




**IFLA Accessibility Metadata
Network**

Request for comments on the draft IFLA Accessibility Metadata Statement and Principles

 Draft Accessibility Metadata Statement and Principles for worldwide review 2025 06

What is Accessibility Metadata?

Accessibility metadata is metadata or information about the accessibility features of a resource so that a person with disabilities can determine whether they can access the content of the resource. It may also include information about a resource's conformance with accessibility standards or about hazards.

Many information and library professionals have noted the lack of guidance for creating and using metadata about accessibility features, and for including this type of metadata in library discovery systems. Accessibility metadata is either completely absent or it is recorded inconsistently, making it difficult to use reliably for retrieval or display in library catalogues. With legislation such as the European Accessibility Act coming into effect, there will also be an increasing amount of accessibility metadata created in related sectors, such as by publishers, and the reuse of this metadata would greatly benefit library users.

Who wrote the draft statement?

The IFLA Accessibility Metadata Network was created to improve the resource discovery experience for library users with disabilities, with widespread collaboration across sectors, both within IFLA and outside IFLA.

The IFLA Accessibility Metadata Network is sponsored by six IFLA committees: Advisory Committee on Standards, and the Standing Committees of the Audiovisual and Multimedia Section, Bibliography Section, Cataloguing Section, Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities Section, and Subject Analysis and Access Section. There are currently four working groups looking at different aspects of the guidance required.

One of the working groups has produced a draft statement on the role of accessibility metadata in advancing the goal of universal and equitable access to information, ideas and literature and in supporting an inclusive information society.

The statement includes a call to action and a set of principles for the use and design of accessibility metadata. The statement can be used for advocacy, in negotiations with vendors, or for informing strategic planning, staff training and the allocation of resources.

We are now launching a worldwide review – this is a period of consultation with the wider community to gather feedback and comments. The comments are important in ensuring that the statement will be effective and respond to the needs of those who would benefit from a more widespread use of accessibility metadata.

When to comment?

The review period extends until 31 August 2025, to ensure that there is ample time for comments even during a time when many people will be enjoying vacations.

How to comment?

Please send comments as an email message or as a document attached to an email. Feel free to download a copy of the draft, add suggestions or comments in your copy, and then send it to us. Send to Victoria Owen and cc Hélène Brousseau and use this subject line: “Review of the IFLA Statement on Accessibility Metadata.”

victoria.owen@utoronto.ca and helene.brousseau@concordia.ca

Please identify whether you are commenting as an individual or on behalf of an organization, committee, interest group, etc. (And please do include your name and organization/affiliation).

Share the draft

Please **share the draft and this request for comments** with your colleagues and networks.

Your participation is greatly appreciated,

Victoria Owen
Chair, Principles Working Group

Chris Oliver
Convenor, Accessibility Metadata Network