

Working Group Guidelines

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1. Group scope and conditions

RDA Working Groups (WGs) are groups of experts that provide specific solutions for data sharing, exchange, and interoperability over a short and focused period. The scope and conditions of WGs can be extracted from the RDA website [1, 2, 3, 4, 5], and the RDA WG Template [6], as outlined in the table below:

Table 1: WG scope and conditions overview

#	Condition	Description	Source
1	Duration of 12-18 months	WGs are expected to finish within roughly 12-18 months of work	1, 2
2	Focused and substantive outcome	WG outcomes should address a specific roadblock in a substantive way, relating to "data sharing and exchange, interoperability, data use and re-use, data discoverability and analysis, data stewardship and preservation, and best practices for substantive communities" [1]	1, 6
3	Specific community audience	WGs efforts "have substantive applicability to particular segments of the data community, but may not apply to everyone." [1]	1, 5, 6
4	Publish recommendations	WGs must produce a set of recommendations, consisting of e.g. "specifications, taxonomies or ontologies, workflows, schemas, data models, etc." [3]. Recommendations must go through the RDA endorsement process, and are published following submission requirements in an open format. Additional, "Supporting Outputs" may also be published, but are not required (see section 3) [4].	2, 3, 4
5	Openness & transparency	WGs are expected to "work openly and transparently with respect to the community [...and] utilize the RDA website and online interaction channels to: engage the community; keep the community informed of their efforts; make intermediate and final deliverables/outcomes available to the community.	5, 6
6	Documentation	WGs should "document their efforts as they operate on the WG webpage" [5]	5, 6
7	RDA Coordination	WGs must "meet regularly with the RDA to facilitate coordination and communication" [5]	5, 6
8	Develop and carry out "action plan"	"RDA WG members should commit their time and effort to making the WG successful, and should carry out the WG "action plan" within their home organization, institution, or group to the best of their abilities." [6]	5, 6

2. Group creation

The WG creation process is outlined on the [RDA website](#) [1]. In short, the process consists of the steps outlined in the table and figure below. Refer to the links for further details.

Before the WG creation process is started, the initiators may optionally propose an [Birds of a Feather \(BoF\)](#) [7] session at an [RDA Plenary Meeting](#) [10] to assess the interest in the topic of the BoF. The outcome of the BoF is a decision of whether or not to convert the idea into a WG or Interest Group.

The WG creation process is managed by the [RDA Secretariat](#) [11], which can also assist RDA members with certain aspects of it. Prospective WGs may also apply for [RDA TIGER Open Calls](#) [12] for support, which if accepted, can assist the WG in the creation process as well as with other aspects.

Table 2: WG Creation overview

#	Action	Description
1	Develop a Statements of Work (SoW) [5, 6]	The SoW should outline e.g. the beneficiaries, goals, co-chairs, outcomes, and operational approach of the WG, as outlined on the RDA SoW page [5]
2	Complete RDA Group Initiation Request Form [9]	Complete the Initiation Form, including the aims an SoW, using the WG template [6]
3	RDA Group review process	The RDA secretariat will initiate a review process, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community review [13]: one month to allow RDA community peers to provide feedback 2. Technical Advisory Board (TAB) [14] review: in parallel to the community review, TAB reviews the SoW over 4-6 weeks 3. RDA Council [15] review: the council reviews the SoW over 2 weeks 4. WG Endorsement: provided the SoW has been accepted and any necessary revisions have been made, the WG is endorsed

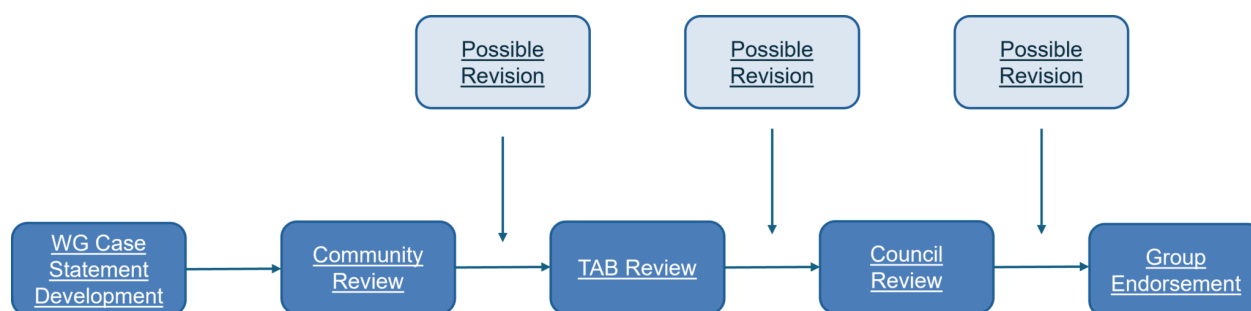


Figure 1: WG Statement of Work Review Process [1]

