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The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set

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Foreword

(This foreword is not part of *The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set*, ANSI/NISO Z39.85-2007. It is included for information only.)

About This Standard

The *Dublin Core Metadata Element Set* is a vocabulary of fifteen properties for use in resource description. The name "Dublin" is due to its origin at a 1995 invitational workshop in Dublin, Ohio; "core" because its elements are broad and generic, usable for describing a wide range of resources.

The fifteen element "Dublin Core" described in this standard is part of a larger set of metadata vocabularies and technical specifications maintained by the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI). The full set of vocabularies, *DCMI Metadata Terms* [DCMI-TERMS], also includes a set of resource classes, the *DCMI Type Vocabulary* [DCMI-TYPE]. The terms in DCMI vocabularies are intended to be used in combination with terms from other, compatible vocabularies in the context of application profiles and on the basis of the *DCMI Abstract Model* [DCAM].

In 2006, the DCMI Usage Board undertook an editorial review of terms in the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set (DCMES) in order to clarify intended semantics and bring the wording of their definitions and usage comments into line with the language of the DCMI Abstract Model [DCAM]. A set of proposed changes was posted for Public Comment from August 28 to September 25, 2006. A face-to-face Usage Board meeting in Manzanillo, Mexico, on September 30, 2006 resulted in the publication on December 18, 2006 of a decision text, a response to comments, and revised terms documentation.

This revision of the original standard that was issued in 2001 corresponds to version 1.1 on the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative website that resulted from the editorial review and public comment period described above. All changes made to terms of the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set since 2001 have been reviewed by a DCMI Usage Board in the context of a *DCMI Namespace Policy* [DCMI-NAMESPACE]. The namespace policy describes how DCMI terms are assigned Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs) and sets limits on the range of editorial changes that may allowably be made to the labels, definitions, and usage comments associated with existing DCMI terms.

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The following individuals served on the original standard committee that developed the 2001 version of the standard. The current version was revised by the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative, the Maintenance Agency for the standard.

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Rebecca Guenther
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The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set

1 Purpose and Scope

The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set is a standard for cross-domain resource description. As in Internet RFC 3986, *Uniform Resource Identifier (URI): Generic Syntax*, this specification does not limit the scope of what might be a resource.

The elements described in this standard are typically used in the context of an application profile which constrains or specifies their use in accordance with local or community-based requirements and policies. The specification of such implementation detail is outside the scope of this standard.

2 References

This standard references the following documents. The bracketed abbreviation is used in the text of this Standard when referring to a specific reference.

DCMI Abstract Model. [DCAM]
http://dublincore.org/documents/abstract-model/

DCMI Encoding Guidelines. [DCMI-ENCODINGS]
http://dublincore.org/resources/expressions/

DCMI Metadata Terms. [DCMI-TERMS]
http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-terms/

DCMI Namespace Policy. [DCMI-NAMESPACE]
http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-namespace/

DCMI Type Vocabulary. [DCMI-TYPE]
http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-type-vocabulary/

Date and Time Formats, W3C Note. [W3CDTF]
http://www.w3.org/TR/NOTE-datetime

Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names. [TGN]
http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabulary/tgn/index.html

MIME Media Types. [MIME]
http://www.isi.edu/in-notes/iana/assignments/media-types/

Tags for Identifying Languages. [RFC 4646]
http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc4646.txt

Uniform Resource Identifier (URI): Generic Syntax. [RFC 3986]
http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3986.txt

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3 Definitions

The following terms, as used in this standard, have the meanings indicated.

Term	Definition
DCMI	the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative, maintenance agency for the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set
Lifecycle of a resource	a sequence of events that mark the development and use of a resource Some examples of events in a lifecycle are: conception of an invention, creation of a draft, revision of an article, publication of a book, acquisition by a library, transcription to magnetic disk, migration to optical storage, translation into English, and derivation of a new work (e.g., a movie).
Resource	anything that might be identified (the same definition as in Internet RFC 3986 and in the DCMI Abstract Model)

4 The Element Set

In the element descriptions below, each element has a descriptive label ("label") for human consumption and a unique token ("name") for use in machine processing.

