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*Information et documentation — L'ensemble des éléments de
métadonnées Dublin Core*



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Foreword

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International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 15836 was prepared by the National Information Standards Organization (as ANSI/NISO Z39.85-2001) and was adopted, under a special "fast-track procedure", by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Technical interoperability* in parallel with its approval by the ISO member bodies.

Introduction

The Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) began in 1995 with an invitational workshop in Dublin, Ohio that brought together librarians, digital library researchers, content providers, and text-markup experts to improve discovery standards for information resources. The original Dublin Core emerged as a small set of descriptors that quickly drew global interest from a wide variety of information providers in the arts, sciences, education, business, and government sectors.

Since the original workshop, there has been steadily growing interest in resource descriptions that are easy to create and that almost anyone can understand. The potential to increase visibility of resources in a collection across sectors and subject domains, and to do so at low cost, is broadly appealing. Services needing semantically rich descriptions would continue to provide them, but would attract cross-disciplinary discovery by also providing universally understandable descriptions that are common across disciplines. The digital tourist metaphor is apt. Internet travellers seeking information in foreign disciplines can use the Dublin Core's constrained vocabulary to obtain basic guidance in a language that they understand. Full accessibility to the culture and its services still requires mastery of the local vocabulary and environment, but a set of simple facts inscribed in Dublin Core can bring to the tourist's attention a foreign information portal that might otherwise have escaped notice.

The interest in cross-domain discovery fueled growing participation in a series of subsequent DCMI workshops. The Dublin Core Metadata element set described here is a set of 15 descriptors that resulted from this effort in interdisciplinary and international consensus building. The Dublin Core now exists in over 20 translations, has been adopted by CEN/ISSS (European Committee for Standardization/Information Society Standardization System), and is documented in two Internet RFCs (Requests for Comments). It also has official standing within the WWW Consortium and ISO 23950. Dublin Core metadata has been approved as a US National Standard (ANSI/NISO Z39.85), formally endorsed by over seven governments for promoting discovery of government information in electronic form, and adopted by a number of supranational agencies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO). Numerous community-specific metadata initiatives in library, archival, educational and governmental applications use the Dublin Core as their basis.

The Dublin Core is not intended to displace any other metadata standard. Rather, it is intended to coexist, often in the same resource description, with metadata standards that offer other semantics. It is fully expected that descriptive records will contain a mixture of elements drawn from various metadata standards, both simple and complex. Examples of this kind of mixing, and of HTML encoding of Dublin Core in general, are given in RFC 2731 [RFC2731].

The simplicity of Dublin Core can be both a strength and a weakness. Simplicity lowers the cost of creating metadata and promotes interoperability. On the other hand, simplicity does not accommodate the semantic and functional richness supported by complex metadata schemes. In effect, the Dublin Core element set trades richness for wide visibility. The design of Dublin Core mitigates this loss by encouraging the use of richer metadata schemes in combination with Dublin Core. Richer schemes can also be mapped to Dublin Core for export or for cross-system searching. Conversely, simple Dublin Core records can be used as a starting point for the creation of more complex descriptions.

The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set

1. Scope and Purpose

The Dublin Core metadata element set is a standard for cross-domain information resource description. Here an information resource is defined to be anything that has identity; this is the definition used in Internet RFC 2396, "Uniform Resource Identifiers (URI): Generic Syntax," by Tim Berners-Lee et al. For Dublin Core applications a resource will typically be an electronic document.

This standard is for the element set only, which is generally used in the context of a specific project or application. Local or community based requirements and policies may impose additional restrictions, rules, and interpretations. It is not the purpose of this standard to define the detailed criteria by which the element set will be used with specific projects and applications.

This standard supersedes Internet RFC 2413, which was the first published version of the Dublin Core.

2. Referenced Standards

[DCT] DCMI Type Vocabulary. DSMI Recommendation, 11 July 2000.
<http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-type-vocabulary/>

[ISO3166] ISO 3166 - Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions
<http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/prods-services/iso3166ma/02iso-3166-code-lists/index.html>

[ISO639] ISO 639-2 - Codes for the representation of names of languages - Part 2: Alpha-3 code (ISO 639-2:1998). <http://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/langhome.html>

[MIME] Internet Media Types
<http://www.isi.edu/in-notes/iana/assignments/media-types/media-types>

[RFC3066] Tags for the identification of Languages, Internet RFC 3066. <http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3066.txt>

[RFC2396] Uniform Resource Identifiers (URI): Generic Syntax, Internet RFC 2396.
<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2396.txt>

[RFC2413] Dublin Core Metadata for Resource Discovery, Internet RFC 2413.
<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2413.txt>

[RFC2731] Encoding Dublin Core Metadata in HTML. Internet RFC 2731.
<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2731.txt>

[TGN] Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names.
<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabulary/tgn/index.html>

[W3CDTF] Date and Time Formats, W3C Note. <http://www.w3.org/TR/NOTE-datetime>

[XML] Extensible Markup Language. <http://www.w3.org/TR/REC-xml>

3. Definitions

DCMI — Dublin Core Metadata Initiative, the maintenance agency for the Dublin Core.

Information resource — anything that has identity (the same definition as in Internet RFC 2396).

Lifecycle of an information resource — a sequence of events that mark the development and use of an information resource. Some examples of events in a lifecycle are: Conception of an invention, Creation of a draft, Revision of an article, Publication of a book, Acquisition by a library, Transcription to magnetic disk, Migration to optical storage, Translation into English, and Derivation of a new work (e.g., a movie).

4. The Element Set

In the element descriptions below, each element has a descriptive label intended to convey a common semantic understanding of the element, as well as a unique, machine-understandable, single-word name intended to make the syntactic specification of elements simpler for encoding schemes.

Although some environments, such as HTML, are not case-sensitive, it is recommended best practice always to adhere to the case conventions in the element names given below to avoid conflicts in the event that the metadata is subsequently extracted or converted to a case-sensitive environment, such as XML (Extensible Markup Language) [XML].

Each element is optional and repeatable. Metadata elements may appear in any order. The ordering of multiple occurrences of the same element (e.g., Creator) may have a significance intended by the provider, but ordering is not guaranteed to be preserved in every system.

To promote global interoperability, a number of the element descriptions suggest a controlled vocabulary for the respective element values. It is assumed that other controlled vocabularies will be developed for interoperability within certain local domains.

5. The Elements

Element Name: Title

Label: Title

Definition: A name given to the resource.

Comment: Typically, Title will be a name by which the resource is formally known.