

ESDN Metadata Best Practices and Guidelines

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Overview and How to Use These Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to assist potential and current partners with preparing and updating metadata to be contributed to the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) through the Empire State Digital Network (ESDN), the New York State Service Hub for DPLA.

The guidelines are *not intended to replace local metadata guidelines*, but our goal is to provide guidance and clarification for new and existing ESDN partners who are considering or in the process of providing metadata to DPLA as part of their digital collections workflow.

We hope that following the recommendations in conjunction with consistently applied local guidelines will help DPLA users to find and use contributed content from ESDN partners.

The fields outlined here represent the current DPLA descriptive metadata properties mapped from ESDN partner data and sent to DPLA through the hub. Additional fields, such as the thumbnail ‘preview’ link and the link back to the metadata record on your local site, are also contributed. Please see the [ESDN Metadata Requirements](#) page on the [ESDN website](#) for additional information.

Additional Resources

[DPLA Metadata Application Profile \(MAP\)](#)

[ESDN Metadata Profile](#)

[ESDN Field Requirements List](#)

[ESDN Mapping Worksheet \(Template\)](#)

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Fields

Alternative Title

Field Name	Alternative Title
Description (from DPLA)	Any alternative title of the described resource including abbreviations and translations.
ESDN MODS Element	<titleInfo type="alternative"><title>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	If used, make sure alternative title is available in a discrete field in metadata feed or able to be parsed consistently from the main title field
Example Values	Road not taken [Main title: The road not taken] Three blind mice [Main title: 3 blind mice] Black socks [Main title: Chaussettes noires]

Contributor

Field Name	Contributor
Description (from DPLA)	Entity responsible for making contributions to described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<name><namePart> where <name> also contains <role><roleTerm>contributor</roleTerm></role>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	LCNAF
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Whenever possible, use authorized form of name and include URIs where available</p> <p>For personal names, recommend entering name in form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Last name, first name</i> middle (middle, title, etc. are optional) • Add birth/death dates if known • [aka, nickname, etc.] • Nee / former name -- add in parentheses <p>For corporate names, avoid generic terms (i.e. <i>Brooklyn College. Student Council</i> instead of just <i>Student Council</i>)</p> <p>If using a variety of role terms in source data, i.e. see https://www.loc.gov/marc/relators/relaterm.html, ESDN can map contributor values to DPLA contributor property as required according to mapping from partner</p>
Example Values	[See Creator]

Creator

Field Name	Creator
Description (from DPLA)	Entity primarily responsible for making described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<name><namePart> where <name> also contains <role><roleTerm>creator</roleTerm></role>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	LCNAF
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Whenever possible, use authorized form of name and include URIs where available</p> <p>For personal names, recommend entering name in form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Last name, first name</i> middle (middle, title, etc. are optional) • Add birth/death dates if known

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [aka, nickname, etc.] • Nee / former name -- add in parentheses <p>For corporate names, avoid generic terms (i.e. <i>Brooklyn College. Student Council</i> instead of just <i>Student Council</i>)</p> <p>If using a variety of role terms in source data, i.e. see https://www.loc.gov/marc/relators/relaterm.html, ESDN can map creator values to DPLA creator property as required according to mapping from partner</p>
Example Values	<p>Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, 1815-1902</p> <p>Adee, Ellen (Skeel)</p> <p>Ruth, Babe</p> <p>City University of New York</p> <p>Brooklyn College. Student Council</p>

Date

Field Name	Date
Description (from DPLA)	Date value as supplied by data provider
ESDN MODS Element	<originInfo><dateCreated keyDate="yes" [point="start"]>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	W3CDTF EDTF
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Whenever possible, do not use any punctuation in the date field beyond dashes.</p> <p>For DPLA Timeline, DPLA will use date provided in ESDN MODS with attribute keyDate="yes"</p> <p>Use for the date of the original material, not the date the material was digitized.</p> <p>Dates of digitization should be in discrete fields or consistently indicated so that ESDN can ignore as required as part of transform for DPLA</p> <p>Be consistent in how you are indicating "questionable," "approximate," and "inferred" dates in your dataset</p>
Example Values	<p>"July 4, 1776" → 1776-07-04</p> <p>"ca. 1922" → 1922</p> <p>"November 1956" → 1956-11</p>

Description

Field Name	Description
Description (from DPLA)	Includes but is not limited to: an abstract, a table of contents, or a free-text account of described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<note type="content">
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	Not to be used as a generic "note" field Avoid full-text in this field, will cause issues in DPLA interface and ESDN will not be able to submit that field as part of ESDN dataset
Example Values	Poster with title text and graphic symbolizing the United States and the Soviet Union. 1968 guide to the New York gay scene which included information on and listings of bars, baths, coffee houses, clothing shops, hotels, discussion groups, theatres, night clubs, parks, private clubs, restaurants, homophile organizations, Brooklyn bars, Staten Island bars, Long Island bars, Upstate New York bars, Fire Island bars and hotels and a special gay motion picture review.

