

RDA Archives and Records Professionals for Research Data IG Meeting Minutes

RDA Plenary 8, Denver. 16 September 2016

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1. Introductions

The group's co-chairs introduced themselves. Two new co-chairs have joined the group since the previous plenary - Sarah Ramdeen (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and Laura Molloy (University of Oxford/Glasgow).

2. IG charter

Sarah updated the group on the feedback received from the RDA Technical Advisory Board (TAB) on the group's charter. The feedback and the group's response to it were discussed at the IG teleconference in August, so the group chairs will progress this and resubmit it to TAB.

3. Activity planning

The group then discussed possible topics for the IG to focus on, and the potential to develop Working Groups which could generate concrete outputs relating to these topics. Topics had been gathered in advance of the meeting, and were presented as short pitches. The presented topics were: appraisal; trusted digital repositories; training for archivists; preservation of physical samples; digital preservation; recordkeeping for RDA; and privacy. The group then selected the four most popular topics, and four parallel breakout groups discussed the potential work that could be done on these topics.

Digital preservation (Rebecca):

Although there is a Preservation e-Infrastructures IG, it was felt that digital preservation still represents a gap to be addressed in RDA. The group discussed the problem that digital preservation can easily be ignored by institutions and individual researchers. We should also consider that many researchers do not know what digital preservation is, or why it is important. Records professionals can contribute knowledge and skills, e.g. their experiences with e-records management - early intervention in terms of file formats, metadata etc. are important for preserving research data too.

Potential outputs were discussed, and it was decided that a publication (in the form of guidelines or a factsheet) could provide information to the RDA community and establish the Archives group as experts in this area. A publication which suggests achievable levels of preservation from minimal to best practice (similar to the 5 Star Open Data principles) could be both informative and useful. This should be based

on extensive research and consensus from the Archives group. It did not seem that this task should lead to the formation of a new Working Group however.

RDA Recordkeeping (Elise):

RDA has begun to invest resources into the archiving of RDA's own records and documents. Archival expertise required. Elise will be working with secretariat, TAB, WGs and IGs chairs, and other groups to develop plan for retention schedule and organising records in a coherent way for now and the future.

The breakout sessions around RDA recordkeeping involved going into more detail about the problem. We heard from individuals who work within RDA governance as well as folks more "on the ground" in RDA. It became clear throughout the conversation that the project needs to incorporate more of a "human element" than Elise had originally conceived of. The group discussed ideas around conducting focus groups and/or interviews with RDA stakeholders to get a better sense of their recordkeeping needs.

Education and Training (Laura):

We had lively interest in the education and training discussion but sadly there was only one archivist in the group. However, we identified that training and education is not only pertinent to archivists, but is also important for those who work with archivists both within their host organisation (developers, management, other information professionals) and beyond it (archive users, researchers, funders). In order to identify a useful way towards identifying skills and competences for these different audiences, LM proposed an examination of the DigCurV digital curation curriculum framework (freely available at <http://www.digcur-education.org/>) in order to check its usefulness for the archive professional. It was agreed that the structure - with its three organisational levels (i.e. 1. Practitioner; 2. middle / programme / project manager; 3. Senior executive) would lend itself well to a structured understanding of the skills and competences for the archivist working with digital holdings. We haven't yet identified the individual to lead the activity, but LM is happy to keep the group up to date with a similar activity being planned with the IG Libraries. A volunteer to run the activity would be welcome, either as a formal WG or as an output from the IG Archives. Anyone interested should contact Laura at the email address supplied above.

Appraisal (Sarah):

The appraisal group decided on two major tasks that could be done by the community. The first is to develop a literature review and the second would be to develop domain specific reworkings of the DCC guidelines on appraisal. With the literature review, it would be community generated, hosted on our RDA site. We can have a call for literature/citations and allow for feedback and suggestions on use from the community. The audience would be the interest group so that we do not duplicate tasks. It could also be used for outreach into various communities such as libraries, digital preservation, etc. for collaboration, conversations, and next steps. The deadline for this task would be by the RDA P9 in Barcelona. This would give us a scope and time frame to limit the task so it would not get out of hand/too large.

The audience for the domain specific guidelines would be people/organizations with little or no access to archival professionals in their organization. This might help to develop connections or encourage new roles in the organization. Task would include identifying groups to work with from RDA (WG/IG), and determining what work has already been done or already exists. 14 years ago, ICA-SUV created some but they might need to be updated. And this is a group we might engage with. This task would involve volunteers 1) in groups and 2) outwards to interested people that might join the interest group.