have benefitted from a synchronous brainstorming session.

- 232.2 **Question #1:** What is a community? and **Question #2:** What are the characteristics of a community that RSC will recognize? These two questions were considered together by several RSC members.

A number of different definitions were offered. Each incorporated language to reflect the need for flexibility in terms of type, size, and level of formality. While policy statements could be considered one type of RDA community, there was some advocacy for keeping them separate, as they already have a distinct purpose and separate process. Those bodies with which the RSC has protocol agreements would not be considered a community in this sense, since these are more about standards alignment. The RDA regional committees are evidence of RDA region communities, but the committee itself is not the community. Dunsire clarified that the notion of community contribution to the RDA Toolkit is broader than just vocabularies and should include all potential community content. Brenndorfer noted that a key requirement would be that a community must be able to declare ownership and maintain the content they propose to contribute. A definition of community may include of necessity the ability to make a formal commitment, for example, to create and maintain content.

232.3 **Question #3:** What responsibilities would a community be committing to in requesting the inclusion of a community vocabulary in RDA Toolkit? What are the RSC's responsibilities? Might we want a written agreement, outlining each party's roles and responsibilities?

There was consensus that a written agreement was a good idea; it is important for both parties to understand what they are getting into. Kartus advocates striking a balance between flexibility/informality in the initial stages, as community resources emerge, and formal agreements. Specific issues to be addressed in an agreement included:

- Ownership of data. The RSC agreed that the community should own the data and be responsible for its upkeep.
- Technical training and support. This could be provided by a person or group within the RSC, perhaps on a cost recovery basis. The RSC may need to set limits on technical training and support, perhaps with an exit strategy in place should a community fail to reach functional knowledge of appropriate systems/other benchmarks.
- Initial data population requirements. This should be the responsibility of the community.
- Ongoing maintenance requirements. A regular review of community-contributed data should happen at least annually, ideally in conjunction with a Toolkit release.
- Re-use of content by another community. The two communities should contact each other and work together, particularly to communicate changes in content. The RSC does not need to be an intermediary.
- Financial considerations. There might be a financial requirement to recover development costs, for example, if a new domain is required to mint community-specific URIs.

- Conformance with RDA. There needs to be overall agreement that the community intends to apply RDA in good faith.

232.4 **Question #4:** Will the RSC decide which community vocabularies are "worthy" of inclusion? If so, how? and **Question #5:** Will the RSC vet/review a community's approach to ensure that it is valid according to RDA principles? What happens if we have a conflict with a community? These two questions were considered together by several RSC members.

RSC members agreed that a set of criteria for community resources should be drafted and published in Toolkit. Defining expectations would make it easier for communities and for the RSC to vet content and address conflicts. Two of the criteria could be that content needs to (1) meet RDA conformance guidelines, and (2) comply with the LRM model. There should also be a process of discussion and consensus-building between the parties. The RSC should have some control over decisions to include a community resource (or not); there are reputational risks to the standard that should be guarded. There was discussion of the RSC's bandwidth to absorb the workload of assessing content and providing feedback. A conformance checklist and a self-certification process may be useful tools in this regard.

232.5 **Question #6:** What types of content should the "community vocabularies" apply to: The policy statements and application profiles? The Community vocabularies section under the Resources tab? Global and/or Public shared documents in the Toolkit? Specialized vocabulary encoding schemes? Anything else?

Moody suggested that these different kinds of community resources need not all follow the same governance model. Glennan noted that shared documents in Toolkit (global or public) are not the same kind of community resources. Behrens pointed out that the community space, in this sense, should contain content that is substantial, necessary, and sustainable; very specific or very general issues should be kept at the local level. Brenndorfer observed that some types of communities may only be able to handle certain content types (for example, application profiles). Dunsire suggested that it may be a good idea to list the categories of community resources developed during the 3R Project for RSC review and future planning.

232.6 **Question #7:** What role do the regional groups have in this process, if any? What about the Wider Community Engagement Officer (WCEO)?

There was general agreement that there is a strong role for the regions and for the Wider Community Engagement Officer (who represents areas in the world not yet part of a regional structure). Some aspects of this role could be acting as a clearinghouse, identifying potential communities, advising a community on process, and having a communication role between the community and the RSC.

The regional groups and the WCEO could help the RSC understand the context and needs of the community and offer insight on conformance. Glennan noted that a regional committee could be a community if they wanted to be. Kartus observed that some regions might be more active and have more responsibility than others. Dunsire reminded the RSC that the structure of Toolkit needed to make visible the difference between “base” RDA content—which translators are required to translate—and community resources, which are optional for translation.

**ACTION ITEM:** The RSC Chair and RSC Secretary will develop the ideas expressed in this discussion into a written document for further RSC review and development, ideally in a synchronous call at the October meeting.

## RSC Administrative Topics

### 233 Review of Action Items

233.1 RSC members reviewed and updated two spreadsheets linked in Google Drive that listed tasks assigned from earlier asynchronous meetings and the October 2019 in-person meeting. Glennan asked about handling tasks assigned to Kate James, whose RSC assignment ended in December. Moody queried James for more information and updated the spreadsheets for the completed tasks (all completed but one).

### 234 Other Business

234.1 Availability of the [LC-PCC Task Group on Data Provenance in Beta RDA Toolkit Final Report](#) and [Appendix](#) was announced by Glennan. Discussion, possibly with RSC comments in a Google Doc, will happen later. [Follow-up: The Core Team discussed this paper on their August 7 call and decided that no response was needed.]

234.2 Glennan raised the issue of terminology that can have oppressionist overtones and asked the RSC to discuss the appropriate course of action for such terminology in RDA, specifically terms from the VES for Generation that include “master.” Glennan noted that this is part of the overall Western focus problem identified in the Toolkit now and wondered about the priority for this activity in that broader context. RSC members were supportive of addressing this problem now, and several noted that this was a broader issue than simply Western focus. Brenndorfer described the Canadian approach on getting input from Indigenous communities that has been characterized by the phrase “Nothing About Us Without Us” (Latin: Nihil de nobis, sine nobis). Policies should only be decided with full participation by members of communities affected by those policies. The RSC agreed to move forward by contacting the affected communities.

