

**Orbis Cascade Alliance**  
**Content Creation & Dissemination Team, Digital Content Metadata Group**  
**Digital Content Dublin Core Best Practices Draft Guidelines**  
**2015 November 9: For distribution and review at the Alliance**

The purpose of the Orbis Cascade Alliance's Dublin Core Best Practices Guidelines are to:

- Ensure a basic level of uniformity in the structure, encoding, and content of Alliance digital object metadata in keeping with the Mountain West Digital Library Dublin Core metadata application profile and other relevant standards
- Promote interoperability within Alliance institutions metadata records developed from diverse repositories
- Facilitate access to digital content by end users

These guidelines are not to be used for Encoded Archival Description (EAD) records; for those, please consult the Alliance's EAD Best Practice Guidelines at <https://www.orbiscascade.org/best-practices-for-ead-1/>.

The need for shared digital object metadata standards was well demonstrated by the IMLS National Leadership Grant, 2011-2014:

- The project demonstrated that large-scale metadata wrangling is not feasible or scalable
- The AEW Working Group conclusions include a recommendation for the Alliance members to adopt a single minimal metadata standard across all institutions
- A shared minimal metadata standard cuts down considerably on the amount of metadata cleanup and enhancement that needs to be done centrally
- Minimal metadata standard allows the Alliance to prepare for participation in DPLA in the future even if that's not the road chosen now
- Adoption of a minimal standard would increase the need for training across Alliance institutions to bring everyone's metadata up to minimal standards
- Adopting a simple backend OAI harvest allows for less staffing, but training is still an issue regardless.

Intended audience: Alliance members who create and manage digital object metadata. These standards focus ultimately on producing the desired outputs, but offer guidance on how to create metadata such that it will most easily create those desired outputs.

The DC Best Practices assume use of Qualified Dublin Core and will harvest accordingly. Institutions may use Simple Dublin Core if they wish.

Other institutions are free to adopt the Orbis Cascade Alliance Dublin Core Best Practices Guidelines, in full or in part, for their local use.

These guidelines are based on the Mountain West Digital Library Dublin Core Application Profile, Version 2.0, released July 20, 2011.

IMLS Grant Working Group, 2014 September:

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- Sam Meister, University of Montana
- Tom Johnson, Oregon State University/Digital Public Library of America
- Kira Homo, University of Oregon
- Leigh Grinstead, Metadata Consultant
- Jodi Allison-Bunnell, Alliance staff

Digital Content Metadata Working Group, 2015 September:

- Ann Lally, University of Washington (chair)
- Theo Gerontakos, University of Washington
- Michael Boock, Oregon State University
- Devin Becker, University of Idaho
- Stephanie Beene, Lewis & Clark College
- Rick Block, Seattle University
- Jodi Allison-Bunnell, Alliance staff

It is strongly recommended that all digital objects, whether connected to finding aids that have been contributed to the Archives West database or not, comply with minimal guidelines for Dublin Core elements and attributes that are designated "Required" and "Optional."

Element	URI	Definition	Notes
<b>Required</b>			
Identifier	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/identifier">http://purl.org/dc/terms/identifier</a>	An unambiguous reference to the resource within a given context.	<p>Many digital asset management systems, such as CONTENTdm and bepress Digital Commons, automatically create, populate, and map the main identifier field to DC Terms:identifier. This main identifier is a URL for the resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In CONTENTdm, it has the format <a href="http://[domain]/u?[alias],[CONTENTdm number]">http://[domain]/u?[alias],[CONTENTdm number]</a> and serves as the “Reference URL” of the resource.</li> <li>• In BePress Digital Commons, it has the format <a href="http://[domain]/[collection]/[number]">http://[domain]/[collection]/[number]</a></li> </ul> <p>Your system should map only one term to Identifier.</p>
Date	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/date">http://purl.org/dc/terms/date</a>	A point or period of time associated with an event in the lifecycle of the resource.	<p>A resource may have several dates associated with it. The date covered in this table refers to creation of the original resource, that is, when the resource was first created, before undergoing any conversion</p> <p>For resources created in a non-digital format and converted to digital format, use the date the non-digital resource was first created -- e.g., for print books, use the publication date of the print book.</p> <p>For resources that have always been in digital format and never converted, use the date the digital resource was created -- e.g., PDF document uploaded as a PDF document.</p>

