

Only what changes remains, or the need for a rethink

Renate Behrens
Chair RDA Steering Committee
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Why are we still here?

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access

Libraries in a changing world

- Masses of publications
- Less money
- Less trained staff
- Etc.

but

- High quality of metadata
- Sustainability
- High level standards
- Well-developed and reliable international cooperation

Librarians in a changing world

- Cataloguers are well-trained and have to use these tools.
- To achieve this, the focus must be placed more on our own decision-making ability.
- Cataloguers are not recipients of orders, but experts who develop standards for metadata description and use them sensibly.

We need to raise awareness of this among colleagues, library managers and in training programmes.

No cataloguing without standards

- A description of metadata without standards is only management of data.
- Quality cannot be guaranteed.
- Compatibility is lost.
- Others can do this kind of processing better. It's not the job of libraries.

What standards can be

- Standards are the basis for collaboration in the creation of metadata. They are the basis for meaningful and qualitative data.
- They are the tools to map intellectual work and to support automated processes.
- Standards are tools, not revelations.
- They should be flexible and adaptable.

Role of IFLA

- IFLA is a guarantor for the sustainable development of standards, models and principles.
- International cooperation and consideration of local circumstances are the overriding principles.
- This is particularly important in today's difficult economic times.

Diversity

- Our world is very different and that is valuable.
- We have a diversity of people engaged in cataloguing and a diversity of institutions that we must and want to take into account.
- Our tradition of sustainable models, principles and standards enables us to realise this.

