

**IMLS National Leadership Grant LG-02-02-0281
"Proposal for IMLS Collection Registry and Metadata Repository"**

This white paper is part of the three-year interim project report for the IMLS Digital Collections & Content Project, summarizing major findings October 2002 through September 2005. Project is hosted at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Project Director is Timothy W. Cole (t-cole@uiuc.edu). Full report is available at <http://imlsdcc.grainger.uiuc.edu>. The material in this report is based upon work supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under IMLS National Leadership Grant Award No. LG-02-02-0281. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

**Metadata Roundtable
Activity Report**

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The Metadata roundtable, started by the IMLS Digital Collections and Content (DCC) project in 2003, brings together local and visiting practitioners, faculty, researchers and students to discuss and analyze the latest developments in metadata theory and practice and related fields. The Metadata roundtable webpage, <http://www.isrl.uiuc.edu/~dcc/mdrt.html>, is updated on a weekly basis with information on upcoming discussion topics, leaders, and background readings. The webpage also features a link to the metadata roundtable mailing list subscription form. By subscribing to the mailing list one automatically becomes a registered member of the Metadata roundtable. All the registered members receive weekly emails with the details on upcoming meetings and presenters.

Since Metadata roundtable inception in spring 2003, 67 meetings have been conducted. Meeting regularity increased from twice a month during fall and spring semesters to weekly throughout the year starting in the spring of 2006.

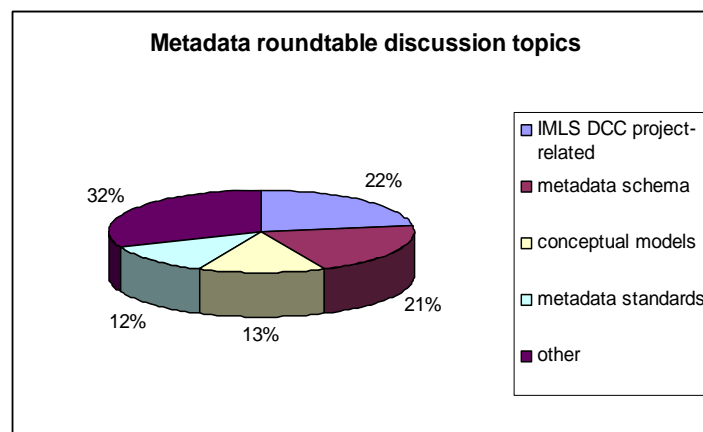
Approximately 22% of the metadata roundtable meetings to date have discussed data obtained through the IMLS DCC research project (collection definition issues, recommendations for *The Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital*

Collections, digital resource developer’s survey, etc.) and issues/challenges faced in implementation and use of the IMLS collection registry and item-level metadata repository (collection description schema development, metadata harvesting, metadata quality, subject access issues, usability testing results, etc.).

Another significant section – 21% – of the metadata roundtable discussions have dealt with various metadata schemas (Dublin Core, EAD, VRA, MODS, METS, Darwin Core, etc.), their implementation and theoretical issues surrounding them.

Conceptual models potentially useful for describing resources in digital libraries (e.g., CIDOC CRM, FRBR, Collection Landscaping, An Analytical Model of Collections and their Catalogues) have been the focus of 13% of the discussions. Metadata standards (e.g., Open Archive Initiative, DLF Best Practices for Sharable Metadata, and Standard for Globally Unique Identifiers for Biology) and their applications have been discussed in another 12% of the metadata roundtable meetings.

Other important topics discussed at the metadata roundtable include theoretical issues of collection identity and collection description, interoperable metadata, the role of LIS schools in metadata education, approaches for adding value to metadata, etc.

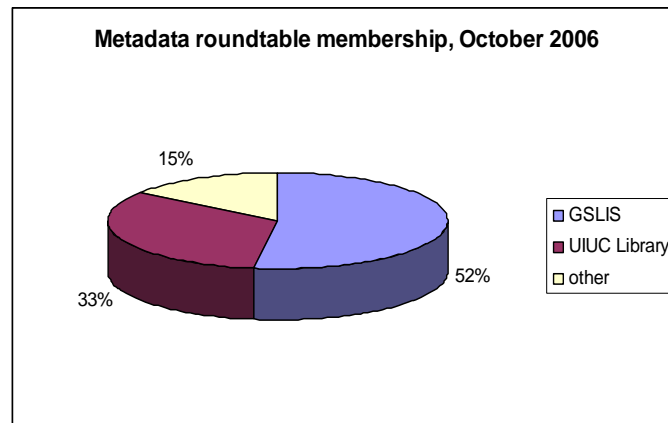


One tenth of the metadata roundtable meetings have served as a venue for dissemination and discussion of members’ activities at recent professional meetings related to digital library development and digital collection description (DLF Aquifer meeting, Alexandria Digital Library Workshop, RLG Members Forum, International Working Group on FRBR and CIDOC CRM Harmonization, etc.).

Although most of the metadata roundtable discussions have been lead by a single person, 16% of the topics have been presented by two persons, sometimes representing different institutions (e.g. one presenter from GSLIS, another from UIUC library). Slightly over half of discussion leaders represented GSLIS, a third – UIUC Library, while 6% of the discussion leaders were visiting speakers representing other institutions: schools of Library Science at University at North Carolina and Syracuse University, the Arrowsmith project at UIC, and the Biomedical Informatics Research Network at UCSD. GSLIS

graduate students presented their research – alone or sometimes together with a GSLIS faculty member or UIUC library faculty or staff member – at 12% of metadata roundtable meetings, with student research presentations increasing in 2005 and 2006.

Metadata roundtable membership has grown significantly since 2003, with the highest growth rate over the past several months. For example, in early May 2006 there were 56 registered Metadata roundtable members, and by October 20, 2006 the membership had increased by 20% to 67. Membership falls into three major categories according to the main affiliation: GSLIS faculty, students and staff (59% in May 2006 and 52% in October), UIUC library faculty and staff (27% in May and 33% in October), and other affiliations, including non-UIUC (14% in May and 15% in October).



Metadata roundtable meetings are open to anyone interested. An average metadata roundtable meeting is attended by 15-25 members and a few non-members. Whenever a topic of wide interest is discussed that is closely related to certain GSLIS courses curricula (e.g., Calhoun report and the future of cataloging, FRBR model, *The Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital Collections*), non-member students in these courses are encouraged to attend. Over the past year, we have observed a significant growth in interest and participation from the UIUC Library faculty and professionals whose main area of responsibility lies in the area of traditional cataloging.

The metadata roundtable has proven to be a fertile arena for researchers and practitioners to share ideas and explore questions. It has offered a unique complement to classroom learning, producing a valuable dialogue blending the practical expertise and experiences of practicing UIUC librarians with the current results and methodologies of LIS researchers.