Extent

Field Name	Extent
Description (from DPLA)	Size or duration of described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<physicalDescription><extent>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	Separate multiple statements by a semicolon Recommend that abbreviations are spelled out, if possible Always include units when specifying dimensions Recommend following use of appropriate content standard (i.e. RDA)
Example Values	1 map ; 30 x 55 cm. 31 pages ; 12 centimeters

	9 x 9 centimeters
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Format

Field Name	Format
Description (from DPLA)	Physical medium or dimensions of described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<physicalDescription><form>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	AAT TGM
Notes and Best Practices	Do not include file format of digital version here Recommend use of controlled vocabulary or consistently applied local vocabulary If including extent information here, separate from form value with appropriate delimiter
Example Values	human hair on cotton fabric photolithograph glass negative

Identifier

Field Name	Identifier
Description (from DPLA)	A unique standard number or code that distinctively identifies a resource
ESDN MODS Element	<identifier>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	Recommend include at least one identifier in each contributed record. Depending on partner requirements, ESDN can use contributed identifier values to build links (i.e. thumbnail URL) or add additional information not available to be directly mapped from contributed records (i.e. ownership note based on identifier range) If ESDN needs to use identifier in record to build links or otherwise complete record prior to contribution to DPLA, values must be applied consistently and completely across collection. Otherwise, records will be incorrect or incomplete and may not be contributed to DPLA

Example Values	gc_fba_2641 1995.10
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Language

Field Name	Language
Description (from DPLA)	Language(s) of described resource. Strongly recommended for text materials.
ESDN MODS Element	<language><languageTerm>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	ISO 639-2 Codes
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Separate multiple-terms with semicolon</p> <p>Not to be used for recording “language of cataloging”</p> <p>Be consistent in using code vs. text across collection</p> <p>ESDN strongly recommends adding language for textual material and other material that has a significant textual component (i.e. photograph of a sign in German)</p>
Example Values	eng eng; fre German

Place

Field Name	Place
Description (from DPLA)	Spatial characteristics of described resource, such as a country, city, region, address or other geographic term. Captures aboutness.
ESDN MODS Element	<subject><geographic>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	LCSH FAST IGN
Notes and Best Practices	Be consistent when applied, i.e. do not include a mix of place of digitization values along with subject values in same field

	<p>This field captures “aboutness” in regards to the resource, as opposed to indicating where an object is held, was digitized, etc.</p> <p>When using local place values, be consistent in how those are created and applied</p> <p>Include URI where possible</p> <p>Also see DPLA Style Guide</p>
Example Values	<p>United States, Ohio, Columbus</p> <p>New York (State)--New York--Staten Island</p> <p>France--Paris</p>

Publisher

Field Name	Publisher
Description (from DPLA)	Entity responsible for making the described resource available, typically the publisher of a text
ESDN MODS Element	<originInfo><publisher>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Used for the publisher of original resource as opposed to the publisher of digital resource</p> <p>If including both publisher of original and publisher of digital in dataset, be consistent in how/where those values are indicated in (ESDN can ignore publisher of digital in dataset if able to be consistently identified)</p> <p>Do not confuse publisher with contributor, and vice versa</p>
Example Values	<p>Mattachine Society of New York</p> <p>White Plains Public Library</p>

Relation

Field Name	Relation
Description (from DPLA)	Related resource.
ESDN MODS Element	<relatedItem><titleInfo><title> ; <relatedItem><location><url>

Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	General related resource field not to be used for collection title (see DPLA Collection Title field)
Example Values	Francis White Photograph [related title on <i>Francis White Register Page</i> record]

Rights

Field Name	Rights
Description (from DPLA)	Information about rights held in and over the described resource. Typically, rights information includes a statement about various property rights associated with the described resource, including intellectual property rights.
ESDN MODS Element	<accessCondition>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	Creative Commons ESDN currently working on implementation of statements from RightsStatements.org
Notes and Best Practices	Prefer if using a standardized statement as well as a “local” rights statement, input in separate fields
Example Values	See DPLA Standardized Rights Statements Implementation Guidelines for best practices and example for including rightsstatements.org statements in records contributed to DPLA

