Translation Policy for RDA and RDA Toolkit

Internationalization is a major goal of the RDA standard and the Co-Publishers of RDA are prepared to work with interested parties to make new translations of RDA possible. In 2013 the first translations of RDA, French and German, were released both in print and digitally via RDA Toolkit. The Co-Publishers of RDA learned a great deal about both the translation and development processes from the rollout of these and subsequent translations, as well as from discussions with other groups interested in translations.

This document is intended to transform those lessons learned into a practical guide for groups considering taking on a translation of RDA. The information clarifies the work and commitment involved and the choices that translation groups will need to make. Finally this document will put forward the Co-Publishers' expectations for the full range of translation options.

The Co-Publishers recognize that each translation project is unique and are prepared to be flexible and open to specific conditions that are likely to arise. It should be also be understood that in all the scenarios discussed below, there is an assumption that translation partners will bear the costs of the editorial work (translation, proofing, etc.) associated with the project.

Who Should Translate RDA?

RDA in its original English is the product of collaboration between a range of cataloguing experts focused on generating clear, accessible instructions written in a manner that can be understood by users from all parts of the English-speaking world as well as by those for whom English is a second language. The expectation that the standard be clear and accessible to all speakers of a given language holds true for any translation. In identifying translation partners for RDA, the Co-Publishers are looking for the following qualifications:

- a deep knowledge of international cataloging practices and terminology (for example, ICP and IFLA standards) as well as the RDA standard,
- an open collaborative translation process that accounts for the full community of likely users of the translation,
- a clear commitment to promoting RDA within the language community, including support for RDA training and implementation,
- sufficient resources to complete and maintain the work, including bearing the costs of the initial translation and timely translation of RDA updates and changes.

RDA Reference

For all translation agreements the Co-Publishers will require that the translation group complete a translation of RDA Reference material as the initial step in the process. This part of the translation will be uploaded to the RDA Registry and made available to any developer looking to build RDA related applications for the language community. RDA Reference includes all RDA Elements, their definitions and any related scope notes, and all value vocabulary terms and definitions. The Co-Publishers will supply the translators with an input form to facilitate the submission of the Reference translation. The Co-Publishers will continue to supply the translators with a Reference translation form in order to keep the registry up to date with the changes to the Reference information.

JSC Translations Working Group

The Joint Steering Committee for the Development of RDA (JSC) is charged with writing and revising the standard. The JSC is keen to get input from translators in regard to how the standard might be improved, especially in regard to phrasing or word choices that are problematic for non-English speakers and in regard to instructions that may reflect cultural bias. To facilitate this input the JSC has formed a working group for translations that can supply reports on language issues and help the JSC to identify solutions to the problems that arise. Translations group are expected to provide this sort of input to the JSC and may be invited to supply a representative to the working group.

Translating RDA for RDA Toolkit

Recent years have shown that most groups prefer to have their translations included in RDA Toolkit, where the translations can be accessed online and benefit from the features and functionality of a website. RDA Toolkit publication will enjoy the full support of ALA Publishing, which will provide online translation tools and technical support. Inclusion of any translation in the RDA Toolkit is subject to the following conditions:

- The Co-Publishers will retain electronic rights to the translation.
- The translation partner will translate the full user interface of RDA Toolkit.
- The translation partner will agree to maintain and revise the translation as needed.
- The translation partner will implement RDA as a cataloging standard within 2 years of publication of the translation on the Toolkit.
- The translation partner will pay a licensing fee for permission to translate. Payment of this fee will come with permission to publish a PDF of the completed translation on the translator's website for one year.

- The Co-Publishers will provide translation groups working on a Toolkit project with the necessary online tools to complete the translation as well as the training and support to use those tools.