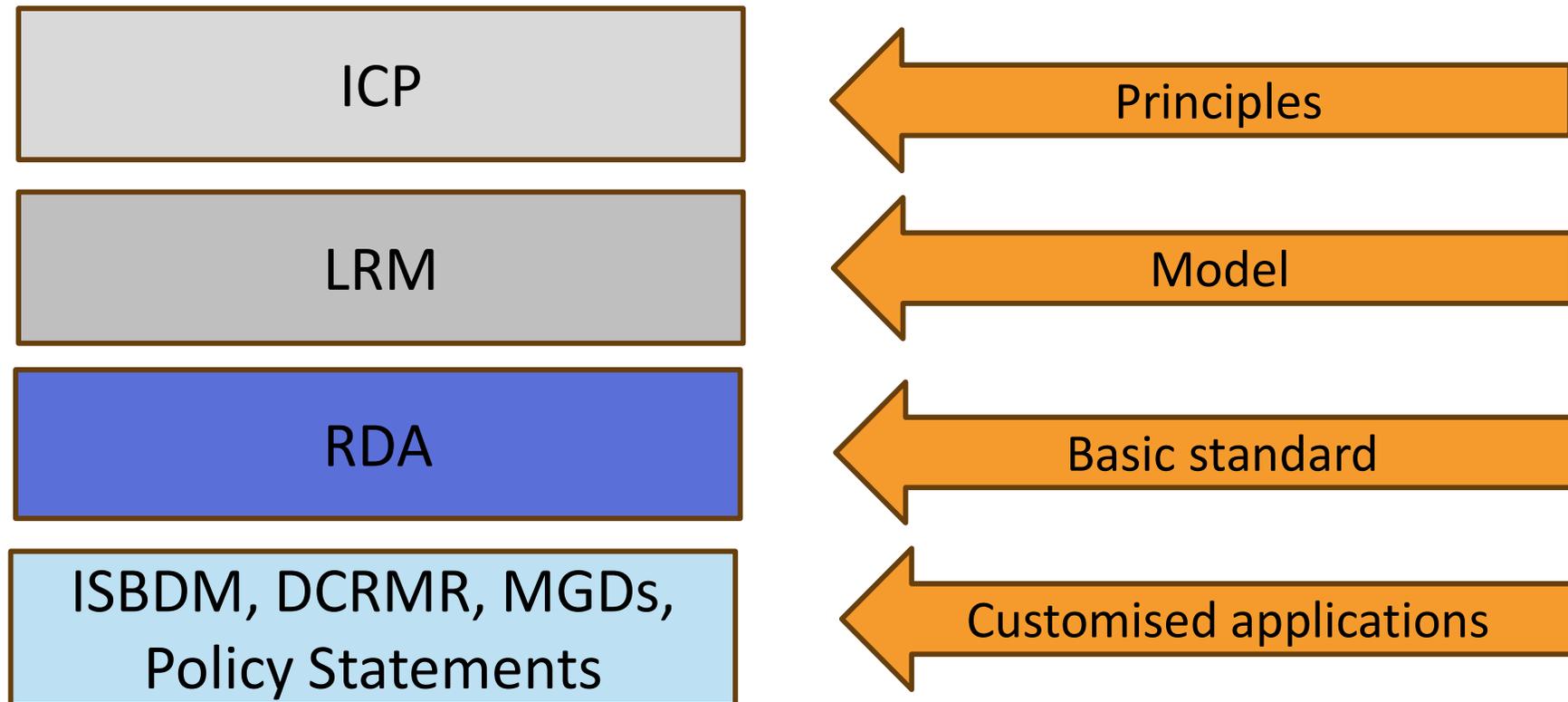
Compatibility despite Differences

- It is obvious that different standards are needed, whether for different communities or target groups.
- In recent years, it has become clear that this is not a problem if standards are compatible.
- This compatibility can be guaranteed if all standards follow the same models or principles.
- The bodies responsible for the standards must cooperate.

