

The Aquifer Metadata Working Group is pleased to announce the release of the final version of the *DLF/Aquifer Implementation Guidelines for Shareable MODS Records*.

We would like to thank the many reviewers who suggested changes or questioned content either through email or at the Birds of a Feather (BOF) session at the DLF Forum in Austin, Texas in April 2006. Following are some of the major changes made to the final version. The Working Group also made some changes based on changes to the MODS standard from version 3.1 to 3.2. In addition, we made numerous minor changes to both the text and examples to make the guidelines more consistent and readable.

## **Purpose of Guidelines**

The Working Group made a great effort to ensure that the guidelines were focused on how to implement MODS for shared records. Whether an element (or attribute or subelement) in a record created explicitly for the purpose being shareable should be required, recommended, optional, or not recommended was partly determined on its usefulness (or potential usefulness) by aggregators. Each element includes a discussion of how aggregators may use the element. The change in the title (from *DLF MODS Implementation Guidelines for Cultural Heritage Materials* to *DLF/Aquifer Implementation Guidelines for Shareable MODS Records*) also reflects this focus. These guidelines are not intended to dictate local practice, but to provide a useful structure for implementing MODS records for sharing within the DLF Aquifer Initiative and potentially in other such initiatives.

## **What is being described? Digital vs. Analog**

The original version of these guidelines recommended describing only the digital version of an object in the top-level MODS elements and recording information about the analog original in `<relatedItem>`. This question generated many comments from reviewers as well as forming the basis for almost an entire BOF session at the DLF 2006 Spring Forum. Most reviewers thought that this decision was confusing and would lead to inconsistent application.

In the final version, the Working Group has tried to keep in mind the needs of end-users and aggregators and has tried to provide as simple a structure as possible for presenting metadata. The guidelines recommend that metadata about content and digital and analog carriers all appear in the main record. The guidelines try to make clear how an aggregator might use the metadata in services for end-users and make recommendations for the inclusion or exclusion of information based on that use. `<relatedItem>` is used only for contextual information, to point to a full metadata record, and to provide additional information about intellectual constituent units of the resource being described. While this does not provide a clean one-to-one record as the Working Group had attempted (and failed) to deliver in the first draft of the guidelines, the Working Group does feel that this is a practical solution to a very complicated issue. Because these guidelines are meant for the 'shared' record, local implementations of MODS that adhere more closely to the one-to-one principle are still possible.

## **One and only one URL**

Originally the guidelines had required one and only one <location> element with a <url> subelement to link to the resource. Several reviewers pointed out that this is not practical given the fact that there are often multiple files associated with a resource, for example, a high resolution image and thumbnail.

In the final version the guidelines require one <location><url usage="primary display">, but allow additional <location><url> as long as these do not use the attribute usage="primary display". The attribute usage="primary display" was added in MODS 3.2.

## **Optional <subject><genre> element**

MODS 3.2 added <genre> as a subelement under <subject>, which allows legacy complex subjects (e.g. LC Subject Headings) with a form/genre subelement to be more appropriately represented in MODS. The final version of the guidelines make use of this subelement an option, but give strong preference to use of the highest-level <genre> MODS element for form/genre terms whenever possible.

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