**ACTION ITEM:** Behrens will contact the special working group on audio-visual in Europe to gather their input.

**ACTION ITEM:** After receiving the information from Behrens, the RSC Chair and RSC Secretary will draft a message to ask the audio-visual community to submit revisions to the Generation VES.

- 234.3 Behrens inquired about Toolkit copyright infringement. The 3R DACH project will prepare a manual for non-commercial use which will include rephrasing of the German translation of some Toolkit text. There could be a general note saying that RDA is not quoted verbatim. Does this constitute copyright infringement? Hennelly responded that copyright will be enforced on official RDA content. The Copyright Holders are typically open to re-use for non-commercial, training use of RDA content; however, if the quoting of RDA is so extensive that the value of a Toolkit subscription is diminished, then the copyright would be enforced.

## 235 Review of Meeting 2020 July

- 235.1 This discussion item provided an opportunity for RSC members to evaluate this asynchronous meeting and suggest improvements.
- 235.2 A number of questions were raised for consideration:
- How can we encourage commenting on the more substantive topics on the first day?
  - Some topics are difficult to discuss online; how can we identify these in advance? Do we need to find a platform better suited to discussion?
  - Do we need a synchronous part in every asynchronous meeting for these difficult topics? There was some support of this. A call might also be useful as a de-brief to ensure understanding and consensus at the end of the meeting. We can evaluate the continuing need for this after we have some experience with synchronous calls at the October RSC meeting.
  - Should we have a maximum number of questions or recommendations for an agenda item?
  - Should we establish best practices for commenting, in terms of labelling or organizing responses, especially with complex topics?
- 235.3 The group was reminded to tag people (using @ and the dropdown) in specific responses so that they are notified of that response via Basecamp software. The group also tested using the Basecamp functionality of “automatic check-ins” when voting on terminology in agenda item 231.3; this will have limited utility.

## Appendix to the Public Minutes

### Agenda item 229: RDA conformance

#### RDA conformance

Discussion paper for RSC

Gordon Dunsire, RSC Technical Team Liaison Officer, May 12, 2020

#### Abstract

This paper discusses aspects of the conformance of metadata to RDA. The paper poses several questions for discussing RSC strategy for assessing and assigning conformance to metadata and presents a draft expansion of RDA Toolkit guidance to accommodate the topic.

#### Background

An RDA metadata statement describes an instance of an RDA entity.

All metadata statements can be formatted with a subject-predicate-object (linked data triple) structure, which is the equivalent of an RDA entity-element-value structure.

RDA instructions cover a full range of data capture and recording methods.

RDA has the flexibility to cover a wide range of metadata applications at an assured level of interoperability. It does this by providing choices for:

- entity granularity (the RDA Entity and Agent hierarchies)
- element granularity (the element hierarchies)
- recording method
- source or construction of values (through recording sources, vocabulary encoding schemes, and string encoding schemes)

Assured interoperability is provided by the semantic coherency of the RDA entities and element sets.

The coherency and integrity of RDA metadata statements requires the use of RDA elements.

The value of an RDA metadata statement is determined by the application of RDA instructions and guidance.

A value of an RDA metadata statement that uses a relationship element is part of the description of the entity in focus, not the related entity. For example, “This manifestation has related agent of manifestation ‘that agent’” is a metadata statement about ‘this manifestation’, and does not describe ‘that agent’. Conversely, the inverse statement “That agent has related manifestation of agent ‘this manifestation’” is about ‘that agent’.

The ‘related entity of [RDA Entity]’ elements are defined as **attribute elements** in RDA, not relationship elements, because the expected value is not an RDA entity.

## Unconstrained element set

The RDA Registry provides an ‘unconstrained’ set of elements. An unconstrained element has a broader meaning than the associated RDA Toolkit element set. The unconstrained elements do not make a distinction between the resource entities *Work*, *Expression*, *Manifestation*, and *Item*, or between the agent entities *Agent*, *Collective Agent*, *Person*, *Corporate Body*, and *Family*.

The unconstrained elements are intended as a tool to interoperate well-formed RDA metadata description sets with metadata from implementations of data models that differ from the IFLA Library Reference Model. This involves transforming data that is conformant with RDA into data that is not conformant with RDA. The RDA Registry provides a set of machine-actionable mappings to support such transformation. The mappings are one-way, from RDA to non-RDA, and they cannot be used to transform non-RDA metadata statements into RDA. They are intended for developing a facility to export RDA metadata for re-use in a non-RDA application.

The unconstrained element set is not an integral part of RDA, and its use in metadata statements is not conformant with RDA.

## Minimum description

RDA provides instructions on the requirements for a minimum description of each RDA entity in the context of the entity.

RDA requires that a description of an entity includes an appellation in the form of a name or title, an access point, or a local identifier.

For a nomen, RDA also requires a metadata statement recording the value of its nomen string. RDA provides specific guidance on the requirements for a minimum description of an RDA resource entity (*Work*, *Expression*, *Manifestation*, and *Item*).

RDA requires that a description of a resource entity also includes the appropriate so-called ‘primary’ relationship elements that associate the entity with the other entities that constitute an information resource. These include the shortcut elements that relate a *Work* to its *Manifestation* and vice-versa.

RDA requires that the use of primary relationship elements in a description of an information resource meets the essential cardinality restrictions of the LRM. RDA provides specifications within the guidance on minimum description.

## Conformance

### Direct conformance

A metadata statement has direct conformance if all of these conditions are met:

- It describes an (instance of an) RDA entity.
- It uses an RDA element.

A metadata description set has direct conformance if all of these conditions are met:

- All of its metadata statements have direct conformance.
- It includes metadata statements for a minimum description of the entities being described.

