

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: John Attig, ALA Representative
Subject: Change to definition of 9.16.1.1, Profession or Occupation

ALA thanks the British Library for raising the issue of the scope of the RDA element Profession or Occupation. ALA generally supports the intent of the proposal.

ALA believes that the changes proposed by the British Library do not go far enough to broaden the scope of the element beyond the activities for which the person is paid. We suggest that the explicit reference to the concept of avocation or non-remunerative activity should be added to the caption and/or definition.

On the other hand, we believe that this can be taken too far. This element exists primarily to record *bibliographically-significant* facts about the person, and the information given in this element should be seen (potentially, at least) as a candidate for inclusion as identifying information in the authorized access point representing the person. We are not enthusiastic about encouraging catalogers to record information about increasingly insignificant leisure activities that have nothing to do with the intellectual or creative output – and we would certainly not want to see such information used in an authorized access point. That said, a person's works are sometimes based on these non-remunerative activities, in addition to or instead of, their paid occupation. We therefore support the expanded scope for the element, but would also like to see the addition of some language that ties the scope in some way to the person's bibliographically-relevant activities.