

To: Renate Behrens, Chair, RDA Steering Committee

CC: Anne Welsh, RSC Secretary

From: Trina Soderquist, NARDAC representative

Subject: Formal response to RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1 – Proposal for Manifestation: extent of manifestation and Manifestation: manifestation extent statement

The North American RDA Committee (NARDAC) thanks the Extent Working Group for their eight proposals to make improvements to the extent elements. NARDAC approves of many of the individual recommendations.

We have the following four comments regarding the proposals when considered as a whole:

1. The proposed changes have the potential to create gaps between RDA and MARC 21. For example, metadata description sets that use terms from and the source code for the current **RDA Illustrative Content** vocabulary encoding scheme will have invalid data if these recommendations are implemented as written. Some mappings between RDA and MARC 21 will need to be reviewed, and proposals will need to be made to the MARC Advisory Committee (MAC) to accommodate the Extent Working Group's recommendations.
2. Many of the recommendations seem incomplete and lack necessary instructions and options. For example, one recommendation suggests moving “applicable instructions” from one element to another but does not identify which instructions are applicable.
3. We are very concerned about moving instructions to Community Resources. The documents in Community Resources are not official RDA instructions or guidance approved by the RDA Steering Committee (https://access.rdatoolkit.org/en-US_topic_CR_landing/p_gxz_pyb_4mbt). Many of the instructions that are listed for removal to Community Resources do not correspond to a specific string encoding scheme.
4. The Policy, Training, and Cooperative Programs division (PTCP) at the Library of Congress does not believe it can implement these new extent elements beyond making minor adjustments to the Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging policy statements and Metadata Guidance Documents. It is our understanding that these new elements, definitions, vocabulary encoding schemes, etc., will not be added to the official RDA Toolkit until the October 2026 RDA update at the earliest. With the countdown clock for original RDA set to begin in May 2026, this timeline does not give us enough time to fully consider these extent elements in terms of LC's descriptive cataloging practices.

NARDAC's comments about specific recommendations are listed below and in separate responses to the seven other proposals.

Recommendation 1. Recast the element Manifestation: extent of manifestation as a superelement that is used to record values constructed from values derived from its subelements in accordance with string encoding schemes.

NARDAC approves of the recommendations, with suggested amendments below.

Change the element label to follow the pattern of other superelements, e.g., Manifestation: edition statement and Manifestation: publication statement. For example, instead of Manifestation: extent of manifestation, change the label to Manifestation: extent statement.

Remove or qualify the word “physical” in the proposed definition. NARDAC assumes that this superelement may be recorded for both tangible (physical) and intangible (electronic) resources, but the proposed definition limits the use of the superelement to describe manifestations with a physical presence.

Revised proposed definition: A quantification of one or more ~~physical~~ characteristics of a manifestation.

Other suggestions for revising the proposed definition follow:

- A quantification of one or more material characteristics of a manifestation.
- A quantification of one or more characteristics of a manifestation
- A quantification of the amount, size, or count of one or more physical components of a manifestation.
- A quantification of the number, size, or spatial extent of the units or components that constitute a manifestation.
- A statement that identifies the quantity of units, components, or spatial dimensions that constitute a manifestation.
- A statement that identifies the quantity of logical parts that constitute a manifestation.

Recommendation 2. Create the element Manifestation: manifestation extent statement, referencing each of the subelements of Manifestation: extent of manifestation as options to record a value. Update the RDA Toolkit guidance chapter for manifestation statements.

NARDAC approves of the recommendations, but we find it difficult to fully assess the recommendation without seeing the proposed text for the conditions, condition options, and options needed for this new element.

We also suggest amending the proposed definition to remove the word “physical.”

Revised proposed definition: A manifestation statement about the quantification of one or more ~~physical~~ characteristics of a manifestation.

Other suggestions for revising the proposed definition follow:

- A manifestation statement about the quantification of one or more characteristics of a manifestation.
- A manifestation statement about a quantification of the amount, size, or count of one or more physical components of a manifestation.
- A manifestation statement about a quantification of the number, size, or spatial extent of the units or components that constitute a manifestation.
- A manifestation statement about the quantity of physical units, components, or spatial dimensions that constitute a manifestation.