Table 3: Practical Group Establishment Aspects

#	Aspect	Description
1	Collaboration Workspace Features	<p>Collaboration workspaces should be openly available, but also allow control of access as and when required. Google Drive and similar services (e.g. OneDrive, iCloud) provide these types of collaboration, with advantages and disadvantages. In short, these translate into:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All three the mainstream services are restricted in China, and will exclude any participants from that country. There are also some restrictions in several other countries on all three - Russia, Iran, some Middle Eastern Countries, and India may also place some restrictions on use of these services. There is no mainstream service that does not face these restrictions. 2. Google Drive provides the most comprehensive features in respect of sharing and usability across platforms. OneDrive and iCloud are more suitable in Office 365 and Apple-OS environments, and some users may struggle to use them in non-Windows or non-Apple environments. 3. All these offerings have specific privacy concerns, and no one service provides a perfect solution in terms of regional or national privacy legislation. <p>If privacy is a major concern, some type of wiki-like or OwnCloud (e.g. B2DROP) may be more appropriate solutions, but these are really cumbersome to use from a sharing and collaborative editing perspective, and are not recommended.</p>
2	Collaboration Workspace Structure	<p>Consider from the start that there will be main folders organised in terms of access - at a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Content only shared with the co-chairs and promoters of the group; 2. Content only shared with group members; 3. Content available to anyone. <p>Individual objects can, of course, usually be controlled in terms of access, but it is a lot simpler to make these arrangements up front.</p>
3	Templates for Group	<p>Templates for establishment of a collaborative area can be obtained from the RDA TIGER project as an archive (ZIP file¹). This can be expanded in a working folder of choice. It contains the following resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ WG Case Statement Development ◦ Case Statement Template • Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Communication plan template • Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Meeting notes template • Landscape Analysis and Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Landscape Analysis Template • Deliverables • Plenaries

¹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a2OHBmXf5Cwm8MZQmaR3odPIFM3swi6/view?usp=drive_link

3. Group membership

WG membership policies are described on the RDA Website [2, 16]:

Table 4: WG membership

#	Policy	Description
1	WG Chairs	“Chairs maintain an efficient organisational structure, ensure adherence to RDA Guiding Principles, and undertake administrative tasks essential for group operation.” [16]
2	Recruiting Group Members	“Ensure membership represents at least 2, but preferably 3 or more continents, and comprises multiple sectors/disciplines and roles.” [16]
3	Joining a WG	RDA members can join a WG by selecting “Join group” on the group’s page. All groups are listed on the RDA Group Directory [17]. Individuals can become an RDA member free of charge on the RDA registration page [18]

4. Group outputs

4.1 Output types

WG outputs are described on the RDA webpage [3, 4]. The below table outlines three types of outputs used by the RDA. Refer to the [RDA TIGER Publication of Outputs](#), and [Preferred Formats for Dissemination and Preservation](#) Guidelines for additional instructions and recommendations for publishing.

Table 5: WG Output Types

#	Output type	Description
1	RDA Recommendations	“Formally endorsed, adopted and adoptable solutions produced by RDA WGs [...and] may include specifications, taxonomies or ontologies, workflows, schemas, data models, etc.” [3]
2	Supporting Outputs	“Guidance reviewed by the RDA Technical Advisory Board and produced by RDA WGs, IGs or CoPs. [...] They have undergone a community review, and may include RDA-branded guidelines, brochures and white papers that serve to educate and inform, rather than directly solve a specific data sharing challenge.” [3]
3	Other Outputs	“Other resources produced by the RDA community [...] have received no level of endorsement. They could include workshop reports, published articles, survey results, etc.” [3]

4.2. Submission

The WG outputs submission is described on the RDA webpage [4]. The below table outlines the process.

