

Metadata Working Group Terms of Reference

Last updated March 2024

1. Purpose

The key to making research citable, searchable and accessible is registering research outputs and resources with metadata that meets basic standards and adheres to uniform, consistent schema.

The Metadata Working Group (WG) advises DataCite on the maintenance of the DataCite Metadata Schema, in consultation with the DataCite community and under the guidance of the [DataCite Board](#). In coordination with DataCite staff, the Working Group actively seeks the broader community's input and coordinates with community standards.

2. Governance

The Metadata WG is a working group and is overseen by the [DataCite Board](#). The Metadata WG aligns efforts with the [Services & Technology Steering Group \(STSG\)](#) and will coordinate with other new and existing DataCite governance groups as required.

3. Membership

The Metadata WG consists of 10-20 members to ensure progress and distribute tasks amongst WG members.

a. Term

Metadata WG members serve for a 2-year term. This term is renewable.

b. Appointment process

Membership is open to anyone with relevant expertise and different user perspectives, and the time and interest to participate fully. Any DataCite member can nominate an expert to serve on the Metadata WG. Membership is confirmed by the

Metadata WG co-chairs, after discussion with the DataCite Executive Director. Member terms are renewed by the co-chairs. The seat is held by the individual representative, but we ask that their organization also approves the nomination. When members rotate off the WG, there is an open call for new members.

c. Types of roles

Member(s); Members of the Metadata WG are individuals with expertise in metadata standards and use cases. The WG aims to have adequate representation from a variety of types of organizations, research domains, and geographic locations. The WG seeks to maintain majority representation from DataCite members in order to ensure their needs are adequately addressed. Members have a good understanding of open repositories/infrastructures and the broader Open Science ecosystem. Members are expected to actively participate in one-hour monthly group meetings, volunteer, collaborate, and complete specific group goals. In addition to the monthly calls, members are expected to contribute to the development of materials and documents related with the WG activities.

Subgroups can be formed as needed for specific tasks or topics and regularly report on the progress to the other members.

STSG representative; The Metadata WG elects a representative as a member of the Services & Technology Steering Group. The representative is appointed by the WG co-chairs and ratified by the STSG Chair.

Co-chairs; The Metadata WG has two co-chairs that have a shared role but divide tasks and responsibilities between them. Co-chairs are elected by the WG and the term aligns with their WG membership term (renewable). Co-Chairs are nominated by the remaining and departing Co-Chairs and Executive Director, elected by the WG and ratified by the DataCite Board. The responsibilities of the co-chairs include:

- Run monthly meetings and prepare agendas in coordination with DataCite staff.
- Post meeting notes on a collaborative working space, send meeting reminders or any other updates to the group.
- Ensure meeting topics and discussions remain focused.
- Welcome new members via email and make sure they have access to the collaboration tools and email list.
- Represent the Working Group on various occasions or events.

- Maintain effective, regular communication with DataCite staff.
- Encourage members to actively participate in asynchronous discussions between meetings.

The expected time commitment for co-chair responsibilities can be 4-6 hours per week.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Membership of the WG requires active participation between meetings. Discussions around essential aspects about changes in the schema rely on feedback from all members of the WG and, in addition, WG members are free to contribute more to those issues in the annual work agenda that interest them most/feel they can contribute the most. WG members are expected to represent the needs of the entire DataCite community and to be transparent about the interests of their own organization.

5. Meetings

The Metadata WG meets once a month on a fixed day and time, via an online meeting. This meeting may be repeated at a different day and/or time so that members across time zones can participate. Monthly meetings last for an hour. The remainder of the work for the month is completed asynchronously via email, shared documents and other collaboration tools, and/or through additional topic-specific calls. All agendas, meeting notes and accompanying materials will be shared in a collaborative working space.

6. Lines of communication and coordination

Coordination with DataCite staff; The Metadata WG collaborates with DataCite staff on the design and revision of proposed changes to the DataCite Metadata Schema. DataCite staff will work with the Metadata WG to ensure the technical feasibility of proposed changes and to schedule changes for release.

Alignment with STSG; The Services and Technology Steering Group (STSG) is responsible for providing expertise and advice on DataCite's product and technology development. The group suggests and reviews product and technology solutions to

evaluate their impact and effectiveness. The Metadata WG has an elected representative on the STSG to report on the WG's activities, proposed Metadata Schema changes and to gather feedback.

Coordination with community groups (e.g. RDA Working Groups); The Metadata WG may coordinate with and take into account outcomes from community groups to inform the various decisions related to the DataCite Metadata Schema.

Discussion group(s) and forum(s); There are various channels for discussion and new ideas for metadata schema changes. The Metadata WG will make use of open discussion forums to provide a platform for these discussions. The details about the communication channels are maintained on <https://schema.datacite.org>.

7. Schema change journey

1. DataCite receives suggestions to change the Metadata Schema from the community through a variety of channels. DataCite staff are responsible for collecting, validating, and prioritizing these ideas in alignment with strategic priorities and gathering community feedback.
2. Prioritized suggestions are advanced to the Metadata WG to design schema change proposals and/or to provide feedback on a proposed change.
3. Schema change proposals are shared with the DataCite community for feedback via a Request for Comments (RFC) process.
4. After subsequent revision of proposals by the Metadata WG, DataCite staff are responsible for prioritizing and scheduling agreed-upon changes for release.