### Indirect conformance

A metadata statement has indirect conformance if all of these conditions are met:

- It describes an (instance of an) entity that has narrower or the same semantics as an RDA entity. The non-RDA entity must be an **entity subtype** or subclass of the corresponding RDA entity. For example, a description of a *Child* or *Adult* entity may be conformant if *Child* or *Adult* are mapped to RDA *Person* as an entity subtype or subclass.
- It uses an element that has narrower or the same semantics as an RDA element. The non-RDA element must be an **element subtype** or subproperty of the corresponding RDA element. For example, a description of a *Person* (or a subtype) that uses an element 'has place of education' may be conformant if the element is mapped to RDA Person: related place of person as an element subtype or subproperty.

A metadata description set has indirect conformance if all of these conditions are met:

- All of its metadata statements have indirect conformance.
- It includes metadata statements for a minimum description of the entities being described.

### Partial conformance

A metadata statement is either conformant with RDA or it is not; there is no utility in the concept of partial conformance of a statement.

An RDA metadata statement may be included in a metadata description set that includes non-RDA metadata statements.

A metadata description set that describes two or more entities may describe one or more RDA entities and one or more non-RDA entities.

A metadata description set that describes only one entity may use RDA and non-RDA elements associated with the entity.

A metadata description set is partially conformant with RDA if it includes RDA metadata statements that meet the minimum description requirements for one or more entities that are described.

### Conformance levels

RDA is intended to produce data that can interoperate with metadata from non-RDA sources.

The level of interoperability is dependent on the semantics of the metadata statements. Sources that are based on the LRM will have a higher degree of interoperability than sources that use an incompatible conceptual model.

RDA metadata statements and description sets are expected to be mixed with metadata that is not partially or fully conformant with RDA for processing and packaging within an application.

Any categorization of a metadata package for its level of RDA conformance should accommodate partial conformance. A minimal categorization is:

1. **Fully conformant:** the package is an RDA metadata description set that meets the specifications for minimum description.

2. **Partially conformant:** the package includes one or more RDA metadata description sets that meet the specifications for minimum description, and it includes at least one description set that is not conformant with RDA.
3. **Not conformant:** the package includes no RDA metadata description sets that meet the specifications for minimum description, although it may include RDA metadata statements.

An RDA conformance level can be assessed by:

- Analysing and parsing metadata into a set of metadata statements in subject-predicate-object syntax.
- Determining the direct or indirect conformance of each metadata statement in the set.
- Determining that the metadata description set contains a subset of metadata statements that meets the minimal description requirements for each of the entities that are described, including cardinality restrictions on the kinds of entities.

## Assigning RDA conformance levels

It is not always necessary to make a full assessment of a metadata package or description set in order to assign a simple conformance level.

Metadata that is conformant with the original RDA instructions may not be conformant with the new instructions. The conceptual model has changed, and known gaps in coverage and accommodation have been filled.

A more granular categorization of partial conformance is highly dependent on the application for which metadata packages are processed. This makes it difficult to provide general guidance in RDA, although the Toolkit might accommodate this as “community” content.

Some communities may wish for some form of certification of conformance.

## Toolkit guidance

There is no guidance in the new Toolkit about metadata conformance.

There is a guidance chapter on ‘Data elements’ that is part of the ‘Introduction to RDA’ that also includes guidance on ‘Objectives and principles governing RDA’ and ‘Standards related to RDA’.

This paper proposes that guidance on RDA conformance is a natural extension of the outline of RDA data components given in ‘Data elements’, and that the topic fits with the other guidance chapters in the Introduction. The proposal changes the title of the chapter from ‘Data elements’ to ‘Data conformance’.

A clean copy of a draft revision of the Toolkit guidance chapter on ‘Data elements’ that is expanded to cover RDA conformance is appended to this paper.

The revision retains most of the existing content, but rearranges it for clarity and consistency. The revision specifically clarifies that only the unambiguous formal, preferred label, or notation, or IRI of an RDA element is conformant when recording the element as a predicate of an RDA metadata statement.

## Questions for discussion

The 3R Project is nearing completion, and the foundations of the guidance and instructions for producing well-formed metadata conforming to the IFLA Library Reference Model are established.

The following questions are posed in this strategic context.

**Question 1:** Should the RSC offer conformance certification in addition to the passive guidance included in the Toolkit?

**Question 2:** Should the Toolkit include content for assessing conformance for specific application communities? Content might include examples, alignments and mappings for parsing metadata statements, and decision trees.

**Question 3:** Should the RSC offer additional technical guidance and support for conformance, interoperability, and mappings between RDA metadata and non-RDA applications?

## Draft text replacement for ‘Data elements’

### Data conformance

#### Conformance of RDA metadata

For general guidance on implementing RDA metadata for an application, see Guidance: [RDA implementation scenarios](#).

### Conformance of metadata statements

A *metadata statement* is conformant with RDA if all of the following requirements are met.

- The statement is well-formed
- The statement describes an instance of an RDA entity
- The statement records a value of an RDA element assigned to the entity
- The statement records a value that is compatible with the RDA guidance and instructions

A well-formed RDA metadata statement can be formatted in a basic subject-predicate-object syntax, where the subject is the entity being described, the predicate is the characteristic being recorded, and the object is the recorded value of the characteristic.

This syntax may be implemented in a range of data structures.

A metadata statement that describes an *entity subtype* of an RDA entity has latent conformance because a statement about an entity subtype is also a statement about an *entity supertype*. The entity subtype may not be an RDA entity.

A metadata statement that records a value of an element subtype of an RDA element has latent conformance because a value of an *element subtype* is also a value of an *element supertype*. The element subtype may not be an RDA element.

## Conformance of metadata description sets

A *metadata description set* is conformant with RDA if all of the following requirements are met.

- Each *metadata statement* in the set is conformant with RDA
- The metadata description set of each entity that is described includes a subset of statements that meets the specifications for a minimum description of the entity

The specifications for the minimum requirements of a description of an RDA entity are included in the instructions for the entity.

For guidance and specifications for the minimum requirements of a description of a resource entity, see Guidance: [Minimum description of a resource entity](#).