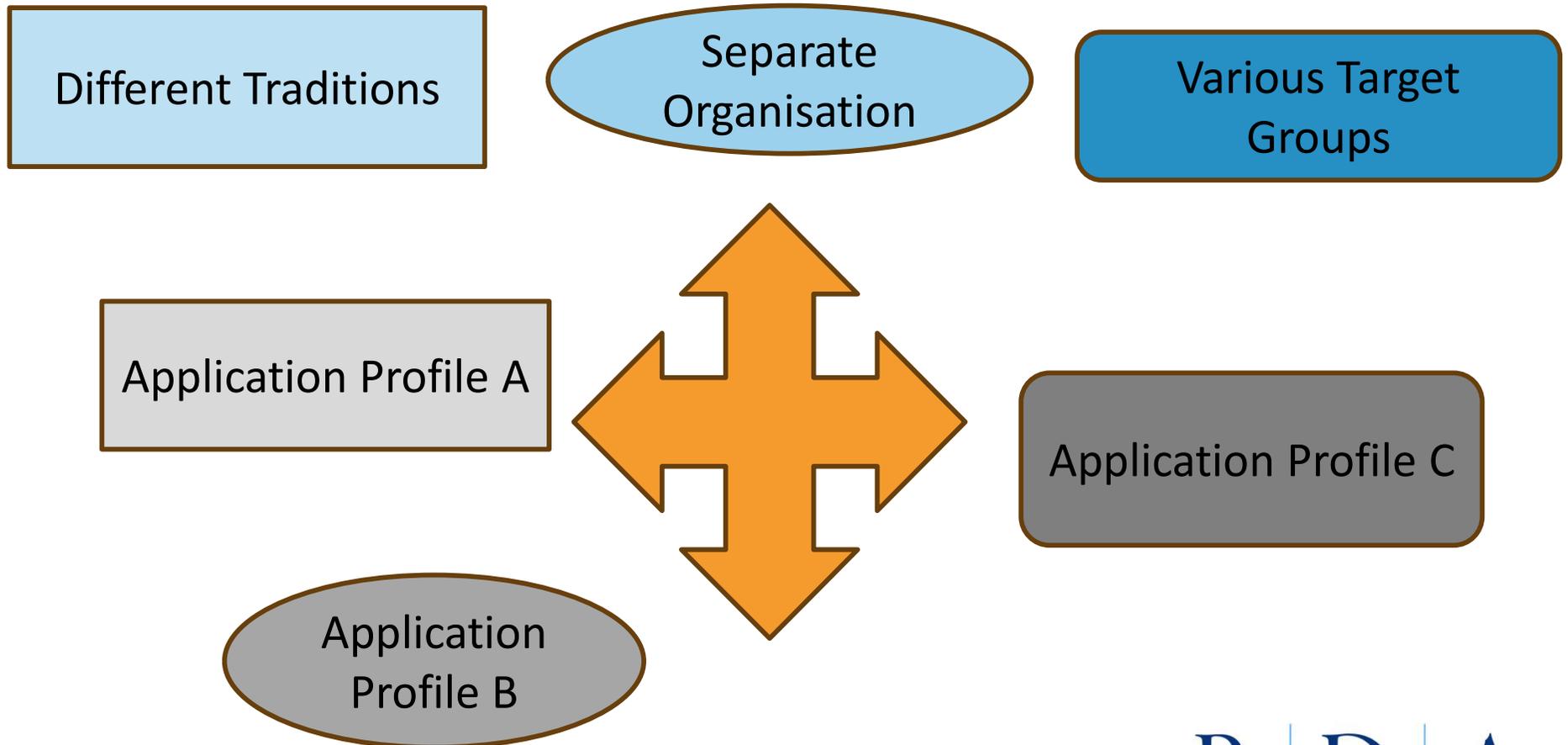
RDA as an Example

- RDA offers many possibilities for different user communities.
- If a standard wants to be truly international and versatile, it must offer options.
- In the past, the user communities, e. g. for special materials or from museums and archives, have urgently requested this and are now very satisfied with it.
- For traditional cataloguing in libraries, however, this means that they can no longer apply the standard 1:1.

Principles, Models, Standards – a Hierarchy



How does it all fit together?

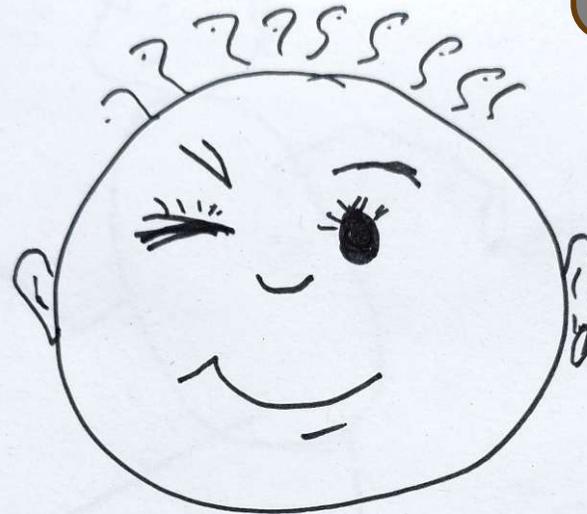


Application Profiles

Application Profile A

Application Profile B

Application Profile C



Application Profiles

What is an Application Profile?

The following application profiles are currently supported in the RDA Toolkit

- Policy Statements
- Documentation that is inserted via the HTML editor of the Toolkit
- Annotations and bookmarks

However, many other forms can also be described as application profiles in a very broad sense:

- Handbooks or Manuals
- Guidelines
- Best Practices
- Standards compatible with RDA like ISBDM
- Etc.

What about Artificial Intelligence?

- [RDA Board / RSC Joint Working Group on Artificial Intelligence](#) established 2024
- [New White Paper: Considering AI in the Growth of RDA / ALA RDA Toolkit](#) published in January 2025
- Next steps: Elaboration of RDA minimal set for cataloguing with AI

What the RSC is currently doing?

- Working Groups (Examples, Technical, Translations, Religions, Extent, AI, Archives)
- Proposals and Discussion papers
- Setting up Community Resources
- Documents and Guidelines
- Training and information events
- Liaisons with other standardisation bodies
- All activities of the RSC are documented

Conclusion

- Libraries worldwide are under great economic pressure. Financial resources are becoming scarcer and at the same time the demands on cultural institutions are increasing. Library management is under great pressure here.
- Standards must also take account of this situation. RDA tries to respond to this by offering the possibility to choose between different options and cataloguing levels and to mark them clearly e.g. with the “recording method” or a cataloguing level.
- The use of AI in the creation of metadata must be assessed realistically. It will be of great benefit in the future, but it cannot replace intellectual labour and cannot be used as a cost-saving tool.
- Cooperation must be an essential component in the creation and further development of standards.

Let's work together!



Thank you for your attention and grateful
for your input!

Renate Behrens
Chair RDA Steering Committee
rsccchair@rdatoolkit.org

