**Name of Standard: wikidata**

**URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikidata**

**Related Resources: Wikipedia, Wikimedia Commons, wikibase**

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

wikidata is a collaborative knowledge base implemented as linked data in the wikibase technology. It’s basically the technology that is getting linked data off the ground on a large scale. All it’s missing is some descriptive rigor--that’s where the GLAM community comes in.

**Discussion:**

1. **Background (a few words)**
   1. **What kind of a standard is it? (Conceptual model, ontology, …)**

It’s not. It provides a structured data infrastructure that complements other wiki instances, such as Wikipedia, but it is not a standard in itself but more of a crowd-sourced ontology.

* 1. **Who maintains this standard?**

The development of the project is mainly driven by [Wikimedia Deutschland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_Deutschland). It was created with funds from the [Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allen_Institute_for_Artificial_Intelligence), the [Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gordon_and_Betty_Moore_Foundation), and [Google, Inc.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google,_Inc.), totaling [€](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euro)1.3 million.

* 1. **How old is it?**

Wikidata was launched on 29 October 2012

* 1. **What is its stated purpose and scope?**

Wikidata is a [collaboratively edited](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki) [knowledge base](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_base) hosted by the [Wikimedia Foundation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_Foundation). It is a common source of [open data](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_data) that Wikimedia projects such as [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia) can use,and by anyone else, under a [public domain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_domain) license.

1. **Relation to Archival Description (1-2 sentences)**
   1. **expand on 1d and b. If archival description is outside the stated purpose/scope, explain how it could be used for archival metadata**

While there isn’t (yet?) a dedicated project to develop archival description in wikidata, it seems that wikidata is on the cusp of being viable for all sorts of description from the GLAM realm.

That’s in part because it is incredibly open and flexible (to create a new “item”, you just go and do it--for creating properties you go through a proposal process). The only caveat is its utter obliviousness to cardinality constraints--items and properties can be scoped, but the only three things required on an item record are a label (no formatting guidelines), a brief description, and either a class or an instance relationship.

Upon creation, the item has an identifier that allows it to be used and queried (using SPARQL, see <https://query.wikidata.org/>).

1. **What it does well (1-2 sentences)**

It’s an out-of-the-box solution to creating and making discoverable descriptive metadata as triples/linked data. New items and statements are available within seconds. It is entirely open and flexible in terms of creating new items (the requirements are “notability” and “uniqueness”)

1. **Shortcomings (1-2 sentences)**

This means that descriptive data can be created fluidly--but it is the responsibility of metadata creators to impose external conceptual models and/or constraints.

1. **Possible Impact on Structured Archival Data (2-5 sentences)**

I see a huge potential here for the GLAM community to leverage wikibase to make the transition to linked data, as long as we can agree on a conceptual data model to impose on the data structure (my vote is for FRBRoo, but I guess we’re also still waiting for RiC). The way I see this going forward in a library/archives/catalog environment is by 1) the community developing, or forming consensus around, a data model and 2) by each institution deploying a local instance of wikibase that exchanges data with the open-source instance. The latter is, in my opinion, a requirement to allow institutions to retain control of who edits their local records. In other words, while an institution could choose to contribute its data to the wikidata ecosystem, and while it could choose to harvest data from that ecosystem, a local instance would allow it to retain stable descriptive records shielded, to an extent to be decided by policy, from outside edits.

(The public comment draft of the ARL Wikidata Task Force White Paper seems to come to the same conclusion <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZsOyw2sOD3a7xJQ6XCSYDGjZUPxGGl8tuvC7vvtlJRU/edit>)