- [RDA entities](#)
- [RDA elements](#)
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## RDA entities

The RDA entities are:

- [RDA Entity](#)
  - [Work](#)
  - [Expression](#)
  - [Manifestation](#)
  - [Item](#)
  - [Agent](#)
    - [Person](#)
    - [Collective Agent](#)
      - [Corporate Body](#)
      - [Family](#)
  - [Nomen](#)

- [Place](#)
- [Timespan](#)

These entities generally reflect the entities identified in the [IFLA library reference model](#) (LRM), with the following exceptions:

- The top-level entity in LRM (*Res*) is not used in RDA. Instead, *RDA Entity* is an *entity subtype* of *Res* that is limited to the set of entities defined in RDA, rather than all things or entities in the universe of human discourse. *RDA Entity* is an *entity supertype* of all other RDA entities.
- The LRM entity *Collective Agent* has been subdivided into entity subtypes in RDA (*Family* and *Corporate Body*) for the purpose of extending the LRM to provide specific attributes of those types of collective agent, and specific relationships relevant to them

## RDA elements

The elements in RDA reflect the attributes and relationships associated with the RDA entities. They often provide a greater level of granularity than the LRM itself.

RDA follows the LRM categorization of elements as attributes and relationships.

- *attribute element*
- *relationship element*

The LRM notes that the distinction is dependent on the implementation of the model for recording an IRI as the value of an element.

An RDA relationship element accommodates the recording of an IRI for an RDA entity.

An RDA attribute element either does not accommodate the recording of an IRI, or does not record an RDA entity.

RDA provides guidelines and instructions for recording the values of these elements, and usually provides more than one recording method.

For general guidance on recording methods, see Guidance: [Recording methods](#).

## Choice of elements

Decisions on whether certain elements are core, and the cardinality of recorded elements, may be indicated by an agent who creates the metadata. These decisions may be recorded in [RDA toolkit](#) as policies, as separate documents issued by the agent, or as an *application profile*.

For general guidance on application profiles, see Guidance: [Application profiles](#)

## Legacy elements and deprecation

RDA retains legacy elements that were developed before the publication of the LRM if:

- an element is consistent with the LRM and its implementation in RDA
- an element remains useful following the implementation of the LRM

An element that is redundant is replaced by a new or amended element. The label of a redundant element is treated as an alternative label of a replacement element, and appears in the Glossary.

For some elements, RDA offers an option to use another element, and states that the option is preferred.

These elements have a coverage and values that are better accommodated by the preferred element. For example, a broader element may be preferred if there is no longer a requirement to record data with fine granularity.

RSC will review these elements in due course to determine if they should be retained.

## Subjects

Coverage of the construction and use of a subject analysis *vocabulary encoding scheme* is out of scope for RDA. Any kind of entity can be a subject of a Work, and there are many ways of modelling the organization and structure of a subject vocabulary.

A work can be related to any RDA entity that is a subject of a work by recording a Work: subject RDA entity or element subtype.

This element, and its subtypes, is categorized as a *relationship element*.

A work can be related to any other entity, including a concept or term, that is a subject of a work by recording a Work: subject.

This element is categorized as an *attribute element*.

## Unconstrained element set

A metadata statement that uses an element from the unconstrained element set available from the RDA registry is not conformant with RDA.

An unconstrained element is an *element supertype* of an RDA element.

An unconstrained element does not encode the type of entity that is being described.

The unconstrained element set is provided for the transformation of an RDA metadata statement for use in applications that are not conformant with RDA or its implementation of the IFLA library reference model.

## RDA relationship data

In the [IFLA library reference model](#), (LRM) relationships are an essential part of the bibliographic universe: they connect instances of entities and provide context for them. The relationships in the LRM are generally presented at a high level; RDA provides many additional refinements to LRM relationships.

An RDA *relationship element* links two RDA entities that may be the same or different types of entity.

The first entity is the entity being described. The second entity is referred to as the *related entity*.

Each relationship element has instructions for applying the RDA recording methods to the value of the related entity.

## Relationship hierarchies

The set of relationship elements of an RDA entity has a polyhierarchical semantic structure.

- A relationship element may be broader or narrower in meaning than another relationship element.
- A relationship element of an *entity subtype* of [Agent](#) may also be broader or narrower in meaning than an equivalent relationship element of another subtype of Agent, depending on the hierarchy of Agent subtypes.
- The broadest level or granularity of relationship elements for each RDA entity is a set of elements that associates the entity with every other RDA entity and itself.
- Every other relationship element is narrower in meaning and of finer granularity than one of the high-level association elements.

## Relationship shortcuts

A *shortcut* is a *relationship element* that directly relates two RDA entities that are indirectly related through one or more intermediary entities.

This allows the two entities to be associated without recording any of the intermediary entities or relationships.

Information about an intermediary entity cannot be inferred from the value of a shortcut element.

For example, Manifestation: [work manifested](#) relates a *manifestation* and a *work*. It is a shortcut for:

1. Manifestation: [expression manifested](#)
2. Expression: [work expressed](#)

There is one intermediary entity, an expression that is embodied by the manifestation and is a realization of the work.

A value of this shortcut contains no information about the intermediary expression.

## Relationships with entities that are outside of the scope of RDA

RDA provides a set of relationship elements that associate each RDA entity with an unspecified entity that is outside of the scope of RDA:

- RDA Entity: related entity of RDA entity
  - Work: related entity of work
  - Expression: related entity of expression
  - Manifestation: related entity of manifestation
  - Item: related entity of item
  - Agent: relation entity of agent
    - Person: related entity of person
    - Collective Agent: related entity of collective agent
      - Corporate Body: related entity of corporate body
      - Family: related entity of family
  - Nomen: related entity of nomen
  - Place: related entity of place
  - Timespan: related entity of timespan

RDA makes no assumptions about the nature of the related entity.

Each of these elements is categorized as an attribute element.

## Recording relationship elements

A relationship element itself can be recorded in an RDA metadata statement as a *structured description*, an *identifier*, or an *IRI*.

RDA provides a *vocabulary encoding scheme* for each RDA entity that includes the relationship elements for the entity.

A vocabulary encoding scheme is presented as an element set for the entity in the RDA registry.

