



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 27729**

**Information and documentation —  
International standard name  
identifier (ISNI)**

*Information et documentation — Code international normalisé  
des noms (ISNI)*

**Second edition  
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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents). ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 9, *Identification and description*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 27729:2012), of which it constitutes a minor revision. It also incorporates the Technical Corrigendum ISO 27729:2012/Cor 1:2023.

The changes are as follows:

- correction of a typographical error previously present in [Table A.1](#), such that the last line in the Result column of Step 5 now correctly reads “320 / 11 = 29 remainder 1”;
- minor editorial changes to align this document to the current ISO/IEC Directives Part 2:2021 and to improve the description of relevant principles and source references.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

This document includes a specification for an identifier for the public identities of parties. It aims to provide an efficient means to disambiguate such public identities in the digital environment so that the roles participants play in creation, production, management and content distribution chains can be recognized accurately, and the content they are involved in creating can be managed effectively.

Identifiers created under this document can be used to identify public identities of parties in databases and they can support the exchange of information in the management of media content.

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# Information and documentation — International standard name identifier (ISNI)

## 1 Scope

This document specifies the International Standard name identifier (ISNI) for the identification of public identities of parties, i.e. the identities used publicly by parties involved throughout the media content industries in the creation, production, management and content distribution chains.

The ISNI system uniquely identifies public identities across multiple fields of creative activity and provides a tool for disambiguating public identities that might otherwise be confused.

The ISNI is not intended to provide direct access to comprehensive information about a public identity but can provide links to other systems where such information is held.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 7064, *Information technology — Security techniques — Check character systems*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### **party**

natural person or legal person, whether or not incorporated, or a group of either

### 3.2

#### **registrant**

*party* (3.1) that requests an ISNI from the Registration Authority

### 3.3

#### **public identity**

identity of a *party* (3.1) or a fictional character that is or was presented to the public

### 3.4

#### **name**

character string by which a *public identity* (3.3) is or was commonly referenced

## 4 Structure and syntax of the ISNI

4.1 An ISNI shall consist of 16 digits. It shall consist of two components:

- a) 15 decimal digits, and
- b) a check character.

4.2 An ISNI shall consist of a “dumb” number, of which no meaning shall be embedded in, conveyed by or imputed to any part or subset of the number.

4.3 When an ISNI is written, printed or otherwise presented in a human-readable format:

- a) it shall be preceded by the letters ISNI, separated from the identifier by a space, and
- b) the 16 digits shall be displayed as four blocks of four digits, with each block separated from the next by a space.

EXAMPLE      ISNI 1422 4586 3573 0476

The characters “ISNI” and the space characters shall not be considered to form part of the ISNI.

4.4 The check character may be either a decimal digit or the character “X” and shall be calculated using the preceding 15 decimal digits in accordance with the ISO/IEC 7064, MOD 11-2 algorithm, as described in [Annex A](#).

## 5 Allocation of an ISNI

The principles for the allocation and use of an ISNI shall be in accordance with [Annex B](#).

## 6 Administration of the ISNI system

The ISNI system shall be administered by the Registration Authority of this document, hereafter referred to as the ISNI Registration Authority.

The ISNI Registration Authority shall be responsible for defining the system architecture supporting the ISNI.

The principal tasks of the ISNI Registration Authority shall be in accordance with those outlined in [Annex C](#).

## 7 Association of an ISNI with ISNI metadata

An ISNI shall be associated with ISNI metadata (as specified in [Annex D](#)) about the public identity it identifies by means of a register. The ISNI Registration Authority shall be responsible for the maintenance of this register.

## 8 Association of an ISNI with other identifiers

The relationship of an ISNI with other identifiers is described in [Annex E](#).



**Annex A**  
(normative)

**Method for calculating the check character of an ISNI**

**A.1 General**

The purpose of the check character is to guard against errors caused by the incorrect transcription of an ISNI.

**A.2 Calculation of the check character**

The check character shall be calculated in accordance with ISO/IEC 7064, MOD 11-2. The check character shall always be located in the extreme right (low order) position.

Multiply the character values by their weights, then add the products. Strings including the check character are valid if the sum of these products is congruent to 1 (mod 11).