Table 6: WG Submission Process

#	Condition	Description
1	Recommendation submission requirements	<p>Outputs must be created using the Create Group Output feature on the WG group page, after which the secretariat will mint a DOI, and submit the output for community review [13]. The following information is required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The draft Recommendation 2. A short description/abstract 3. A brief impact statement (see the pages of Endorsed Recommendations for examples, or Secretariat can provide examples). 4. An explanation of how the Recommendations contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 5. See here for a list of the 17 SDGs and please specify which goals, if any, are relevant to the Group's Recommendations. 6. Authorship information 7. This can include the WG itself and/or additional individual authors if relevant. 8. Licensing information 9. Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license 10. Metadata, including: version, publication date, and other relevant metadata. 11. Maintenance and retirement plan 12. The names of two adopters
2	RDA Recommendations Endorsement Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Review [13]: Recommendation undergoes open review by the RDA community during 1 month. The underlying question for the community is: does this output help further the RDA mission, and is it consistent with the principles of RDA? 2. Organisational Assembly (OA) Commentary: the OA is invited to provide optional commentary on the adoptability of the Recommendation, and whether this Recommendation furthers the RDA mission 3. Adoption report: group must provide contact details for two adopters of the Recommendation, who will be asked about their adoption experience 4. Council review: Council reviews the OA commentary (if any), adoption report, and community responses, and detects the presence or absence of consensus. In the case of consensus, Council endorses the Recommendation.
3	RDA Supporting Outputs Submission Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A title and short description 2. UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – An explanation of how the Recommendations contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). See here for a list of the 17 goals [19] and please specify which goals, if any, are relevant to the Group's Recommendations. 3. Authorship information 4. A basic metadata set or other metadata information in RDF/XML Dublin Core (the Secretariat can help with this) 5. Licensing information (as applicable): For RDA Outputs, the default licence is Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) [20].
4	Depositing Documents in RDA Zenodo	<p>The RDA currently uses two Zenodo Community collections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research Data Alliance:

	<p>Contains official documents, including Governance documents, Recommendations, and Supporting Outputs</p> <p>2. Research Data Alliance – Related Documents</p> <p>Contains remaining documents related to RDA activities that are not official RDA documents, e.g. reports and other documents from RDA Working or Interest Group, or Community of Practices, Birds of a Feather (BoFs) that are not meant to be official group outputs; documents from RDA-related activities such as RDA national groups or initiatives; or RDA related events and workshop outputs.</p> <p>See the RDA TIGER Minimum Metadata Schema</p>
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4.3. Adoption

WG Chairs are expected to promote WG outputs for adoption by external organisations, specifically by: [16]

- i) Conduct outreach to external organisations and members to gain support on outputs.
- ii) Communicate to members the importance of adopting outputs and actively seek adopters with group members.
- iii) Submit a publishable version of the WG's Recommendation, a maintenance plan, contact details of two adopters, and other required information to the Secretariat for publishing the Recommendation and endorsement process.

5. Group closure

Once WGs have produced their recommendations, they can be closed using one of the 4 options outlined below: [2]

Table 7: Group closure

#	Option	Description
1	Disbandment	"The WG finishes and disbands and moves to "Historical Groups". Prior to disbanding, the group ensures its Recommendation(s) will be handled per its maintenance plan, which may involve transferring responsibility to another organisation or group."
2	Transition to Maintenance Group	The WG enters the maintenance phase, concentrating on managing community maintenance activities, supporting adopters of the original Recommendation, disseminating, making minor revisions to, and updating adopter details and stories of endorsed Recommendations and Outputs produced before the transition, and transferring work to other groups as needed.
3	Start a New WG	"The WG can create a new WG for producing a new version or significant update of the Recommendation or addressing additional work. This involves a lightweight review

		process including Community review and input from the Organisational Advisory Board (OAB), followed by decisions from TAB and Council.”
4	Start a New Interest Group (IG)	“The WG can create a new IG to facilitate communication and coordination on the WG’s topic. This also involves a lightweight review process similar to starting a new WG”

6. Maximising WG Effort

There will often be a significant investment of time, effort, and knowledge in assembling evidence, cases, and inputs in the lifetime of a group. These efforts can be mobilised and described much better so that (1) it retains context and can easily be found again by newcomers or other interested parties, and (2) it can be reused in a different context by other RDA members, groups, and initiatives.

In broad terms, the vision is to annotate these assets in such a way that they form part of the RDA Graph, findable via the Search and Discovery application, and can be referenced unambiguously by others. To do so, we request groups to take the following considerations into account.

Table 8: Maximising Workgroup Efforts

#	Aspect	Description
1	FAIR Assets	The work being done by the groups in RDA often involves significant research and pooling of collective knowledge accumulated by group members over many years. Formalisation of these efforts in such a way to allow findability and reuse of especially landscape analysis results will be hugely beneficial to others. See section 6.1.
2	FAIR Resources	Formal outputs generated by RDA groups can be made FAIR in two ways: by ensuring that they are properly described in metadata, and by ensuring that the resources are published in designated repositories linked to the RDA Graph. See section 6.2.
3	FAIR Recommendations	Most working groups create sets of best practices and recommendations as an output. These recommendations can be made much more useful and reusable through a process of annotation, as described in section 6.3.