Subject

Field Name	Subject
Description (from DPLA)	Topic of described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<subject><topic> ; <subject><name><namePart> ; <subject><titleInfo><title>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	LCSH FAST
Notes and Best Practices	Recommend use of controlled vocabulary or consistently applied local vocabulary Recommend use of faceted terms as opposed to “LCSH-style” strings Consistently separate multiple subject terms in same field with a semi-colon, or

	<p>input in separate subject fields</p> <p>Include URIs where available when using controlled vocabularies</p> <p>Include at least 1 subject heading in each contributed record, if possible</p>
Example Values	<p>Coal; Coal trade; Railroads; Horse-drawn vehicles</p> <p>Parades Parade of Progress Fire departments Jemima, Aunt</p>

Temporal Coverage

Field Name	Temporal Coverage
Description (from DPLA)	Temporal characteristics of the described resource. Captures aboutness
ESDN MODS Element	<subject><temporal>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	<p>EDTF</p> <p>FAST</p>
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Recommend use of controlled vocabulary or consistently applied local vocabulary</p> <p>Not to be used for the date an item was published, created, etc.</p> <p>Attempt to make separate from subject and place elements in provided dataset. Can be difficult to parse from subject or coverage elements into correct temporal element</p> <p>Also see DPLA Style Guide</p>
Example Values	<p>1985-01-10</p> <p>1901-1910</p> <p>Nineteen forties</p>

Title

Field Name	Title
Description (from DPLA)	Primary name given to the described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<titleInfo><title>

Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	<p>As a general rule, consider how title will “work” outside of local context when creating titles for content that will be shared with DPLA and other aggregators</p> <p>Consider use of appropriate content standard to help devise descriptive titles where required, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DACS • RDA <p>And make title as descriptive as possible following the content standard in use at your local institution</p> <p>Make sure title is unique in respect to collection object is a part of</p> <p>Avoid identifier/file name “titles”</p> <p>When including titles in the same record (<i>main title and alternative title, or main title and collection title</i>)</p>
Example Values	<p>Portrait of Theodore Jay Lee, Sr.</p> <p>Letter from L.H. Brown to Mary Brown, November 1861</p> <p>Photograph of Anna Wilcox (Standing)</p> <p>Queen of Pancakes Rides King of Trucks in Parade of Progress</p>

Type

Field Name	Type
Description (from DPLA)	Nature or genre of described resource
ESDN MODS Element	<typeOfResource>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	<p>MODS TypeOfResource values</p> <p>DCMIType</p>
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Highly recommended by DPLA</p> <p>Make sure applied consistently (pay attention to case)</p> <p>Recommend separating multiple values in field with a semi-colon when providing multiple values in a single field to ESDN</p> <p>ESDN maps all partner values to MODS TypeOfResource values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text • cartographic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● notated music ● sound recording ● sound recording-musical ● sound recording ● still image ● moving image ● three dimensional object ● software, multimedia ● mixed material <p>DPLA uses DCMIType:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● image ● text ● sound ● moving image ● physical object ● collection
Example Values	<p>still image</p> <p>text; cartographic</p> <p>moving image</p>

Collection Title

Field Name	Collection Title
Description (from DPLA)	Name of the collection or aggregation
ESDN MODS Element	<relatedItem type="host" displayLabel="Collection"><titleInfo><title>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	<p>Preferable that this is in a field that can be mapped from partner dataset</p> <p>Make sure this value is distinguishable in record from object-level related resources and titles</p>
Example Values	<p>Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry Poster Collection</p> <p>Robert L. Bracklow Photograph Collection</p>

Collection Description

Field Name	Collection Description
Description (from DPLA)	Free-text account of aggregation, for example an abstract or content scope note.
ESDN MODS Element	<relatedItem type="host" displayLabel="Collection"><abstract>
Vocabulary/Encoding Recommendations	n/a
Notes and Best Practices	Make sure that this field is distinguishable in contributed record from description for item level-record/object
Example Values	<p>This collection consists of 177 hand drawn and printed posters from the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry Records (SSSJ) held by Yeshiva University Archives. SSSJ was a national, grass-roots student organization founded in 1964 to oppose the persecution of Soviet Jews and promote their right to emigrate freely from the Soviet Union.</p> <p>The White Plains Collection is comprised of materials relevant to the history of White Plains, New York. This digital collection contains 322 items including photographs and documents spanning the late 19th to late 20th centuries. They document civic life, street scenes, and the dramatic change in the character of White Plains through suburban development and urban renewal. Also included are items from Community History Day, when people brought in materials related to their families, churches, personal interests, or work and added them to the collection.</p>