Connecting with educators

Elisa Sze
RDA Education and Orientation Officer,
RDA Steering Committee

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access

Background

Elisa Sze

Metadata Librarian
University of Toronto Libraries

Sessional instructor
Faculty of Information, University of Toronto
Course: *INF2145 Creation and Organization of Bibliographic Records*

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access

Overview of the position

- Facilitate effective RDA instruction relating to the official Toolkit
- Encourage and support communities in their transition to the official Toolkit
- Temporary position; term runs from January 1-December 31, 2022

Tasks of the position

- Liaise with RSC members and communities as they plan outreach events
- Liaise with LIS education communities, and build informal network of RDA educators/experts
- Identify opportunities for RDA education and orientation internationally and recommend how to handle them
- Create instructional materials for RDA content and give related presentations (***but not*** creating instructional materials for specific communities)
- Work with RSC Secretary in responding to some Toolkit feedback
- Prepare RDA revision proposals, discussion papers, and fast track changes as appropriate

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access

Activities to date

- Connecting with regional representatives
- Identifying and connecting with instructors who teach cataloguing, knowledge organization, or metadata creation courses within library and information science programs
  - Differences across regions
  - Mix of university degree programs and vocational diploma/certificate programs
- Conducting short interviews to hear first hand about
  - General philosophy and approach to teaching cataloguing
  - Challenges around switching to new RDA
  - Successful teaching approaches
- Sharing teaching ideas with RSC members

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access

Themes heard

- Uncertainty about how to begin
- Hesitance or fear of getting things "wrong"
  - Answering the question "Why?": Instructors are aware of the concept of linked open data, but are unsure of how that applies to metadata creation in a library-specific context
- For those who are eager to test out the new RDA Toolkit, typical reasons cited include:
  - Potential for wider applications of library metadata
  - Desire to prepare students for what is coming
  - Instinct/gut feeling that students who successfully navigate the new RDA Toolkit are more adaptable to working with the original Toolkit if required by the workplace

R|D|A
Resource Description & Access

What instructors are looking for

- Guidance on how to begin
  - Looking for a "narrative" to follow
- Definitions for new terminology
  - Demystifying application profiles
  - What a metadata description set could look like
- What does it mean on a practical level, when we say that RDA is aligned with the IFLA LRM conceptual model?
- Concrete examples
  - Unspoken assumption: Examples sought would be based on the implementation scenario most prominently encountered by new graduates entering the library workforce
- Opportunity to watch others create metadata using the new RDA Toolkit

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access

Student reception of RDA

Anecdotal experience from co-teaching INF2145 at the University of Toronto iSchool, Winter 2022 semester

- Students' challenges were not specific to learning the official RDA per se, but rather, to cultivating the mindset of a cataloguer.
- Students with prior exposure to element/property-value pairs, application profiles, metadata schemas, and ontologies through other iSchool courses tended to adapt comfortably to RDA Toolkit.
- One student said that she liked RDA, and found it "to be very fluid and navigable":
  - "I like envisioning how the different entities and elements interact with each other, and the RDA Toolkit does a good job of drawing out the hierarchies and relationships, and making those clear to the cataloguer."

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access

Questions?

Please reach me at:
elisa@rdatoolkit.org or elisa.sze@utoronto.ca

R | D | A
Resource Description & Access