

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Dave Reser, LC Representative
Subject: Field of Activity of the Corporate Body (Revision of RDA 11.10.1.3)

Thanks to the British Library for bringing the Field of Activity instructions for persons and corporate bodies into closer alignment. We agree with the proposal.

We agree with the ALA response that the examples proposed for deletion from 11.10.1.3 are good candidates for moving to 11.11.1.3.

As to the ALA proposal to establish “Field of Activity of the Family,” we have some reservations. Given the fact that the scope of any individual family established using RDA instructions could encompass families ranging for one generation to many generations, the likelihood that all members of the family were engaged in the same field of activity would depend on the scope of each heading. It would not seem helpful to have many fields of activity recorded to cover every person (if this could even be determined), or to suggest to a cataloger that they should establish a new family as soon as one or more members of the family operate outside of the family norm. We think that the element “Family History” already at RDA 10.9 suffices for recording this information (note especially the second example describing the activities of the Medici family).

If the JSC wishes to add the element Field of Activity of the Family, we would suggest that the definition be generalized to indicate that the element does not have to be indicative of all members of the family, e.g., “is a field of endeavor, area of expertise, etc., commonly associated with the family or members of the family.”