

**To:** RDA Steering Committee  
**From:** Kathy Glennan, RSC Chair  
**Subject:** General Terms of Reference for RSC Working Groups

This document sets out the general terms of reference for an RSC Working Group.

Each RSC Working Group will have specific terms of reference within these general terms of reference.

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## 1 Background

The RDA Steering Committee (RSC) is responsible for the content of *RDA: Resource Description and Access*, a package of data elements, guidelines, and instructions for creating library and cultural heritage metadata that are well-formed according to international models. The overall structure is based on the IFLA Library Reference Model.

These metadata are intended to support the discovery and identification of resources in library and other cultural heritage collections.

RDA Toolkit provides guidelines and instructions about the user-focused entities, elements, and vocabulary encoding schemes intended for an agent who creates metadata.

RDA is developed in a collaborative process led by the RSC. The work of the RSC relies heavily on the members of its regional communities:

- Europe: the European RDA Interest Group (EURIG)
- North America: the North American RDA Committee (NARDAC)
- Oceania: the Oceania RDA Committee (ORDAC).

Regional committees are also anticipated for Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The RSC utilizes both standing Working Groups and task and finish Working Groups.

From time to time, the RSC may establish task and finish Working Groups to assist with the development of particular aspects of RDA, such as instructions covering specific types of content and media, supporting documentation, and the interoperability of RDA metadata.

## **2 Purpose**

The purpose of an RSC Working Group is to support the RSC in the development of RDA by producing discussion papers, recommendations, proposals, and other documents for consideration by the RSC.

## **3 Charge (Duties and Responsibilities)**

An RSC Working Group is charged to:

- Carry out the tasks assigned by the RSC in a timely and appropriate fashion.
- Seek the views of expert groups and individuals outside of its membership to inform its activities.
- Reach consensus on the content of documents developed by the group before submission to the RSC.
- Follow standard procedures and policies for submitting documents to the RSC, and any ad hoc instructions issued by the RSC Chair.
- Identify new tasks within the group's specific terms of reference and propose them to the RSC.

## **4 Members**

Membership of the groups may include RSC members, individuals from RSC communities, representatives of external groups, or individuals from other communities. Working group members will be selected based on their knowledge, expertise, and the contribution they are able to make to the group. If possible, working groups will have at least one representative from each region. A typical working group will have 7-15 members.

Each member is expected to:

- Bring professional or specialist knowledge to the group.
- Make an effective contribution to the work of the group.
- Promote the work of the Working Group and the RSC to peers.
- Give feedback to the member's community or external group, if applicable.

## **5 Tasks**

An RSC Working Group will normally be assigned a set of specific tasks approved by the RSC and numbered for identification and reference. Adjustments, such as the revision or addition of tasks, may be proposed by either the RSC or the Working Group. The RSC and the Working Group must agree on all tasks.

Tasks will be reviewed and approved by the RSC at its annual meeting, and at such other times as deemed necessary.

## **6 Resources and Method of Working**

The RSC will not normally provide funding to support an RSC Working Group or its members.

The RSC will provide access to RDA Toolkit and to internal RSC documents, as needed, to members of an RSC Working Group.

The RSC will provide public information about each RSC Working Group on the RSC website, including its terms of reference, current membership, current tasks and activities, and formal output.

An RSC Working Group is expected to carry out its tasks using a variety of communication channels, including:

- meetings
- remote conferencing facilities
- email
- collaborative workspaces.

The RSC can arrange access to remote conferencing facilities and to a collaborative workspace provided by ALA Publishing.

## **7 Standing Working Groups**

The RDA Board has established two standing working groups: the Technical Working Group and the Translations Working Group. The chairs of these two groups are also voting members of the RSC. Their selection and terms of service are described in RSC/Operations/1.

Standing working groups may only be established, reviewed, or terminated with permission of the RDA Board.

### *Selection of standing working group members*

Standing working group members are selected based on specific expertise and/or roles.

Technical Working Group members are appointed to two-year terms with the possibility of one renewal.

Translation Working Group members represent the different translation teams. They are selected by their language communities, who also determine their terms of service.

Term limit exceptions may be made with the agreement of the RSC.

### *Task forces*

With the approval of the RSC, standing working groups may form task forces to carry out specific work within a specified time frame. Members of the task forces will be nominated by the working group and the RSC. The RSC will approve the continuation of such task forces and their members on an annual basis.

## **8 Task and Finish Working Groups**

The RSC establishes task and finish working groups to address specific topics. Such working groups normally serve one to two years. Their duration may be extended in consultation with the RSC.

### *Selection of task and finish working group members*

RSC members nominate potential members of an RSC Working Group. The RSC approves the final membership list.

Task and finish working group members normally serve for the duration of the working group. If the group exists for more than two years, members may be reappointed with the agreement of the Chair of the Working Group and the RSC.

### *Chair*

The Chair of a task and finish RSC Working Group comes from among its members and is normally selected by the RSC. The responsibilities may be divided between two individual co-Chairs. In some cases, the working group may select its own Chair with RSC approval.

The Chair of an RSC Working Group is expected to:

- lead the Group by setting agendas, timescales, etc.

- liaise with the RSC Chair on a regular basis
- submit to the RSC regular reports of the activities of the Group and the status of its tasks
- present the output of the Group to the RSC at its meetings, as appropriate:
  - in person
  - using remote conferencing facilities
  - via a proxy
  - in a written report.

A working group chair serves for a two-year term, with the possibility of one renewal.

#### *Reporting line*

An RSC Working Group reports via its Chair to the RSC Chair. The Chair of the Working Group may nominate a proxy when appropriate.

#### *Review*

The RSC will review the need to continue each task and finish RSC Working Group on an annual basis.

#### *Termination*

The RSC will terminate a task and finish RSC Working Group if it deems that the Group has completed its activities, is no longer required, or is ineffective.

An RSC Working Group, through its chair, may ask the RSC to terminate the Group at any time. In either case, within three months of its termination, the Chair of the Working Group will send the RSC Secretary any relevant archival material, such as interim drafts of documents and data gathered to inform its activities, subject to data privacy and protection considerations. This material may be used for the future development of RDA. The RSC will not normally publish such material without the permission of the members of the Working Group.