

Association for Library Collections & Technical Services  
(A division of the American Library Association)  
Cataloging and Metadata Management Section

Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

## How to Submit a Revision Proposal to CC:DA

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### Introduction

***RDA: Resource Description and Access*** is a set of guidelines and instructions on formulating data to support resource discovery. RDA provides a comprehensive set of guidelines and instructions covering all types of content and media.

RDA was developed and is maintained by the Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA (JSC), which is responsible for making decisions regarding the content of RDA. This international group is made up of representatives from the American Library Association, the Australian Committee on Cataloguing, the British Library, the Canadian Committee on Cataloguing, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, the German National Library, and the Library of Congress.

The JSC receives, discusses, and makes decisions on proposals received from one of the JSC constituencies or from non-JSC groups. Each JSC constituency is expected to respond to every proposal, and reaches decisions by consensus.

**The Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA)** is the body within the American Library Association (ALA) that is charged with initiating and developing proposals for the revision of RDA. Within the United States, all additions and changes to RDA (except those originating from the Library of Congress) must be channeled through this group.

### Who Can Submit a Revision Proposal?

Anyone can submit a revision proposal to CC:DA by following the instructions detailed below. CC:DA welcomes input and suggestions for revision. At the same time, it should be noted that the revision process is a formal one that requires careful preparation and patience upon the part of the petitioner. The latter is particularly important because, although approved and endorsed by

CC:DA, a proposal must usually pass through a lengthy review, revision, and subsequent review process before it is approved by the **Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA (JSC)**.

## **What Types of Proposals Are Acceptable?**

The JSC accepts two types of proposals:

1. Certain minor issues may be subject to a Fast Track procedure. This is designed to deal with issues that do not require extensive discussion or consultation by the JSC members. Examples include the addition of terms to the RDA vocabularies (including the relationship designators), the addition, deletion, or modification of examples, the correction of errors in the text (including typographical errors). Suggestions for Fast Track proposals should be directed to the ALA representative to the JSC, who will carry them forward to the JSC. (Correction of errors in the text can optionally be submitted using the “feedback” button in the RDA Toolkit.)
2. Other proposals follow the more formal process described in this document.

CC:DA is open to considering revision proposals that range from small, isolated additions or changes to the text (e.g., the Committee submitted a proposal to change an RDA instruction and a related glossary definition to expand the scope of Artistic and/or Technical Credit to include sound recordings) to major changes of the code (e.g., addition of a new chapter or deletion of an instruction).

## **How Will Proposals Be Evaluated?**

Whether minor or major revisions result, each proposal is carefully evaluated by the Committee and considered from several different angles. Although each area below might not be equally important for every proposal, the following list provides an overview of the factors and questions that the Committee routinely considers in its evaluation process.

- **The need for the revision:** Is the current text confusing? Does the current text and/or examples lead to incorrect or inconsistent results, or does it cause access or identification problems for catalog users? Is there an inconsistency among similar or analogous instructions? Is an instruction in the wrong place? Does the proposal address a situation not covered? Is it appropriate to a general code?
- **The context:** What are the underlying principles or issues? Are there analogous situations?
- **The correctness of the proposal:** Does the proposal solve a problem without creating others? Is it in accordance with underlying principles? Is it clear and unambiguous? Is it consistent with other similar instructions?

- **The possible impact on other instructions:** Would the proposed change necessitate other changes? Would examples need to be corrected? Would captions, indexes, tables of contents, etc., need to be changed?
- **The potential impact of the proposal:** Would old cataloging need to be altered? Would the change simplify decisions? How often does the matter arise? Is access affected?

## **Preliminary Steps To Take in Submitting a Proposal**

Given the complexity and time-consuming nature of the revision process, as well as the careful evaluation and close examination that each proposal will receive, it is advisable to undertake several preliminary steps before undertaking the preparation of a formal proposal:

1. Discuss the concern with other catalogers in order to test the merits of your case and to establish the validity of the potential proposal in light of the evaluative criteria given above.
2. Contact the Chair of CC:DA, one of the voting members of the Committee or one of the liaisons from a group (e.g., Music Library Association's CC:DA representative) whose sphere of cataloging interest and activity might be closely allied with your concern. Discussion of the potential proposal with this expert might uncover other issues that need to be addressed, open up an avenue for discussion with other members of a particular cataloging community, or lead to taking an altogether different approach to the problem. Additionally, the Chair, the voting members, and the liaisons can be particularly helpful in guiding the process outlined below and in navigating the waters of CC:DA procedures.
3. Consider consulting with the ALA representative to the JSC. It can be helpful to discuss preliminary ideas with someone familiar with the overall editorial and revision process.

## **Formal Elements of a Revision Proposal**

The proposal should be sent in electronic form to facilitate distribution over the Committee's electronic discussion list. This will speed up the process by allowing CC:DA to consider the proposal as soon as it is received. Proposals distributed to CC:DA are also posted on the CC:DA Web site <<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/otherdocs.html>>.

Electronic copies must be in Microsoft Word (1997 version or higher).

The CC:DA Webmaster prepares documents for distribution to CC:DA and for posting on the CC:DA Web site. The Webmaster may be contacted for assistance in the mechanical and editorial details of preparing a proposal. The Webmaster may contact the proposer for corrections or clarifications; the proposer will have the opportunity to review the final version of the proposal.

