

To: RDA Steering Committee

From: Kathy Glennan, RSC Chair

Subject: Outcomes of the October 2021 RSC Meeting

The October meeting of the RDA Steering Committee (RSC) once again was a virtual meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Held 12-15 October and 18-22 October 2021, this virtual meeting had two components: (1) an asynchronous meeting conducted online using Basecamp software, and (2) three video Zoom calls, two in executive session and one in public session and open to observers.

The meeting focused on three topics:

- The proposal [RSC/TechnicalWG/2021/2](#): Implementing the Collections Model in RDA
- The appointment of four new Working Groups for 2022-2023
- Continuing discussion of the Community Resources area in RDA Toolkit.

Participants included:

Linda Barnhart, *RSC Secretary*  
Renate Behrens, *Europe representative*  
Thomas Brenndorfer, *North America representative*  
Charlene Chou, *Wider Community Engagement Officer-Elect*  
Charlotte Christensen, *backup Oceania representative*  
Ahava Cohen, *backup Europe representative*  
Kathy Glennan, *RSC Chair*  
James Hennelly, *ALA Digital Publishing*  
Damian Iseminger, *Technical Team Liaison Officer*  
Ebe Kartus, *Wider Community Engagement Officer*  
Honor Moody, *RDA Examples Editor*  
Daniel Paradis, *Translations Team Liaison Officer*  
Melissa Parent, *Oceania representative*  
Elisa Sze, *Education and Orientation Officer*  
John Trevor-Allen, *RDA Board Chair-Elect*

There were 12 observers from 7 countries on the 18 October public session Zoom call.

Public minutes will be published soon on the [RSC website](#) and will include appendices holding the usual annual reports from RSC position holders, regional representatives, and liaisons to external organizations.



*The RSC at its virtual meeting October 2021 (Left to right, top to bottom): Linda Barnhart, Kathy Glennan, Ebe Kartus, Thomas Brenndorfer; Charlotte Christensen, Elisa Sze, Daniel Paradis, John Trevor-Allen; Damian Iseminger, Melissa Parent, Renate Behrens, Charlene Chou; James Hennelly, Honor Moody.*

## Proposal: RSC/TechnicalWG/2021/2

This [proposal](#), developed by the Technical Working Group, addressed the coverage of the concepts of “collections” and “collection level description” in RDA. It proposed new relationship and attribute elements, amendments to existing elements, two new vocabulary encoding schemes to support proposed attribute elements, and new terms for the RDA Terms vocabulary encoding scheme (also published in the RDA Glossary). The proposal, in four parts, was posted for public comment on the RSC website on 03 August.

The implementation of the IFLA Library Reference Model (LRM) treatment of aggregates in RDA during the 3R Project identified a requirement that RDA should also develop a treatment for “collections.” LRM provided a cursory treatment of collections; there is also an extensive literature of earlier, pre-LRM models for collections. The proposal includes a basic collections model diagram for a collection in RDA.

The proposal was discussed as part of the public session on the 18 October Zoom call as well as during the asynchronous part of the meeting. Most of the 67 recommendations were approved by unanimous consent, but a handful required deeper discussion. Foremost among the topics discussed was the definition and scope of the terms “metadata description set” and “metadata statement.” Several

recommendations will require follow-up actions, including drafting a new guidance chapter, adding terms to the two new vocabularies, extension of the concept of “bound with” to films spliced together, and issues raised by ARLIS/NA about “curator” and “collector” definitions.

The proposal as adjusted by RSC discussion will be implemented in the RDA Registry and RDA Toolkit and published in the next release. An [RSC Decisions document](#) has been published that includes the final wording of definitions and instructions, the new, deprecated and soft deprecated elements, and other changes, such as to element hierarchies and RDA vocabularies.

## New Working Groups

The RSC polished the terms of reference for four new Working Groups:

- [Extent Working Group](#)
- [Official Languages Working Group](#)
- [Place/Jurisdiction Working Group](#)
- [Religions in RDA Working Group](#)

These Working Groups will address areas in need of improvement in RDA, with their overall goal being the preparation of discussion papers or proposals for RSC consideration. International membership was sought for these groups, and invitations to potential members were extended in November and December. These task-and-finish working groups will be active in 2022-2023.

## Community Resources

The Community Resources area (on the Resources tab of RDA Toolkit) was an agenda topic for discussion, as has been the case with every RSC meeting in 2021. This discussion, however, led the RSC to reconsider some fundamental aspects of its structure and content, particularly for legacy instructions. Concerns were raised about maintenance and sustainability with the current approach. This area will continue to be explored in the coming RSC meetings, with discussions to center on where certain types of community RDA guidance belong in RDA Toolkit; what role user-contributed documents might play; the nature of “legacy” content; and how regimented or free-form the content should be.

## RSC Communication and Work Processes

**Guidance menu re-organization:** The idea of moving from a long alphabetical list of guidance chapters to a shorter list with topical subsections was raised earlier in the year by library school educators teaching the official Toolkit. The RSC recognized the need but decided not to make this change now, noting that there are some technical solutions that could be considered in the near future.

**RSC communications improvements:** Suggestions were made to improve external RSC communication, including adding an RSS feed for website updates, a list of new or revised website pages, more use of regional email lists and regional web pages, more engagement with social media, and consultation hours with RSC members.

**RDA workshop:** Ideas were floated for a multi-day, multi-track international workshop focused on RDA, potentially in 2023. The difficulty in arranging content across international time zones and the need for specific community training and participation were noted. Discussion points were received by ALA Digital Reference for further consideration.

**RSC Action Plans:** The 2022-2024 Action Plan will be refined and published early in the year.