Each element set provides data for identifying and recording each element associated with the entity:

- A Toolkit label and a Registry label that can be used for a structured description of the element
- A compact version of a Registry IRI for the element that can be used for an identifier for the element
- A Registry IRI that is the IRI for the element

## Agenda item 230: RDA entity boundaries

## RDA entity boundaries

Gordon Dunsire, RSC Technical Team Liaison Officer, 12 June 2020

### Abstract

This paper proposes a development of the guidance and instructions for determining if an RDA metadata description set is referring to an entity being described or to a different entity. The criteria for making a distinction between two entities are essential for the creation of RDA metadata that are well-formed and meet the requirements of local applications.

The paper proposes the revision and relocation of existing Toolkit content, and poses questions on the coverage and granularity of Toolkit content on this topic.

### Background

This proposal is a follow-up to the discussion paper on [Work boundaries](#) discussed by the RDA Steering Committee at its meeting in October 2019 in Santiago, Chile.

Following informal discussions early in 2020, the scope of the development was widened to include the boundaries of all RDA entities.

The proposal does not include a development of the guidance and instructions for work groups, but does include guidance on the use of work groups to collocate works with boundaries determined by different criteria applied by different agents who create metadata.

### Discussion

An agent who creates metadata applies a set of criteria for determining if an entity being described already has a metadata description set or requires a new description. The set of criteria is termed an 'entity boundary'.

The criteria are specified as a difference in the values of one or more elements associated with a single entity.

The criteria fall into two categories:

1. Conformance with the semantic integrity of the type of entity. These criteria are mandatory for well-formed RDA data.
2. Conformance with "bibliographic and cultural conventions" (as noted in the LRM) that are specified for a particular application. These criteria are optional.

An entity boundary may include criteria in both categories.

Previous discussion has indicated the need for a specific guidance chapter on entity boundaries.

**Recommendation 1: Remove the sections for describing a distinct entity from the guidance pages for describing a work, expression, and manifestation, and remove the sections for Transformation**

**boundary of a work and a static work from the guidance on Diachronic works.** These sections are located at the URLs:

[https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US\\_ala-4d4d3f5b-8d94-3ee5-89d8-241a98366db4/section\\_ewz\\_sbp\\_vdb](https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US_ala-4d4d3f5b-8d94-3ee5-89d8-241a98366db4/section_ewz_sbp_vdb)  
[https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US\\_ala-f2747cbc-74d2-3131-a94b-e30effad9d09/section\\_qlp\\_33n\\_zdb](https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US_ala-f2747cbc-74d2-3131-a94b-e30effad9d09/section_qlp_33n_zdb)  
[https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US\\_ala-cf0b18a4-5a55-3358-94b0-2d4fb5449314/section\\_vrw\\_j25\\_xdb](https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US_ala-cf0b18a4-5a55-3358-94b0-2d4fb5449314/section_vrw_j25_xdb)  
[https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US\\_ala-443c463e-b075-3e6a-9377-eb230c6b8281/p\\_fvr\\_njh\\_vdb](https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US_ala-443c463e-b075-3e6a-9377-eb230c6b8281/p_fvr_njh_vdb)  
[https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US\\_ala-443c463e-b075-3e6a-9377-eb230c6b8281/p\\_k3w\\_yv4\\_vdb](https://beta.rdatoolkit.org/en-US_ala-443c463e-b075-3e6a-9377-eb230c6b8281/p_k3w_yv4_vdb)

The guidance on *Transformation boundary of a diachronic work* is general and contextual and is best retained in the guidance for Diachronic works. The specific boundary criteria for diachronic work transformations are included in the instructions for *Boundary of a work* in Appendix 2. Appropriate cross-references will be added to the Toolkit.

**Recommendation 2: Add a specific guidance chapter on entity boundaries. The proposed content is given in Appendix 1.**

**Recommendation 3: Add the term ‘entity boundary’ to the RDA Terms vocabulary, with the definition “A set of criteria that is applied by an agent who creates metadata to determine if a new entity is being described.” Include the alternate term ‘boundary’ as a cross-reference in the Toolkit Glossary.** For consistency, boundary criteria should be presented in the Toolkit as a set of conditions associated with an instruction to treat the entity being described as a new entity that is different from the entity that is described by existing metadata. The instruction may be mandatory or optional.

### **Mandatory criteria**

Most mandatory criteria are associated with the physical characteristics of an entity and are intrinsic to the type of entity.

The RDA entities that have physical boundaries are *Item*, *Manifestation*, *Person*, *Place*, and *Timespan*.

Physical characteristics may be associated with unique values of space and time. For example, different values of the places and dates of birth and death indicate that a person being described is not the same person that has already been described.

The physical characteristics that distinguish an item arise from modification of the item; the common physical characteristics of exemplars of a manifestation form the description of the manifestation, not the item.

A place is distinguished by its location; a timespan is distinguished by its beginning and ending.

*Nomen* has a mandatory boundary determined by the nomen string and the entity of which it is an appellation. Any difference in a nomen string or the entity to which it refers requires a description of a new nomen.

### **Optional criteria**

Optional criteria for an entity boundary reflect cultural conventions and the requirements of an application for distinguishing instances of the same entity.

Optional criteria can be included in the boundaries of all RDA entities.

### **Boundary granularity**

Only the broadest element applicable to a boundary criterion needs to be specified. By default, any instruction that applies to an element also applies to the subtypes of the element.

Differences in values that arise from the application of different recording methods or from granularity are ignored when determining a boundary.

Several criteria in the current beta Toolkit are worded in general terms without specifying any elements.

An example is the Boundary of a manifestation given in Appendix 2. Other criteria reference one or more separate elements. An example that references multiple elements is included in the Boundary of an expression in Appendix 2.

### **Question 1: Should all boundary criteria be associated with one or more specific elements? That is, should the general criteria specify the elements to which they apply?**

Boundary of an expression in Appendix 2 also illustrates another choice in the presentation of boundaries in the Toolkit. The element Expression: date of expression is presented separately from the long list of elements given in a subsequent condition; this reflects the current separation of boundary criteria.

