

# RDA's Strategy and the Future Development of RDA

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# The Elephant in the Room

Artificial Intelligence is so big  
and important you just can't  
ignore it.



# Libraries cannot ignore AI

- Libraries are an important part of cultural and social development.
- They are key parts of knowledge management.
- This makes the discussion about AI unavoidable and important at the same time.
- Many libraries and cataloguing institutions are in a very difficult economic situation and have to save money and human resources.



# RSC and AI

- The RSC and the RDA Board felt it is their duty to support cataloguing organisations in the current difficult situation and to adapt RDA accordingly.
- It was important for us to participate in the current discussion and thus also support our colleagues worldwide in the belief that cataloguing needs to be changed, but cannot be replaced solely by the use of AI.
- 2024 the RSC and the RDA Board decided to set up Joint Working Group on Artificial Intelligence



# Membership

- Ahava Cohen (Chair), RSC, Israel
- Christian Aliverti, RDA Board, Switzerland
- Renate Behrens, Chair RSC, Germany
- Colleen Barbus, Chair RDA Board, USA
- Judith Cannan, RDA Board, USA
- Charlene Chou, RSC, USA
- James Hennelly, ALA, USA



# Information about the WG

Joint RDA Board and RSC Working Group  
on Artificial Intelligence | ALA RDA Toolkit



# Initial Tasks

- How might AI assist in the implementation of RDA?  
How might it hinder the implementation of RDA?
- What are the ethical implications of using AI that might affect RDA?
- Are the copyright or other intellectual property considerations with regard to the AI that might apply to the implementation of RDA Toolkit?



# First deliverable: White paper

Considering AI in the growth of RDA , published January 16, 2025 Objectives:

- To examine how AI can enhance metadata creation and cataloging within RDA
- To provide guidance for implementation in a way that encourages standardization in metadata while holding space for upholding our own communities' core values.
- To collaborate with other international library organizations, such as IFLA, PCC, and AI4LAM, to responsibly implement AI in cataloging worldwide





# White paper Key Points #1

- **Enhancing, Not Replacing Human Work:** AI is envisioned as a tool to automate repetitive cataloging tasks, such as metadata tagging and authority control, thereby allowing catalogers to focus on complex, interpretative work.
- **Human Oversight Remains Crucial:** Despite AI's capabilities, human expertise is essential to ensure accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and contextual understanding in cataloging.



# White paper Key Points #2

- **Training AI with RDA Standards:** There's a need to develop machine-readable RDA guidelines to train AI models effectively, ensuring the creation of RDA-compliant metadata.
- **Misconception Addressed:** The paper clarifies that AI adoption is not intended to reduce staffing but to augment human roles, drawing parallels with past technological advancements in libraries that expanded rather than contracted staff responsibilities.



# Tasks April 2025 ff

- Investigate live production services using AI for cataloguing and whether they adhere to RDA or other standards.
- Identify specific ways AI can support metadata creation and maintenance while maintaining compliance with RDA standards.
- Draft guidelines for creating an AI agent to help users navigate the RDA Toolkit.
- Develop a minimal set of entities that a dataset must include to be RDA compliant, even if the metadata is automatically generated.



# Tasks April 2025 ff

- Establish quality criteria for RDA compliant metadata (including AI generated metadata) to ensure reliability, accuracy, and consistency and elaborate on how AI can assist in quality assurance.
- Provide recommendations for transparency in the AI-assisted metadata creation process.
- Propose methods for documenting the AI-generated nature of RDA data in metadata records.



# Out of Scope

- Ethical considerations
- Environmental considerations
- Copyright



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- Charlene Chou  
Wider Engagement Officer, RSC  
Head, Knowledge Access, New York University Libraries
- Ahava Cohen  
European Representative, RSC  
Head Cataloguing Section  
National Library of Israel



Thank you for your attention and grateful  
for your input!

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