While the Co-Publishers of RDA believe that a positive solution can be found for each RDA Toolkit translation request, Toolkit publication may not be the best choice for each translation. Some questions that should be addressed when considering a Toolkit translation project are…

- **Is the language community likely to support an online service like the Toolkit?** Are cataloging institutions prepared to use this sort of tool and is the annual Toolkit subscription affordable for the community? (While we can be somewhat flexible about costs, we do have to maintain a certain level of revenue from Toolkit usage.)
- **Is the translating group fully prepared to meet the demands of both the initial translation and the subsequent maintenance?** In recent years the JSC has made substantial updates to the text of RDA, and the work of translating the standard should not be underestimated. The Co-Publishers will maintain the right to drop translations from the Toolkit that are not kept up-to-date.
- **Does the translation represent a significant development challenge for the Toolkit?** Currently the translations on RDA Toolkit belong to languages that use Roman script. Translations for languages using scripts not yet in the Toolkit will certainly require a higher licensing fee. The fee will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Development Schedule – plans to add a translation to the toolkit are often tied to training and implementation schedules in a language community. Given the costs and resources involved in adding a translation to the toolkit, it is necessary to establish a queue for adding new translations to RDA Toolkit. Once an agreement is reached and a rough schedule for the translation process is established, a translation will be slotted into the queue for publication. The Co-Publishers anticipate publishing no more than 2-3 new translations in a year.

Translating RDA for Print

Commercial distribution of a print publication of an RDA translation might be an appealing option for some communities. The Co-Publishers are happy to support such efforts, but there will be several questions to address related to taking this course.

1. **Who will publish the translation?** Our initial assumption is that the translating group would assume the publisher role, which includes producing, marketing, and distributing the print publication, or partner with a local publisher; however, if that is not possible, the Co-Publishers will work with the translation team to identify a local publisher for the

translation and, if necessary, negotiate a separate agreement with that publisher for rights to publish a print translation of RDA.

2. **What fees and royalties will be paid?** There is an expectation that the fees will consist of an initial fee and an ongoing royalty based on sales to be paid to the Co-Publishers (and shared with RDA fund as specified) for commercial distribution of a print translation of RDA. The rate is determined during negotiations and dependent on several factors, including market size.

3. **Is the translation also being added to RDA Toolkit?** If the translation will also be published in RDA Toolkit, ALA Publishing will take a larger role in the print production process. Creation of PDFs of RDA Toolkit content is a standard procedure for RDA Toolkit and these PDF files can easily be transformed into print files that can be supplied to the publisher of the translation.

4. **Is the translation partner interested in continuing revisions and updates?** The commercial distribution of a translation may be a one-off agreement, but translators should be aware that RDA is updated annually and that the scope and scale of updates may be substantial. Potential translating partners should determine their level of commitment to RDA translation. This is important decision in determining the most appropriate method of distribution for their community.

Translating RDA Reference Only

For language groups that have cataloging personnel who are fluent in English or another of the languages currently in the RDA Toolkit, the most affordable option is to translate the RDA Reference. This content will, of course, be made available on the RDA Registry, allowing software developers to make applications for use by patrons in their local language. This approach does not require payment of any licensing fee and greatly reduces the development and maintenance requirement, while still meeting users' needs.

Translating RDA for Study/Evaluation

Some groups have approached us asking for permission to translate RDA "for study". This is to say that they are interested in translating RDA for the purpose of evaluating the standard for use in their cataloging environment. The Co-Publishers of RDA are happy to grant permissions for research, however, if there is any plan to publish or distribute the translation then payment of a licensing fee will be required. Typically the involvement and support from the Co-Publishers is minimal with this option, and the permissions agreement does not include any obligation to update or maintain the translation.

Summary of Translation Options

Translating for...	RDA Reference	Maintenance	Licensing Fee and/or Royalties	Working Group Participation	Authoring Training and Support
RDA Toolkit	Required	Required	Yes	Likely	Yes
Print	Required	Optional	Yes	No	Only if done with a Toolkit translation
RDA Reference	Required	Limited	No	Possibly	Yes
Study	Required	Optional	No	No	No