Presenting boundary criteria as a set of separate conditions has the advantage of finer granularity that provides a flexible approach for policy statements and application profiles to select the specific criteria required. The statement or profile can simply indicate that a condition based on one or two elements is to be applied. If multiple elements are specified in a single optional condition, a policy statement or profile needs to provide further information if only a subset of the elements is used to determine a boundary.

On the other hand, presenting a finer granularity of boundary conditions increases the number of conditional options for the relevant entity.

### **Question 2: What level of granularity of boundary conditions should the Toolkit offer?**

The basic choices are:

- a) Use one condition to list all elements that are associated with optional boundary criteria, and leave it to policy statements and application profiles to refine the boundary.
- b) Use one condition for each element that is associated with optional boundary criteria, to allow a simple selection by policy statement and application profile.

- c) Use a combination of single-element and multiple-element conditions to reflect the presentation of an optional boundary in the current beta Toolkit.

**Question 3: Are there any mandatory boundary conditions missing from Appendix 2?**

**Question 4: Are there any optional boundary conditions missing from Appendix 2?**

**Recommendation 4: Add a specific section on entity boundaries to the instructions for each entity. The proposed content is given in Appendix 2.**

**Recommendation 5: Add content to the guidance chapter on Representative expressions to indicate their use in determining work boundaries. The proposed content is given in Appendix 3, with the preceding and succeeding paragraphs.**

## **Questions for discussion and recommendations**

**Question 1: Should all boundary criteria be associated with one or more specific elements? That is, should the general criteria specify the elements to which they apply?**

**Question 2: What level of granularity of boundary conditions should the Toolkit offer?**

**Question 3: Are there any mandatory boundary conditions missing from Appendix 2?**

**Question 4: Are there any optional boundary conditions missing from Appendix 2?**

**Recommendation 1: Remove the sections for describing a distinct entity from the guidance pages for describing a work, expression, and manifestation, and remove the section for Transformation boundary of a static work from the guidance on Diachronic works.**

**Recommendation 2: Add a specific guidance chapter on entity boundaries. The proposed content is given in Appendix 1.**

**Recommendation 3: Add the term ‘entity boundary’ to the RDA Terms vocabulary, with the definition “A set of criteria that is applied by an agent who creates metadata to determine if a new entity is being described.” Include the alternate term ‘boundary’ as a cross-reference in the Toolkit Glossary.**

**Recommendation 4: Add a specific section on entity boundaries to the instructions for each entity. The proposed content is given in Appendix 2.**

**Recommendation 5: Add content to the guidance chapter on Representative expressions to indicate their use in determining work boundaries. The proposed content is given in Appendix 3, with the preceding and succeeding paragraphs.**

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## **Appendix 1: Guidance chapter Entity boundaries**

An RDA *entity boundary* is a set of criteria that is applied by an agent who creates metadata to determine if a description of a new RDA entity is required.

The criteria are specified as a difference in the values of one or more elements associated with a single entity.

The criteria may indicate a new entity of the same type, or of a different type. For example, the criteria applied to an expression may determine that a new work is being described as well as a new expression.

In practice the values of an existing *metadata description set* are compared with the values that characterize the entity being described to determine if the existing metadata describe the same entity or a different entity. If it is determined that a different entity is being described, a new description is required.

Differences in values of an element are not treated as significant when they are the results of applying different recording methods, options within a recording method, or different levels of granularity. For example, the difference in the values “Nineteen-sixty” and “1960-Jan-01” for a related timespan is not sufficient to decide that they describe different entities.

The set of criteria is specific to an entity. Some criteria are required for conformance with well-formed RDA metadata and are determined by the semantic integrity of the type of entity. Some criteria are specified within an application and are determined according to “bibliographic and cultural conventions” ([IFLA library reference model](#)).

The semantic integrity of some entities is determined by characteristics that reflect the physical world. A significant difference in the values of one or more of the corresponding elements indicates that a different entity is being described and a new description is required. This applies to:

- [Item](#)
- [Manifestation](#)
- [Person](#)
- [Place](#)
- [Timespan](#)

The definition of [Nomen](#) requires that a nomen is distinguished by its nomen string and the entity of which it is an appellation.

Criteria specified for different applications may vary in the choice of elements, the range of variation in values of each element, and the choice of an existing description set for comparing values. Criteria may be specified by an *application profile*.

The specification of criteria may be supported by a *vocabulary encoding scheme* for RDA Entity: [category of RDA entity](#) or an appropriate *entity subtype*. Each term or concept in a scheme may be used to define the boundary elements and values of the application that uses the scheme. If an application allows only one value to be assigned to each entity, a change in the value of a category becomes the criterion for a new description.

For general guidelines on application profiles, see Guidance: [Application profiles](#).

For general guidance on data conformance, see Guidance: Introduction to RDA. [Data conformance](#).

## Appendix 2: Element instructions

### Boundary of an agent

The relative boundary of the entity is determined by bibliographic and cultural conventions.

### Boundary of a collective agent

The relative boundary of the entity is determined by bibliographic and cultural conventions.

### Boundary of a corporate body

The relative boundary of the entity is determined by bibliographic and cultural conventions.

### Boundary of an expression

The relative boundary of the entity is determined by bibliographic and cultural conventions.

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in the values of elements of an expression from the values of a *representative expression*.

#### OPTION

Record a new instance of [Expression](#).

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of [Expression: creator agent of expression](#) or an element subtype

#### OPTION

Record a new instance of [Expression](#).

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of [Expression: date of expression](#).

#### OPTION

Record a new instance of [Expression](#).

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of one or more of

- [Expression: aspect ratio](#)
- [Expression: aspect ratio designation](#)
- [Expression: capture information or an element subtype](#)
- [Expression: colour](#)
- [Expression: content type](#)
- [Expression: designation of version](#)
- [Expression: duration](#)
- [Expression: extent of expression](#)
- [Expression: form of notation or an element subtype](#)
- [Expression: intended audience of expression](#)
- [Expression: interactivity mode](#)
- [Expression: key of expression](#)
- [Expression: language of expression](#)

- Expression: prime meridian
- Expression: relief type
- Expression: scale
- Expression: script

OPTION

Record a new instance of Expression.

