

To: RDA Steering Committee
From: Renate Behrens, RSC Chair
Subject: RDA/MARC 21 Alignment Task Force, 2025

This document sets out the general terms of reference, charge, and membership for the RDA/MARC 21 Alignment Task Force. It supersedes [RSC/Chair/2023/10](#) and differs from it only in membership. Links to other RSC documents have also been updated to URIs where available¹.

Contents

- 1 [General terms of reference](#)
- 2 [Background](#)
- 3 [Charge \(duties and responsibilities\)](#)
- 4 [Membership](#)

1 General terms of reference

This RDA/MARC 21 Alignment Task Force is a standing task force. It is a sub-body of the Technical Working Group and reports to its chair. The length of service for task force members is open-ended.

This Task Force is charged by the RSC, which appoints the members in consultation with the Working Group. The Working Group administers the operations of the Task Force.

2 Background

RDA Toolkit has always offered an alignment between RDA elements and the MARC 21 Authority and Bibliographic formats.²

The alignment is one-way (RDA to MARC 21).

¹ From 2023, the RSC has access to URIs for its documents in its repository at ALAIR. Wherever possible, links are given to URIs in preference to URLs.

² This is not, strictly speaking, a linked data or semantic map because there is no formal representation of MARC 21 in Resource Description Framework (RDF). Instead, an alignment matches an RDA element to a string that represents the corresponding MARC 21 tag, indicators, and subfield. The alignments are one-to-many: a single RDA element aligns with multiple combinations of tag, indicators, and subfield. The alignments are complex.

The 3R Project changed the presentation of the alignment within the Toolkit from a table to an in-context display within the Element Reference section of the relevant RDA element.

Because of the need for long-term maintenance of the RDA to MARC 21 alignments and because the experts had been working ad hoc, the RSC approved the creation of this Task Force at its October 2020 meeting (see [RSC/Minutes/Restricted/236-260](#) Item 243).

Procedures for maintaining the alignments from RDA elements to MARC21 Authority and Bibliographic encoding formats was prepared by the Chair of the Technical Working Group in November 2020. General documentation about the development and maintenance of mappings and alignments will be prepared in due course.

3 Charge (duties and responsibilities)

The Task Force is charged to:

- Create, coordinate, and maintain the alignment between RDA elements and MARC 21 fields, subfields, and indicators
- Hold ad hoc meetings as needed to address alignment issues
- Prepare reports or recommendations as needed
- Advise on infrastructure, workflow, and documentation for maintaining the alignment
- Advise on the publication of the alignment in RDA Vocabularies in GitHub
- Advise on presentation of alignment in the official Toolkit
- Consult on the development of inverse alignments within or associated with RDA Toolkit as needed
- Advise on the development of a general mapping/alignments tool when undertaken

4 Membership

Christopher Holden, Chair and Technical Team Liaison Officer; Library of Congress, USA

Corine Deliot, British Library [for MARC 21 Bibliographic Format]

Hong Cui, Libraries and Archives Canada/Bibliothèque et Archives Canada [for MARC 21 Authority Format]

Victoria Morris, British Library [for MARC 21 Bibliographic Format]

James Hennelly, ALA Digital Reference, *ex officio*

5 Reference

Procedures for maintaining the alignments from RDA elements to MARC21 Authority and Bibliographic encoding formats (Restricted: available on the RDA Toolkit Data shared drive).