Metadata Guidelines

The Guidelines for Descriptive Metadata for the UCLA International Digital Ephemera Project (IDEP) provide descriptive metadata specifications for IDEP partner institutions with the intent of establishing a common understanding and set of practices across all IDEP collections. Following these guidelines will result in consistent metadata that accurately and adequately describes IDEP collections, facilitates federated searching, and is readily shareable between institutions.

These guidelines seek to provide concrete and specific recommendations wherever possible. However, there are often choices to be made and there is a spectrum of possibilities ranging from the acceptable to the ideal. In addition, the guidelines are meant to apply to a broad range of metadata formats and resource types. In following these guidelines, metadata contributors will be describing both the original object and the digital surrogate of the original object in various parts of the record.

It takes time and effort to create quality, shareable metadata, but there are many benefits:

* Increasing exposure of resources in our collection within the IDEP platform and beyond.
* Providing greater context for resources in the collection.
* Maximizing access to research collections which might otherwise remain unseen.
* Affording opportunities for end-users to make connections between resources across different collections.

Since metadata contributors may not have the time or resources to conform to all of the recommendations, these guidelines are structured into two sections:

* Required metadata elements: these elements must be supplied for all digital objects or collections submitted to IDEP.
* Recommended metadata elements: these elements are not mandatory, but if provided they will greatly increase the discoverability of the resources and provide contextualized information that helps end users evaluate and understand the results of their search.
* Additionally, the Digital Library can build more robust services (such as advanced search features) around richer metadata. If metadata contributors are unable to provide the recommended elements themselves, we encourage them to consult with the UCLA Digital Library and/or collaborate with other partners to add to or enhance the records.

## Metadata Template

Metadata for IDEP collections should be submitted to the UCLA Digital Library in spreadsheet form. To facilitate this process, the UCLA Digital Library has created the Metadata Spreadsheet Template that can be used as a starting point for collecting and recording metadata that describe IDEP collections. The spreadsheet includes pre-formatted columns for **Required**\* and **Recommended** fields, along with descriptions, links to resources, and instructions for use.

The Metadata Spreadsheet Template also includes templates (tabs) for specific types of resources (Books, Serials, and Archival Collections). The templates in these tabs are based on the original (General) sheet, but have been edited to address the metadata needs of the specific resource types and should be used when applicable. In some cases, a selection of values has been pre-filled, allowing for selection of the appropriate value from a pull-down menu. If one of the pre-filled values does not accurately describe the object, you may fill in a new value; however, most cases will be covered by the existing values.

To make it easier to refer back to this guide, descriptions for each of the fields include links pointing back to the relevant Descriptive Term outlined in this guide. For example, in the description for the column "Title," there is a link pointing back to the Descriptive Term Summary for "Title" in this guide.

Creating metadata can be daunting for some at the outset, but the UCLA Digital Library will work with partners to identify the relevant descriptive terms and values that best describe their IDEP collections and to further customize these templates to meet collection needs.

Metadata Spreadsheet Template: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1nEIsORvcOvL3xOH_CJEbPJGeb6Etj_Qbj-vF_ROgB0M/edit?usp=sharing>

## Glossary

Here you will find a selection of terms used in the guidelines and their explanations.

**authority file**: A list of authoritative forms of headings (names, subjects, etc.) used to make sure that headings are applied consistently. Usually relates to the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) or the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF).

**content standard**: Guidelines for the format, syntax and content of the values entered in metadata elements. Examples: Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules/Resource Description and Access (AACR2/RDA), International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD), Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO), Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS).

**controlled vocabulary**: An established set of preferred terms used to provide consistency in resource description and retrieval.

**descriptive metadata**: Data about resources and digital objects that is intended to improve their discovery and identification, and establish relationships between different resources.

**element**: A discrete component of metadata such as Title, Date, Format, etc., which describes properties of a resource. Elements may be qualified.

**metadata**: Literally, data about data. In this context, data about resources and digital objects.

**object**: The digital surrogate or manifestation of the original resource. If the something is born-digital, the object has no original for which it is a surrogate.

**property**: Specific attributes, characteristics or relations used to describe or provide context for a resource.

**qualifier**: Terms used to make the meaning of an element narrower or more specific.

**resource**: The original entity being described by the record; in other words, the physical or created resource. A collection of resources is also a resource.