CONDITION

An expression is an *aggregating expression*.

There is a significant difference in the values of Expression: aggregates.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Expression.

### Boundary of an item

The absolute boundary of the entity is determined by physical characteristics of the entity.

CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of one or more of

- Item: modifier agent or an element subtype
- Item: accompanied by item or an element subtype

Record a new instance of Item.

### Boundary of a manifestation

The absolute boundary of the entity is determined by physical characteristics of the entity.

The characteristics of a manifestation are derived from the characteristics that are common to all items that exemplify the manifestation.

CONDITION

An item that has not been modified has values of characteristics that differ from those of a manifestation.

Record a new instance of Manifestation.

CONDITION

A manifestation has values of relationship, identifying, or carrier characteristics that differ from another manifestation.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Manifestation.

### Boundary of a nomen

The absolute boundary of an instance is determined by its nomen string and the entity of which it is an appellation.

CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of one or more of

- Nomen: nomen string
- Nomen: appellation of RDA entity of or an element subtype

Record a new instance of Nomen.

### Boundary of a person

The absolute boundary of the entity is determined by physical characteristics of the entity.

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of one or more of

- Person: date of birth
- Person: date of death
- Person: place of birth
- Person: place of death

Record a new instance of Person.

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of Person: field of activity of person.

#### OPTION

Record a new instance of Person.

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of Person: period of activity of person.

#### OPTION

Record a new instance of Person.

### Boundary of a place

The absolute boundary of the entity is determined by physical characteristics of the entity.

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of Place: location.

Record a new instance of Place.

### Boundary of a timespan

The absolute boundary of the entity is determined by physical characteristics of the entity.

#### CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of one or more of

- Timespan: beginning
- Timespan: ending

Record a new instance of Timespan.

### Boundary of a work

The relative boundary of the entity is determined by bibliographic and cultural conventions.

A *static work* may be realized in two or more expressions that differ in content without changing the intellectual or artistic conception of the work.

An expression of a static work may be embodied in two or more manifestations without changing the content. A manifestation that carries the same content embodies the same expression and work.

A difference in content between two expressions is necessary but insufficient as an indicator that each expression realizes a different work. For example, an expression that is a translation of another expression is not usually described as a realization of a different work. Instead, both expressions are described as realizations of the same work.

A *representative expression* may be used to establish the values that are compared to determine if an expression that is being described is a realization of a new work.

For general guidelines on representative expressions, see Guidance: [Representative expressions](#).

A common appellation may be used to collocate distinct works with common characteristics as a *work group*. This device can be used to harmonize the results of applying different work boundaries by different agents who create the metadata.

**CONDITION**

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: subject or an element subtype.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

**CONDITION**

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: related agent of work or an element subtype.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

**CONDITION**

There is a significant difference in the values of elements of an expression from the values of a *representative expression*.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

**CONDITION**

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: expression of work for an expression whose content differs from another expression of the work as the result of a change in genre or literary form.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by genre of

**CONDITION**

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: expression of work for an expression whose content differs from another expression of the work as the result of a change in target audience.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by audience of

**CONDITION**

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: expression of work for an expression whose content differs from another expression of the work as the result of a change in editorial policy.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by policy of

**CONDITION**

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: expression of work for an expression whose content differs from another expression of the work as the result of a change in style.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by style of

CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: extension plan that is a change from *integrating determinate plan* or *integrating indeterminate plan* to *successive determinate plan* or *successive indeterminate plan*.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: sequential version of

CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: extension plan that is a change from *static plan* to *successive determinate plan* or *successive indeterminate plan*.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: serialized version of

CONDITION

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: extension plan that is a change from *integrating determinate plan* or *integrating indeterminate plan* to *static plan*.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: static version of

CONDITION

A work is an *aggregating work*.

There is a significant difference in the values of Expression: aggregates of an expression from the values of the *aggregating expression*.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

CONDITION

A work is an *diachronic work*.

There is a significant difference in the values of elements of an expression from the values of an expression that realizes a work.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

CONDITION

A work is a *diachronic work*.

There is a significant difference in a value of Manifestation: carrier type for a manifestation that embodies a work.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by policy of

CONDITION

A work is a *diachronic work*.

There is a significant difference in a value of one or more characteristics of the plan for embodiment over time.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by policy of

CONDITION

A work is a *diachronic work*.

A value of Work: preferred title of work is in a language and script that divides text into words.

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: preferred title of work that is a change in the first five words that follow an initial article, if any.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by policy of

CONDITION

A work is a *diachronic work*.

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: preferred title of work that is a change in meaning of the title or an indication of a different subject.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by policy of

CONDITION

A work is a *diachronic work*.

There is a significant difference in a value of Work: preferred title of work that is a change in a name of a corporate body.

OPTION

Record a new instance of Work.

OPTION

Relate the new work to the other work using Work: transformation by policy of

## Appendix 3: Additions to guidance on representative expressions

### Representative expressions

...

These characteristics are useful for describing and distinguishing a work. The values of a representative expression element can be used in the description of a work by copying them from a representative expression to the corresponding work element, although strictly speaking these elements concern expression characteristics rather than work characteristics.

A *representative expression* may be used to establish the values that are compared to determine if an expression that is being described is a realization of a new work.

For instructions on determining the distinction between different works, see Work: Boundary of a work. Any expression can be used as a representative expression.

## Agenda item 231: Revision of the beta Toolkit menu tab for Resources

## Revision of the beta Toolkit menu tab for Resources

Gordon Dunsire, Technical Team Liaison Officer, June 15, 2020

### Abstract

This paper proposes a further re-organization of the Resource menu of the beta RDA Toolkit, as part of the SES Project. The final layout of guidance and instructions within this menu is dependent on discussions about the wider issues of incorporating and managing 'community' tools in the Toolkit.