In accordance with the *DCMI Namespace Policy* [DCMI-NAMESPACE], the "name" of an element is appended to a DCMI namespace URI to construct a Uniform Resource Identifier as a globally unique identifier for that element. The use of element names and URIs in the context of different implementation technologies is explained in *DCMI Encoding Guidelines* [DCMI-ENCODINGS].

5 The Elements

Element Name: title

Label: Title

Definition: A name given to the resource.

Element Name: creator

Label: Creator

Definition: An entity primarily responsible for making the resource.

Comment: Examples of a Creator include a person, an organization, or a service. Typically, the name of a Creator should be used to indicate the entity.

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Element Name: subject

Label: Subject

Definition: The topic of the resource.

Comment: Typically, the subject will be represented using keywords, key phrases, or classification codes. Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary. To describe the spatial or temporal topic of the resource, use the Coverage element.

Element Name: description

Label: Description

Definition: An account of the resource.

Comment: Description may include but is not limited to: an abstract, a table of contents, a graphical representation, or a free-text account of the resource.

Element Name: publisher

Label: Publisher

Definition: An entity responsible for making the resource available.

Comment: Examples of a Publisher include a person, an organization, or a service. Typically, the name of a Publisher should be used to indicate the entity.

Element Name: contributor

Label: Contributor

Definition: An entity responsible for making contributions to the resource.

Comment: Examples of a Contributor include a person, an organization, or a service. Typically, the name of a Contributor should be used to indicate the entity.

Element Name: date

Label: Date

Definition: A point or period of time associated with an event in the lifecycle of the resource.

Comment: Date may be used to express temporal information at any level of granularity. Recommended best practice is to use an encoding scheme, such as the W3CDTF profile of ISO 8601 [W3CDTF].

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Element Name: type

Label: Type

Definition: The nature or genre of the resource.

Comment: Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as the *DCMI Type Vocabulary* [DCMITYPE]. To describe the file format, physical medium, or dimensions of the resource, use the Format element.

Element Name: format

Label: Format

Definition: The file format, physical medium, or dimensions of the resource.

Comment: Examples of dimensions include size and duration. Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as the list of *Internet Media Types* [MIME].

Element Name: identifier

Label: Identifier

Definition: An unambiguous reference to the resource within a given context.

Comment: Recommended best practice is to identify the resource by means of a string conforming to a formal identification system.

Element Name: source

Label: Source

Definition: A related resource from which the described resource is derived.

Comment: The described resource may be derived from the related resource in whole or in part. Recommended best practice is to identify the related resource by means of a string conforming to a formal identification system.

Element Name: language

Label: Language

Definition: A language of the resource.

Comment: Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as RFC 4646.

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Element Name: relation

Label: Relation

Definition: A related resource.

Comment: Recommended best practice is to identify the related resource by means of a string conforming to a formal identification system.

Element Name: coverage

Label: Coverage

Definition: The spatial or temporal topic of the resource, the spatial applicability of the resource, or the jurisdiction under which the resource is relevant.

Comment: Spatial topic and spatial applicability may be a named place or a location specified by its geographic coordinates. Temporal topic may be a named period, date, or date range. A jurisdiction may be a named administrative entity or a geographic place to which the resource applies. Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as the *Thesaurus of Geographic Names* [TGN]. Where appropriate, named places or time periods can be used in preference to numeric identifiers such as sets of coordinates or date ranges.

Element Name: rights

Label: Rights

Definition: Information about rights held in and over the resource.

Comment: Typically, rights information includes a statement about various property rights associated with the resource, including intellectual property rights.

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Appendix A
(informative)
Further Reading

(This appendix is not part of *The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set*, ANSI/NISO Z39.85-2007. It is included for information only.)

Further information about the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set is available at the URL: http://dublincore.org/

This website contains information about workshops, reports, working group papers, projects, and new developments concerning the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI).

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Appendix B
(informative)
Maintenance Agency

(This appendix is not part of *The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set*, ANSI/NISO Z39.85-2007. It is included for information only.)

The Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) is responsible for the development, standardization and promotion of the Dublin Core metadata element set. Information on DCMI is available at the URL: http://dublincore.org/

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