6.1. Making outputs FAIR

6.1.1 FAIR Assets: Reusable Workgroup Research

Creation of reusable working group research can be achieved in a number of ways, and the most important aspects of this relates to preparation for such reuse. This entails selection of appropriate vocabularies for contextualisation of the research, and the subsequent implementation using RDA TIGER-provided tools and infrastructure.

Table 9: Making Group Research FAIR

#	Aspect	Description
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1	References	Agree up front on a shared inventory of references accumulated in preparation for a BoF session [7], or the establishment of the group.
2	Annotation of References	References (web resources such as web pages, landing pages of PIDs, etc.) can be annotated - either as a specific fragment of a web resource or the resource (page) itself. By annotating these references with selected RDA vocabularies (see Tag Lists, Registries, and Vocabularies), these references are added to the body of knowledge in the RDA Graph, and can be found via search and discovery in the RDA Knowledge Base. A separate guide available to end users to explain the annotation process, and how to install the RDA Annotation Tool, can be found here .
3	Selection of Vocabularies	Each group will likely require specific vocabularies to be used for contextualisation of their research, but at present the RDA Annotator only supports a set of common vocabularies. The current default vocabularies are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Keywords/Tags • Pathways • GORC Attributes • GORC Elements • Interest Groups • Working Groups • Domains
4	Agree on Your Own Tags (Keywords)	Each group will likely have a set of custom tags (keywords) - these can be entered as keywords and is based on a type-ahead validation of previously entered keywords. It will be good practice to agree on the set of keywords within the group and to maintain it independently for the benefit of new members of the group.

6.1.2. FAIR Resources: Publication and Curation of RDA Resources

RDA Resources are defined as RDA outputs, supplementary materials, and any other supporting documentation that has utility within the group or has usefulness to external users (RDA members or the general research community). Some of these resources are managed and curated to a higher standard than others, but we need to provide unified and harmonised access to these resources. To do so, the provisions in Table 3 should be followed.

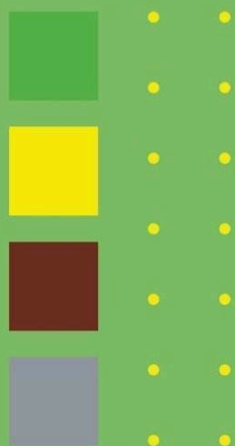
Table 10: FAIR Publication and Curation

#	Aspect	Description		
		RDA Outputs	Supplementary Materials	Other Resources
1	Publication Target	1. A journal, or 2. The RDA outputs collection in Zenodo	The RDA supplementary collection in Zenodo	The target for publication is one of 1. The RDA supplementary collection in Zenodo 2. The RDA Website 3. Any other persistent web

				location.
2	Publication Workflow	Initiate the publication process via the RDA website. The publication workflow is described in the RDA Publication Guidance document [8].	Initiate the publication process via the RDA website.	Publish the resource using the RDA Knowledge Base (for full metadata records) or the Annotation Tool (for external, non-RDA resources).
3	Metadata	The metadata for RDA outputs need to match the schema provided in the RDA Minimum Metadata Schema .	Supplementary materials metadata also need to match the schema in the RDA Minimum Metadata Schema .	Groups can choose to describe other resources using either the formal metadata schema in the RDA Minimum Metadata Schema section 1, if the target is a formal collection, or the annotation schema in section 2 if the target is elsewhere.
4	Curation	Curation is performed by the RDA Secretariat, with assistance from RDA TIGER, on submission via the RDA website.	Curation is performed by the RDA Secretariat, with assistance from RDA TIGER, on submission via the RDA website.	The content is self-curated, with minimum annotation metadata and linked vocabularies configured in the RDA Annotation Tool.

Table 11: Persistent Web Locations

#	Aspect	Description
1	Resources with Persistent Identifiers	<p>These resources have the highest probability of being resolvable for the foreseeable future. Deposits to journals, preprint servers, trustworthy repositories, and mainstream generalist repositories such as Zenodo and Figshare meet these criteria. See table 11 below.</p> <p>The resources are not guaranteed to be persisted in all cases, and for that reason, the RDA RDA Knowledge Base will also mirror copies of content placed in the RDA Zenodo collections to a long-term repository.</p>
2	Public Knowledge Bases	Public Knowledge Bases (Wikipedia, WikiData, ...) have a high probability of being persistently available, but content drift and changes are not under direct control. These resources are very good for the definition of concepts and things - providing a stable URI for these.
3	RDA Website	The RDA Website should not be used as the only location for publication of content to be preserved for the long term. For content not placed in the RDA Zenodo collections, it is prudent to consider any of the options listed in Table 11 in addition to the RDA Website.



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