**Table A.1 — Method for calculating the check character of 1422 4586 3573 047**

Step	Procedure	Result														
1	Take the weighting factors associated with each digit position as defined in <a href="#">Table A.2</a> . The check digit has position 1 and is not included at this stage.	10	5	8	4	2	1	6	3	7	9	10	5	8	4	2
2	Take the first fifteen digits of the ISNI. The check character will be the sixteenth and last character.	1	4	2	2	4	5	8	6	3	5	7	3	0	4	7
3	Multiply each digit in turn by its weighting factor.	10	20	16	8	8	5	48	18	21	45	70	15	0	16	14
4	Add these numbers together.	10 + 20 + 16 + 8 + 8 + 5 + 48 + 18 + 21 + 45 + 70 + 15 + 0 + 16 + 14 = 314														
5	Select a number such as its sum with the previous result is congruent to 1 (mod 11). If the above number is 10 then replace it by an "X".	314 + 6 = 320 and 320 / 11 = 29 remainder 1														
6	Append the result of step 5, which is the check character, to the extreme right (low order) position of the base number of the ISNI.	1422 4586 3573 0476														
NOTE		A number is congruent to 1 (mod 11) when the division of this number by 11 yields a remainder of 1.														

**Table A.2 — Weights of the 16 digits**

Position	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Weight	10	5	8	4	2	1	6	3	7	9	10	5	8	4	2	1

The weight,  $w_i$ , is calculated using  $w_i = 2^{(i-1)} \pmod{11}$  where  $i$  is the digit position starting from the right and mod 11 is the Modulus 11.

## Annex B (normative)

### General principles for the allocation and use of ISNI

An ISNI shall be allocated in accordance with the following principles.

- a) The ISNI Registration Authority shall be responsible for allocating an ISNI to a public identity of a party upon request by a registrant.
- b) The same ISNI shall be allocated to one and only one public identity of a party.
- c) Alternative spellings, alternative presentations, character set variances, script variances and linguistic variances do not by themselves justify the allocation of different ISNIs.

EXAMPLE 1 William Shakespear and William Shakespeare are alternative spellings of the same name.

EXAMPLE 2 e. e. cummings and E. E. Cummings or Oxford University Press and OUP are alternative presentations of the same name.

EXAMPLE 3 Günter Graß, Guenter Grass and Guenter Graß are character set variants of the same name.

EXAMPLE 4 Ciaikovsky, Pjotr Iljč is a script variant of Пётр Ильич Чайковский.

EXAMPLE 5 Pyotr Tchaikovsky and Peter Tchaikovsky are linguistic variants of the same name.

- d) Multiple public identities relating to the same party shall have separate ISNIs.

EXAMPLE Ruth Rendell and Barbara Vine are two public identities of the same party. Ruth Rendell and Barbara Vine are allocated distinct ISNIs.

- e) Corporate entity name changes resulting from splits or mergers justify the allocation of a different ISNI.

EXAMPLE 1 Charles Scribner's Sons merged in 1978 with Atheneum to become The Scribner Book Companies. All three entities are allocated different ISNIs.

EXAMPLE 2 Warner Music Group was split off from Time Warner. Warner Music Group is allocated a new ISNI.

- f) Links between multiple public identities relating to the same party may be established by including the related ISNI and the type of relationship in the metadata set of the ISNI of each public identity as described in [D.3](#).

EXAMPLE The ISNI metadata set for Ruth Rendell can include the following metadata elements:

— Related identifier: ISNI 0000 0003 6864 7620

— Type of relationship: "is the pseudonym of"

ISNI 0000 0003 6864 7620 being the ISNI for Barbara Vine.

- g) An ISNI can be allocated to groups of natural persons or legal persons.

EXAMPLE The Beatles can be allocated an ISNI.

- h) Once allocated, an ISNI shall never be re-used by being allocated to another public identity, even if it is found to have been issued in error. If a party or an entity ceases to operate, the ISNI allocated to its public identities continues to identify it.

- i) The ISNI Registration Authority shall define different classes of registrants and rules governing their authority to act on behalf of, or in respect of, parties in applying for an ISNI.