			<p>For resources that were first created in one digital format, the converted to another digital format -- e.g., audio file recorded in WAV format, then converted to MP3 format -- use creation date of the first digital format -- e.g., WAV. Additional types of dates (see refinements) are allowed, though only one date (i.e., date of the original) should be mapped to dcterms:date to prevent confusion in harvesting environments that use only simple DC.</p> <p>If the date is unknown, specify an estimated date or date range. See General Guidelines for Digital Metadata for more information about types of dates.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: Use ISO 8601:2004 formatting for dates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Year: YYYY (e.g. 1997)</li><li>• Year and month: YYYYMM (e.g. 199707)</li><li>• Complete date: YYYYMMDD (e.g. 19970716)</li><li>• Complete date plus hours and minutes: YYYYMMDDThh:mmTZD (e.g. 19970716T19:20+01:00)</li><li>• Complete date plus hours, minutes and seconds: YYYYMMDDThh:mm:ssTZD (e.g.19970716T19:20:30+01:00)</li><li>• Complete date plus hours, minutes, seconds and a decimal fraction of a second: YYYYMMDDThh:mm:ss.sTZD (e.g. 19970716T19: 20:30.45+01:00)</li><li>• Date range: YYYY/YYYY (e.g. 1900/1920)</li><li>• Decade: YYYu (e.g. 194u)</li><li>• Circa/approximate: YYYY~ (1886~)</li></ul>
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			For other more complex examples please see the EDTF proposed standard at the Library of Congress ( <a href="http://www.loc.gov/standards/datetime/pre-submission.html">http://www.loc.gov/standards/datetime/pre-submission.html</a> ), or consult Alliance staff.
Type	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/type">http://purl.org/dc/terms/type</a>	The nature or genre of the resource.	<p>Must have at least one type field containing appropriate type(s) from DCMI Type vocabulary.</p> <p>For images, refine with a second term, either StillImage or MovingImage (i.e., use Image;StillImage or Image;MovingImage). Note that these combined terms contain no space after the semicolon and that both words in the second term are capitalized.</p> <p>If a resource is an image of text (such as a scan of a printed article), use the term Text.</p> <p>If the resource consists of more than one type (e.g., an interview with sound and text files), use multiple type terms as needed to describe, separating them with a semicolon and a space (e.g., Sound; Text).</p>
Title	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/title">http://purl.org/dc/terms/title</a>	A name given to the resource.	<p>Take title from digitized item when possible. Metadata creator may supply a title if none exists and does not need to put this supplied title in brackets.</p> <p><b>Use DACS 2nd edition 2.3 or Cataloging Cultural Objects Chapter 1 for information about creating a title element</b></p>
Rights	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/rights">http://purl.org/dc/terms/rights</a>	Information about rights held in and over the resource.	Use Rights to describe the copyright status of the access file, its copyright holder and contact information (if applicable), and physical ownership rights (if applicable). Choose from the standard list of rights statements developed

