

To: Renate Behrens, Chair, RDA Steering Committee
CC: Anne Welsh, RSC Secretary
From: Jack Ennis Butler, ORDAC representative

Subject: Formal response to RSC/NARDAC/2025/3/- Inconsistency in the transcribed manifestation elements related to source of information

ORDAC thanks NARDAC for raising this issue and for their thorough analysis. We think that it would be useful to add these options in some cases. However, we think that they should be added to a narrower selection of Manifestation elements. ORDAC has provided suggestions and are willing to work with NARDAC on incorporating these into a revised proposal.

Recommendation 1

ORDAC does not approve of this recommendation.

Recommendation 2

ORDAC does not approve of this recommendation.

General comments

1. Option: ‘Use any source of information’

We do not think it is useful to add the option ‘Use any source of information’ to a narrower element that directs the cataloguer to a broader element that already includes the same option. This is because:

- This is redundant. If an option already sits at a broader element, it will be applicable to the narrower element through the downwards inheritance of attributes.
- There are many other options as well as the one mentioned which are present at a broader element but not the narrower element. If the proposal is accepted, then for consistency these other options **should also** be repeated at the narrower element.
- Adding this option may result in cataloguers not bothering to check the broader element for much needed guidance.
- Many Agent elements with a range of Nomen (e.g. *Person: preferred name of person*) also lack this option. These too are elements where a value is transcribed from a source of information to describe the entity. If the proposal is accepted, then for consistency the option ‘Use any source of information’ should also be added to the Agent elements that lack this.

We also do not think it is useful to add the option ‘Use any source of information’ to any element that is a shortcut element that is recorded by recording a value of *Timespan: name of timespan* or *Place: name of place*. This is because the elements *Timespan: name of timespan* and *Place: name of place* **already** include this option. Therefore, it is redundant to add the option to these shortcut elements.

However, we think it would be useful to add this option to:

- the Manifestation superelements that lack this
- the Manifestation subelements that lack this and which are **not** recorded by recording a value of *Timespan: name of timespan* or *Place: name of place*.

This is because these elements lack broader elements that include this option, and there is no other guidance allowing the cataloguer to 'Use any source of information'.

2. Option at 'Unstructured description' pointing cataloguers to Data provenance

We agree that sometimes it would be useful to add an option pointing cataloguers to the Data provenance instructions for guidance on selecting a preferred source of information.

However, we think this option should **only** be added to elements that represent either a value of preferred name or a value of preferred title, as this is the point where choices between values need to be made to choose a preferred value.

We think that the element *Manifestation: title proper* should be renamed *Manifestation: preferred title of manifestation* to make it clearer that this represents a preferred value. This would also ensure consistency across naming conventions by following the pattern of other title elements. For instance *preferred title of expression*, *variant title of expression*.

3. The 'source of information' preference tables

In addition, ORDAC would like to raise that the source of information preference tables at [Data provenance: Recording a source of metadata that is a manifestation that is being described](#) etc. do not in fact represent options for recording a value of an element. They merely give guidance on selecting a value to be recorded. Having tested this in production in the course of day-to-day cataloguing, we feel that changes are certainly needed.