### Background

The current Resources tab of the beta Toolkit navigation menu is laid out as follows:

Resources

- Glossary
- Vocabulary Encoding Schemes
- Relationship Matrix
- ---
- Additional instructions on names of persons
  - Names in the Arabic alphabet
  - Burmese and Karen names
  - Chinese names containing a non-Chinese given name
  - Icelandic names
  - Indic names
  - Indonesian names
  - Malay names
  - Roman names
  - Romanian names containing a patronymic
  - Thai names
  - Recording names that include an article and/or preposition
    - [Subheadings for languages from Afrikaans to Spanish]
- Capitalization
  - General Guideline for Capitalization
  - General guideline for English language capitalization
  - Other languages
    - [toc for languages from Bosnian to Ukrainian]
- Initial articles
  - Initial articles listed by language
    - [Table for languages from Afrikaans to Yiddish]
  - Initial articles listed by word or words
- ---
- Revision History
- Community vocabularies
  - Abbreviations
    - Abbreviations for countries and states

- Abbreviations in Cyrillic script
- Abbreviations in Greek script
- Abbreviations in Hebrew script
- Abbreviations in Latin script
- Books of the Bible
  - Books of the Bible: Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging
  - Festlegungen für den deutschen Sprachraum zum Erfassen der bevorzugten Titel von biblischen Schriften
  - Livres de la Bible : Bibliothèque et Archives Canada-Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
- Terms of rank
  - [toc for 4 languages and countries from Iban to the United Kingdom]
- Terms for collective titles
- Terms for gender
- Terms for medium of performance
- ---
- AACR2

The menu is divided into four sections by horizontal lines (---). The brackets [] indicate narrower options that do not appear in the Resources tab.

The items in the second section (from “Additional instructions on names of persons” to “Initial articles”) are relocated from appendices of the original Toolkit without significant amendment. They are now being reviewed as part of the SES Project to move instructions for string encoding schemes (SEs) from element pages to a specific area for “community” tools or local instructions that can be incorporated in policy statements or accessed by application profiles.

The content of the items in the second section is a mix of guidance and instructions for recording strings of text that are used as the values of RDA elements.

All of the items are associated with the choice and manipulation of strings used in SEs.

The Capitalization item also covers the normalization of transcribed strings used in unstructured descriptions.

All of the items cover strings in multiple languages and scripts.

## **Discussion**

### **Consistency**

The presentation of the content is inconsistent.

The following editorial guidance should be applied to the capitalization and phrasing of the labels of menu items:

- Menu labels should capitalize the first word and proper nouns only.

- Menu labels should be concise and consistent.

The arrangement of guidance and instructions varies between a focus on a specific language and a group of languages.

Content is variously presented as:

- a set of pages that are accessed via a table of contents (toc)
- a single page that is divided into subheadings
- a table

### **Language markup**

Toolkit content that is in a language that is different from the language selected for viewing must have markup to indicate the language for use by screen-reader software, and to indicate that the content should not be translated.

The markup is applied to the language content only, and is not applied to, for example, punctuation used to delimit lists of terms (otherwise a screen-reader set to read the punctuation would fail to deliver a good user experience). It is easier to apply markup to bulleted lists that do not require additional punctuation; the language indicator is set for the list as a whole.

For similar reasons, the current layout of language content in tables should be revised to accommodate language markup, or avoided altogether.

### **Coverage and focus**

The focus of the current guidance and instructions is Anglophone. The Toolkit assumes a user is describing mostly English-language manifestations, and requires detailed coverage of strings in English.

The user is also assumed to have a working knowledge of specific languages “other than English” and requires a ‘ready reference’ coverage of strings in that language.

These assumptions are no longer valid, and the Anglophone focus should be replaced by an equal treatment of English with other languages. The Toolkit should assume a user is describing manifestations in the language chosen to view the Toolkit, and requires a ‘ready reference’ coverage of other languages.

Detailed coverage of a specific language may be provided within the Toolkit ‘community’ area, according to the needs of that community, or by an external source.

The information about names of persons covers the processing of values of Person: name of person for use in Person: access point for person. This is likely to overlap with the information maintained by IFLA for its ‘Names of persons’ service.<sup>1</sup> The IFLA service is organized by country instead of language; this is presumably because the information is supplied by national libraries and similar agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Names of persons. Available at <https://www.ifla.org/node/4953>

Using language as the organizing principle is better for the Toolkit than using a country basis because it is likely to be more useful for the Toolkit user who is dealing with ‘foreign language’ manifestations. It also avoids issues for countries that are multilingual. However, there remains a general tension between a focus on language and a focus on country which requires balancing mechanisms such as cross-references between countries and their languages.

Not all ‘community’ SES content has a language focus and is more appropriately organized by country. For example, instructions for terms of rank are organized by country or language, as required.

**Recommendation 1: Organize the guidance and instructions for SESs by specific language or script where possible, with standard sections for each string process or aspect of syntax, such as capitalization, initial articles, names of persons, etc.**

There are over 60 languages associated with SES guidance and instructions. This is too long to be a submenu, so access to the content is via a table of contents on a ‘landing’ page. This results in a shorter menu and submenu display in the Toolkit that does not need visible division into sections.

A possible new structure for the Resource menu tab is:

Resources

- Glossary
- Vocabulary encoding schemes
- Community vocabularies
  - Abbreviations
    - Abbreviations for countries and states
    - Abbreviations in Cyrillic script
    - Abbreviations in Greek script
    - Abbreviations in Hebrew script
    - Abbreviations in Latin script
  - Books of the Bible
    - Books of the Bible: Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging
    - Festlegungen für den deutschen Sprachraum zum Erfassen der bevorzugten Titel von biblischen Schriften
    - Livres de la Bible : Bibliothèque et Archives Canada-Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
  - Terms for collective titles
  - Terms for gender
  - Terms for medium of performance
  - Terms in specific languages
    - [toc for 64 languages from Afrikaans to Yiddish]
  - Terms of rank
- Revision history
- AACR2

Further changes to the arrangement of the menu may arise following general discussion on ‘community’ vocabularies.

**Recommendation 2: Move the general guidance on capitalization of transcriptions to the Guidelines on normalized transcription.**

This work will be carried out as part of the ongoing SES Project and presented for RSC approval in due course.