			with the Digital Public Library of America and Europeana. ( <a href="http://rightsstatements.org/files/151002recommendations_for_standardized_international_rights_statements.pdf">http://rightsstatements.org/files/151002recommendations_for_standardized_international_rights_statements.pdf</a> )
<b>Required if Applicable</b>			
Creator	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/creator">http://purl.org/dc/terms/creator</a>	An entity primarily responsible for making the resource.	<p>Person or entity responsible for creating intellectual content of resource such as a person, organization or service. Prefer form of name as verified in the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF). If name is not listed there, give name in the following format: Last name, First name, Middle initial and period, year of birth and/or death if known, separated by a hyphen.</p> <p>For further help in formatting names not found in LCNAF, consult a cataloging resource such as the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2), Resource Description and Access (RDA), or Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS), 1st Edition.</p> <p>If creator is unknown, leave the field blank. If the work is credited to an anonymous creator, use that term.</p> <p>Examples:  Aggens, Steffen Heinrich, 1834-1888  Callaway Family  Adelphian Literary Society (Oregon State University)</p>
Relation	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/relation">http://purl.org/dc/terms/relation</a>	A related resource.	Value MUST be a URI for a related resource. In almost all cases this will be an EAD Archival Resource Key (ARK) URI that points to the EAD finding aid in Archives West.

Spatial	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/spatial">http://purl.org/dc/terms/spatial</a>	Spatial coverage	<p>Use the coverage element in a spatial sense. This element is the topic of the resource, the spatial applicability of the resource, or the jurisdiction under which the resource is relevant. Use LCSH, TGN, or Geonames; Geonames preferred.</p> <p>At a minimum, account for country and state.</p> <p><u>Geonames Examples</u>  <i>Note: these examples are based on the recommendations of the recommendations of the Mountain West Digital Library's Geospatial Discovery Task Force - Their final report and relevant instructions can be found here:</i>  <a href="https://sites.google.com/site/mwdlgeospatial/home">https://sites.google.com/site/mwdlgeospatial/home</a></p> <p><i>Minimum -</i>  <b>Ellensburg, Kittitas County, Washington, United States</b></p> <p><i>Recommended -</i>  <b>Ellensburg, Kittitas County, Washington, United States,</b>  <a href="http://www.geonames.org/5793639/">http://www.geonames.org/5793639/</a></p> <p><i>Recommended (with coordinates) -</i>  <b>Ellensburg, Kittitas County, Washington, United States,</b>  <a href="http://www.geonames.org/5793639/">http://www.geonames.org/5793639/</a>, 46.99651, -120.54785</p> <p><u>LCSH Example</u>  United States--Washington (State)--Seattle</p>

Language	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/language">http://purl.org/dc/terms/language</a>	The language of the resource	Use ISO 639-3 three letter codes. For multiple languages, use separate language fields or list all in a single field, separating each with a semicolon and a space. More detail about the languages may be included in the Description element. Example: In German and English in parallel columns.
Source	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/source">http://purl.org/dc/terms/source</a>	A related resource from which the described resource is derived.	Put physical location information (for collections managed archivally, box/folder) here
<b>Optional</b>			
Subject	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/subject">http://purl.org/dc/terms/subject</a>	The topic of the content resource.	Describe what the resource content is about, expressed in keywords, phrases, names, subject headings, or classification codes. Use a standard vocabulary and indicate the vocabulary in your own system -- e.g., Subject LCSH or Subject (LCSH); subjectKW. Use a standard source including: LCSH, AAT, TGM
Description	<a href="http://purl.org/dc/terms/description">http://purl.org/dc/terms/description</a>	An account of the content of the resource.	Use standard punctuation and grammar to describe the item's history, physical appearance, contents, abstract, etc.  Do not put fulltext transcription in this field. Use DACS 2nd edition element 3.1, scope and content, for formation guidelines.  <b>A description is strongly recommended.</b>
Thumbnail	<a href="http://schema.org/thumbnail">http://schema.org/thumbnail</a>	A small image representing the object for display in aggregated discovery interfaces.	Institutions supply thumbnails as a URL. If institutions do not supply a thumbnail, a placeholder image based on DCMI type will be supplied during aggregation.



			<p>Institutions can supply a placeholder image if they prefer.</p> <p>Use the following parameters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The thumbnail should be up to 160x160 with at least one dimension at 160</li><li>• The format should be JPEG</li></ul>
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