**Name of Standard:** schema.org and Schema Architypes

**URL:** <https://schema.org/>

**Related Resources:**

W3C hosted community group for Schema Architypes - <https://www.w3.org/community/architypes/>

Schema Architypes community group Wiki - <https://www.w3.org/community/architypes/wiki/Main_Page>

Proposed Schema Architypes extension - <https://github.com/schemaorg/schemaorg/issues/1758>

Examples - <https://archival.github.io/schema-org/>

**Summary (1-2 sentences):**

Founded by Google, Microsoft, Yahoo and Yandex and currently maintained by a collaborative community “with a mission to create, maintain, and promote schemas for structured data on the Internet, on web pages, in email messages, and beyond.”

Can be used with many different encodings, including RDFa, Microdata and JSON-LD.

**Discussion:**

1. **Background (a few words)**
   1. **What kind of a standard is it? (Conceptual model, ontology, …)**Schema.org is a vocabulary or rather a collection/set of vocabularies covering entities, relationships between entities and actions, that “can easily be extended through a well-documented extension model”.
   2. **Who maintains this standard?**Schema.org vocabularies are developed by an open [community](https://www.w3.org/community/schemaorg) process, using the [public-schemaorg@w3.org](http://lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/public-schemaorg) mailing list and through [GitHub](http://github.com/schemaorg/schemaorg).
   3. **How old is it?**Version 1.0 was published in 2011. Its current version is 3.4.
   4. **What is its stated purpose and scope?**To “make it easier for webmasters and developers to decide on a schema and get the maximum benefit for their efforts”.
2. **Relation to Archival Description (1-2 sentences)**
   1. **expand on 1d**The aim for schema.org is to “improve the web by creating a structured data markup schema supported by major search engines”. By using schema.org entities and properties as part of an organisation’s on-page markup search engines are enabled to better understand the information on web pages and to provide richer search results.  
      *With this, schema.org might mainly be of interest when talking about presentation of archival descriptions and increasing outreach. It might be the question, whether schema.org could be useful as part of an archive’s Dissemination Information Package, DIP, (following the OAIS reference model), though might not necessarily be required when thinking about the structure of an organisation’s Submission or Archival Information Packages, SIP and AIP. Furthermore, the argument could be made, that including schema.org in a system’s set up would be a useful focus for aggregators or suppliers of widely used archive management systems (e.g. ArchivesSpace), but maybe one step too much for smaller institutions.*
   2. **If archival description is outside the stated purpose/scope, explain how it could be used for archival metadata**Schema.org is not meant for a specific domain or type of information, hence using what it offers in general will mean to be open to compromise and generalisation - kind of similar to e.g. using Dublin Core rather than domain specific variations of its elements.   
      However, with its community based approach schema.org also offers opportunity for extensions and specifications and so the Schema Architypes community group submitted a proposal for extension in September 2017, which covers the main aspects that the community felt to be missing in order to mark up archival information with schema.org. The proposal, which has not yet officially become part of schema.org’s vocabulary, includes:

* Two new entities:
  + “Archive” as an institution with archival holdings and
  + “ArchiveComponent” as an intangible type to be applied to any archive content.
* Three new properties:
  + “holdingArchive” and “archiveHeld” to specify the “Archive” that holds, keeps and maintains the “ArchiveComponent” respectively to specify the collection, fonds, or item, i.e. the “ArchiveComponent”, held by an “Archive”
  + “accessConditions” to provide details of conditions of access and use of an archive or item.
* A broadened range of four existing properties:
  + “hasPart”, “isPartOf”, “itemCondition”, and “location”.

1. **What it does well (1-2 sentences)**Though the approval process for new proposals seems rather long, one of the positive aspects of schema.org is probably its openness and flexibility in terms of allowing for extensions and specifications of existing entities and properties. This might be an approach to consider in order to make revisions easier.  
   Apart from that, one of the big advantages of schema.org in terms of its use for online discovery is its support by the four big companies that functioned as its funding fathers.
2. **Shortcomings (1-2 sentences)**The positive aspect of schema.org’s extensibility might also be seen as one of its shortcomings, which - in my opinion - is shared with similar models and standards, where the sheer amount of entities and properties represented within them impedes their application in practice. Especially when definitions of and distinctions between “things”, which could be understood as being the same, but are handled as being different within the standard, are not as clear-cut as they could - or should - be.
3. **Possible Impact on Structured Archival Data (2-5 sentences)**As mentioned above, schema.org’s focus is on published information on the web. In this regard, using schema.org’s vocabulary - with or without the Architypes extension - could be useful when aiming at making archival information more discoverable in “non-archival” contexts.   
   While this doesn’t necessarily mean, that archives should use schema.org’s vocabulary to describe the information and the content they hold, it might be worth considering to e.g. provide a crosswalk between the most prominent elements in EAD/EAC-CPF and useful equivalents in schema.org (e.g. with regard to titles, descripitions, any named entities such as persons, organisations, places). Such a crosswalk could then be used by individual organisations, aggregators, software suppliers and developers to create DIPs and presentation versions that are more easily picked up by search engines etc.