

To: RDA Steering Committee
From: Kathy Glennan, RSC Chair
Subject: Official Languages Working Group, 2022-2023

This document sets out the membership, terms of reference, and specific tasks for the Official Languages Working Group.

The purpose of the Official Languages Working Group is to support the improvement of the RDA standard by examining the concept of “official language” for corporate bodies in RDA. The primary deliverable is a discussion paper or a proposal (or both if needed) describing whether and how this concept should be retained.

1 Background

This topic was on the agenda for the RSC in-person meeting in Santiago in 2019 as a Fast Track change proposal. The RSC determined that the proposal uncovered a bigger issue and could not be resolved by the Fast Track process and agreed to form a task-and-finish working group. Here are the minutes for this topic:

173.1 The RSC considered [Fast Track proposal 01](#) submitted by Paradis for changes to Corporate Body: *name of corporate body. Names of corporate body in more than one language*. Substantive discussion surrounded the concept of “official language” for a corporate body, a concept that seems to have been lost in the process of adjusting language in the beta Toolkit. Glennan presented a [flowchart](#) that demonstrated the complexity of the instructions. The committee agreed that this proposal uncovered a bigger issue and that it cannot be resolved through the Fast Track process. The RSC will consider establishing a Working Group to discuss the issue of “official language,” including whether to retain this concept and define it in the Glossary. “Official language” appears in five elements, and all need to be considered.

ACTION ITEM: The RSC will consider setting up a working group to examine the concept of “official language” in RDA. This will be discussed further when setting up the three-year operational plan.

The five (now four) elements are:

- Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body
- Corporate Body: category of corporate body

- Corporate Body: category of government
- Place: preferred name of place

2 Membership

Peter Rolla, USA, Chair

Christian Aliverti, Swiss National Library [temporary; awaiting expert arriving in February]

Christel Kayser, Bibliothèque nationale du Luxembourg

Hannes Lowagie, Royal Library of Belgium (KBR)

Hanock Roniger, Israel

Daniel Paradis, RSC Translation Team Liaison Officer, ex officio

3 Terms of Reference

The Working Group operates within [RSC/Operations/3](#), the general terms of reference for RSC Working Groups. As a task-and-finish group, the Working Group has a two-year term, 2022-2023.

4 Tasks

1. Review the documents in the reference sources section for fuller context of the issues.
2. Review the elements and instructions related to “official language” in both the original Toolkit and official Toolkit and evaluate the intended cataloguing outcomes for each.
3. Discuss whether the concept of “official language” should be retained in base RDA. Consider the potential need for changes to other elements. If the Working Group does not support including the concept of “official language” in base RDA, make recommendations for how this should be approached and documented by communities.
4. Prepare a discussion paper or proposal (or both if needed) for RSC review.

A discussion paper may request RSC feedback on issues or options, ask questions and/or suggest possible next steps. Discussion papers typically precede formal proposals to choose among multiple possibilities, or if the path isn't clear.

A proposal should have specific implementation recommendations for elements and/or guidance, including for the RDA Registry (new or re-defined elements,

semantics, hierarchy) and for RDA instructions (guidance, principles, conditions and options).

Either document may identify problem areas where further consultation is needed and provide recommendations for next steps where feasible. More information is available in [RSC/Operations/4](#) and [RSC/Operations/5](#), and proposals that can be considered models are on the [2021 Documents page](#). Questions may be sent to the RSC at any time from the working group chair to the RSC Chair.

5. Provide brief progress reports to the RSC in June and December 2022 and in June 2023.
 6. Provide a final report to the RSC in December 2023.
- 5 Reference sources
- [Fast Track proposal 2019](#): Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body/Names of corporate body in more than one language
 - [Language of corporate body flowchart](#) prepared by Glennan