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## Information and documentation — The Dublin Core metadata element set

*Information et documentation — L'ensemble des éléments de  
métadonnées Dublin Core*

Please see the administrative notes on page iii

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## Foreword

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The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 15836 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Technical interoperability*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 15836:2003), of which it constitutes a minor revision to incorporate minor changes and align it with ANSI/NISO Z39.85:2007.

## Introduction

The *Dublin Core Metadata Element Set* is a vocabulary of fifteen properties for use in resource description. The name “Dublin” comes from its original 1995 invitational workshop, which took place in Dublin, Ohio; “core” because its elements are broad and generic, usable for describing a wide range of resources.

The fifteen-element “Dublin Core” described in this International Standard is part of a larger set of metadata vocabularies and technical specifications maintained by the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI). The full set of vocabularies, *DCMI Metadata Terms* [DCMI-TERMS], also includes a set of resource classes, the *DCMI Type Vocabulary* [DCMI-TYPE]. The terms in DCMI vocabularies are intended to be used in combination with terms from other, compatible vocabularies in the context of application profiles and on the bases of the *DCMI Abstract Model* [DCAM].

In 2006, the DCMI Usage Board undertook an editorial review of terms in the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set (DCMES) in order to clarify intended semantics and bring the wording of their definitions and usage comments into line with the language of the *DCMI Abstract Model* [DCAM]. A set of proposed changes was posted for public comment from August 28 to September 25, 2006. A face-to-face Usage Board meeting in Manzanillo, Mexico, on September 30, 2006, resulted in the publication on December 18, 2006, of a decision text, a response to comments, and a revised terms documentation.

This revision of the original ANSI/NISO Z39.85 standard that was issued in 2001 corresponds to version 1.1 on the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative website that resulted from the editorial review and public comment period described above. All changes made to terms of the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set since 2001 have been reviewed by a DCMI Usage Board in the context of a *DCMI Namespace Policy* [DCMI-NAMESPACE]. The namespace policy describes how DCMI terms are assigned Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs) and sets limits on the range of editorial changes that may be already made to the labels, definitions and usage comments associated with existing DCMI terms.



# Information and documentation — The Dublin Core metadata element set

## 1 Scope

This International Standard establishes a standard for cross-domain resource description, known as the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set. Like RFC 3986, this International Standard does not limit what might be a resource.

This International Standard defines the elements typically used in the context of an application profile which constrains or specifies their use in accordance with local or community-based requirements and policies. However, it does not define implementation detail, which is outside the scope of this International Standard.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ANSI/NISO Z39.85:2007, *The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set*

DCAM, *DCMI Abstract Model*. Available at <http://dublincore.org/documents/abstract-model/>

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in DCAM and the following apply.

### 3.1

#### **resource**

anything that has identity

[RFC 3986, DCMI Abstract Model]

### 3.2

#### **lifecycle of a resource**

sequence of events that mark the development and use of a resource

**EXAMPLES** Conception of an invention, creation of a draft, revision of an article, publication of a book, acquisition by a library, transcription to magnetic disk, migration to optical storage, translation into English, and derivation of a new work (e.g. a movie).

## 4 Element set

In the element descriptions given in Table 1, each element has a descriptive label (“label”) for human recognition and a unique token (“name”) for use in machine processing.

In accordance with the *DCMI Namespace Policy* [DCMI-NAMESPACE] specified in ANSI/NISO Z39.85:2007, the “name” of an element is appended to a DCMI namespace URI to construct a Uniform Resource Identifier

as a globally unique identifier for that element. The use of element names and URIs in the context of different implementation technologies is explained in *DCMI Encoding Guidelines* [DCMI-ENCODINGS].

**Table 1 — Element descriptions**

Name	Label	Definition	Remarks
title	Title	name given to the resource	
creator	Creator	entity primarily responsible for making the resource	Examples of Creator include a person, an organization, or a service. Typically, the name of a Creator should be used to indicate the entity.
subject	Subject	topic of the resource	Typically, the subject will be represented using keywords, key phrases, or classification codes. Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary. To describe the spatial or temporal topic of the resource, use the Coverage element.
description	Description	account of the content of the resource	Description may include, but is not limited to, an abstract, a table of contents, a graphical representation, or a free-text account of the resource.
publisher	Publisher	entity responsible for making the resource available	Examples of Publisher include a person, an organization, or a service. Typically, the name of a Publisher should be used to indicate the entity.
contributor	Contributor	entity responsible for making contributions to the resource	Examples of a Contributor include a person, an organization, or a service. Typically, the name of a Contributor should be used to indicate the entity.
date	Date	point or period of time associated with an event in the lifecycle of the resource	Date may be used to express temporal information at any level of granularity. Recommended best practice is to use an encoding schema such as the W3CDTF profile of ISO 8601 [W3CDTF].
type	Type	nature or genre of the resource	Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as the <i>DCMI Type Vocabulary</i> [DCMI-TYPE]. To describe the file format, physical medium, or dimensions of the resource, use the Format element.
format	Format	file format, physical medium, or dimensions of the resource	Examples of dimensions include size and duration. Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as the list of <i>Internet Media Types</i> [MIME].
identifier	Identifier	unambiguous reference to the resource within a given context	Recommended best practice is to identify the resource by means of a string conforming to a formal identification system.
source	Source	related resource from which the present resource is derived	The described resource may be derived from the related resource in whole or in part. Recommended best practice is to identify the related resource by means of a string conforming to a formal identification system.



Table 1 (continued)

Name	Label	Definition	Remarks
language	Language	language of the resource	Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as RFC 4646.
relation	Relation	related resource	Recommended best practice is to identify the related resource by means of a string conforming to a formal identification system.
coverage	Coverage	spatial or temporal topic of the resource, the spatial applicability of the resource, or the jurisdiction under which the resource is relevant	Spatial topic and spatial applicability may be a named place or a location specified by its geographic coordinates. Temporal topic may be a named period, date or date range. A jurisdiction may be a named administrative entity or a geographic place to which the resource applies. Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as the <i>Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names</i> [TGN]. Where appropriate, named places or time periods can be used in preference to numeric identifiers such as sets of coordinates or date ranges.
rights	Rights	information about rights held in and over the resource	Typically, rights information includes a statement about various property rights associated with the resource, including intellectual property rights.

**Annex A**  
(informative)

**Further information**

Further information about the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set is available at the URL <http://dublincore.org/>. This website contains information about workshops, reports, working group papers, projects, and new developments concerning the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI).

## Bibliography

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- [9] RFC 3986, *Uniform Resource Identifier (URI): Generic Syntax*. Available at <http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3986.txt>
- [10] RFC 4646, *Tags for identifying languages*. Available at <http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc4545.txt>

