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NEWS RELEASE

DLF Aquifer Invites Public Review of Metadata Guidelines

WASHINGTON, D.C. —The Digital Library Federation's Aquifer Initiative is seeking public comment on a draft set of implementation guidelines for the Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS). The guidelines will help developers of digital collections of cultural heritage and humanities-based scholarly resources create metadata records that can be easily exchanged and shared, whether by the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata harvesting (OAI PMH) or by other means.

Metadata are created to convey essential information about an electronic resource. The MODS guidelines pertain to descriptive metadata—such as title, author, or genre—that help scholars and researchers find and identify needed resources in digital library collections. At present, there are a handful of descriptive metadata schemes in common use, but they are loosely defined and are implemented in many ways. These variations reduce the effectiveness of search and retrieval. The MODS guidelines aim to address this problem by providing a limited set of suitable implementation choices for cultural materials.

The guidelines include a general overview of requirements and recommendations, advice concerning the attributes common to all MODS elements, discussions of each element in the MODS 3.1 Schema, and seven full examples of MODS records that meet these guidelines.

[more . . .](#)

The draft guidelines are available at http://www.diglib.org/aquifer/DLF_MODS_ImpGuidelines_ver4.pdf. Comments are due by January 20, 2006 and should be sent to dlf-mods-guidelines-comments-L@listserv.indiana.edu.

The primary goal of the DLF Aquifer initiative is to enable distributed content to be used effectively by libraries and scholars for teaching, learning, and research. The Digital Library Federation established DLF Aquifer in 2004 to further its mission to enable new research and scholarship through the development and adoption of technical standards and best practices. Starting with a significant, well-bounded collection of digital content in the area of American culture and life, DLF Aquifer is creating a test bed of tools for selecting, collecting, and providing access to high-quality digital content. DLF Aquifer participants include the California Digital Library, Emory University, Indiana University, Johns Hopkins University, Library of Congress, New York University, Stanford University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, University of Tennessee, and University of Virginia.

The Digital Library Federation is an independent membership organization of academic libraries and related organizations that pioneer the use of electronic-information technologies to extend their collections and services. Founded in 1995, DLF identifies standards and best practices for digital collections and network access; coordinates research and development in the libraries' use of technology; and incubates projects and services that libraries need but cannot develop individually. More information about DLF is available at www.diglib.org.

DLF is housed at the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the management of information for research, teaching, and learning. More information about CLIR is available at www.clir.org.

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