***Address:***

The proposal should take the form of a dated memorandum addressed as shown below. Once received by the Chair of CC:DA, the proposal will be assigned a document number.

To: [Name], Chair, ALA/ALCTS/CaMMS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access  
From: [To be supplied]  
Subject: [To be supplied]

**Note:** On the *From:* line, please include the name of the person submitting the proposal, followed by the constituent group he or she represents, if applicable. On the *Subject:* line, please include the following types of information if applicable to the proposal: the RDA instruction number; captioned words associated with the instruction; whether examples, footnotes or appendices are affected:

**Examples:**

- RDA 6.29.1.21, Reports of One Court
- RDA 7.24, Artistic and/or Technical Credit
- RDA 9.13, Affiliation
- RDA 11.2.2.21.1 & 11.2.2.21.2, Heads of State and Government
- RDA 16.2.2.9, Places in Certain Federations
- Change to GLOSSARY entry for Artistic and/or Technical Credit

***Background:***

The proposal should include a background statement that provides the context in which the revision should be considered. A thorough explanation of the problem(s) in RDA that will be remedied by the revision, an historical overview of the steps, discussions, events, etc. that have led to its creation, and citations to any related documents are appropriate for inclusion in this section of the proposal. As the organizational needs of the proposal dictate, the [Rationale](#) and [Assessment of impact](#) discussed below may also be included here.

***Proposed revisions:***

According to JSC policy, “There will be one proposal per document.” CC:DA interprets this to mean that all revisions in the proposal must be closely related, not that a separate proposal is required for each instruction affected by the revision. It is therefore common for proposals to include revisions to more than one instruction. Furthermore, these revisions may occur in different parts of RDA.

To assist CC:DA and the JSC in discussing the proposal, the specific changes being requested should be given as a numbered list, if possible. This not only draws attention to the specifics, but allows reference to each change by number.

To enhance the clarity and readability of the proposal, the text of the proposed changes should be given in two versions: one using markup to show the changes from the current text, and one

showing a clean version of the proposed text. The current text of RDA should be copied from the RDA Toolkit and should retain the original typography.

The proposed revisions should be indicated as deletions or additions to the current text. The markup should use strike-through to indicate deletions and double-underlining to indicate additions.

***Rationale/Explanation for the proposed revisions:***

Each proposal should contain a rationale or justification for the suggested revision, including a statement of the problem presented by the current instruction.

***Assessment of the impact and survey of related instructions:***

Finally, the proposal should include an assessment of the impact resulting from implementation of the revision(s), including the need to study and/or change other instructions within RDA.

***Other considerations for inclusion in the proposal:***

It may be useful to include surrogates or other ways of depicting resources to be cataloged that illustrate the instruction being addressed (e.g., a recent proposal from the Music Library Association that included surrogates of two CDs to show circumstances where the inability to use a source that presents a collective title as the preferred source leads to complications). It may also be advisable to include evidence of having considered the scope of the proposed change and to offer suggestions for broadening or narrowing that scope, if applicable. Finally, it may be helpful to mention other constituencies that have been consulted or made a part of the proposal-drafting process (e.g., consultation or coordination with OLAC, the Canadian Association of Music Libraries, etc.).

## **Forwarding the Proposal**

The revision proposal should be forwarded to the Chair of CC:DA, either directly or through any voting or non-voting member of CC:DA. The [roster of current CC:DA members](#) is available on the CC:DA Web site.

## **What is the Timetable for Submitting a Revision Proposal?**

While CC:DA will accept a revision proposal at any time, revision is a complicated and lengthy procedure, and the more complicated and longer the proposal, the more time will be required to consider it. For a proposal to be guaranteed to receive consideration at the next CC:DA meeting, the following minimal time should be allowed:

- Revision proposals should be made available to the Chair of CC:DA one month prior to the next CC:DA meeting, which is scheduled during the ALA Annual Conference or Midwinter Meeting. The proposals will be made available to the CC:DA membership and posted on the CC:DA Web site one month prior to the next CC:DA meeting.

- If the revision proposal is accepted by CC:DA, it is forwarded to the Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA (JSC). JSC requires that revision proposals be transmitted to JSC at least three months prior to the next scheduled JSC meeting in order to be considered. This is to allow sufficient time for the other JSC members to consult their respective advisory bodies, for those advisory bodies to review the proposal and formulate their responses, and for the JSC member to transmit those responses to the other JSC members in a time frame that allows them to read the responses and be prepared to discuss both the original proposal and the responses at the next JSC meeting. [The date of the next JSC meeting is available on the [JSC Web site](#), usually as the final item on the latest report of Outcomes of the ... JSC Meeting. The JSC procedures for receiving and considering revision proposals are documented in JSC's "[Statement of Policy & Procedures.](#)"]
- Unless the revision proposal is either accepted or rejected by all the JSC constituents, there will likely be further revision and subsequent review by JSC. This process may take a year or more, depending on the complexity of the proposal and the number of revisions requested.

## **Where Can I Find Examples of Revision Proposals?**

All RDA revision proposals are posted on the JSC website. Check here for examples of recent proposals, paying particular attention to the [ALA proposals](#).

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