

ISO WG2N1118 Metadata Study Period

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Study Period Introduction

Many organizations have recognized the need to develop and share programmatically accessible terminologies, services and data collection forms. At the May 2008 SC32 Plenary meeting in Sydney, Australia, following the [11th annual Metadata Open Forum](#) the WG2 passed a resolution to form a Study Period to investigate possible new metadata registry standards in: Forms (or data collection instruments), Terminology, and Services.

The work during the study period will focus on building a consensus and plan address the following:

- the requirements, involving possible users where this is relevant;
- the relationships with other work, the technical approach and technical feasibility of a New Proposal, including identification of reference material on technical issues and initial material if available;
- the preparation of a detailed plan of work covering the timetable, resource requirements and resource availability (technical and administrative).

This wiki page and its child pages have been created to aid the study period members in preparing and documenting the above. To join this wiki with editing privileges, please click on the "[New Account](#)" link.

Users who have requested/received wiki accounts may attach related materials directly to the wiki. Refer also to the NCI's caMDR Gforge project archive for the [GForge: WG2N1118 Metadata Study Period Documents](#).

**** NOTE THIS PAGE IS A WORK IN PROGRESS ****

Background

To enable data processing systems to be written to discover and use these types of resources accurate, unambiguous and verifiable metadata is a prerequisite. With appropriate metadata standards for these types of objects, systems could be designed to allow owners to register and share electronically the essential characteristics necessary for common understanding of what and how these resources are intended for use. While the ISO/IEC 11179 addresses unambiguous representation and registration of data elements, no such standard exists for these important objects that are essential for developing interoperable information systems. A standard metadata framework to describe the essential characteristics of these types of objects in ways that can be compared and interpreted is needed.

The envisioned metadata standards would be similar to the ISO/IEC 11179 Metadata Registries standard Part 3 in which the registry and basic attributes of each type of object are defined and can be specified and registered in a metadata registry.

This session will facilitate developing a common understanding of some of these characteristics for each type of object. Participants will share existing metamodels and emerging specifications, discuss common needs, approaches and priorities and possible next steps that could lead to the development of new ISO standards in these areas.

The study period would be of interest to information developers, information managers, data administrators, standards developers and others who are responsible for designing systems in which these types of metadata objects are understandable and shareable.

Metadata Study Period Goals

From Wikipedia: **A model** is an abstraction of phenomena in the real world; a **metamodel** is yet another abstraction, highlighting properties of the model itself. A model conforms to its metamodel in the way that a computer program conforms to the grammar of the programming language in which it is written.

The goal of the study period is conduct research into the current standards and initiatives for each of the three areas, and to document the 'as-is' and 'to-be' (requirements). This will lead to either a draft NP (New Proposal) for a new work area, suitable for development of a standard **metamodel specification**, or to conclude that further study is needed. If after the initial inquiry and research, it is determined that the group is ready to submit a NP, it would be then subject to formal approval of the SC32 before submission to JTC1.

Participants in the study period are asked to contribute to one or more of the three focus areas, each described on the subpages of this wiki page:

- [Forms Metadata](#)
- [Services Metadata](#)
- [Terminology Metadata](#)

The ISO/IEC 11179, Ed 2, Part 3 contains descriptive text and metamodels describing the classes and attributes and the relationships between them, that are required for development and registration of unambiguous, human and machine interpretable meanings for data. From this standard arises the phrases used here "metadata", "metadata registry", and "data element semantics".

The vision for this initiative is similar, that a standard metamodel and descriptive text for the semantics of various types of information technology resources, here specifically Forms, Terminologies and Services, can be developed to facilitate understanding and use of these resources by humans and machines.

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