2nd ISNI Summit for libraries
26-27th June 2019
Topic 1 "I want to make my data more usable by ISNI"
Plenary feedback of breakout sessions
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Among the participants to these breakout sessions, the level of knowledge related ISNI was quite different. A few libraries such as the National Library of Korea, the Royal Library of the Netherland and the BnF have already implemented workflows to update their data with the ISNI base on a regular basis. Others have just initiated initial batch loads of their data in the ISNI DB or a on the verge of doing so, and a exploring ways of regular updating workflows. At last, many institutions do not contribute directly to the ISNI DB and participated to this summit to get more information so that they can make a decision.

1) IMPROVE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION RELATED TO ISNI

The participants stressed the need for clearer information regarding the following:

a. **ISNI fee policy: on which basis are ISNI requests charged?**
For example, are ISNI requests charged when a data contributor sends updates of existing data in ISNI? Via AtomPub, all records are sent to the ISNI base as ISNI requests.
What about ISNI requests for identities who already have an ISNI assigned but the data contributor is not in the existing ISNI records?

b. **What is the logic regarding the public display rules of some data such as dates**: in some cases, exact bibliographic dates are publicly displayed, in other cases, they are not. Why?

c. **How are data corrected by contributors?** There is a problem for updating incorrect dates in the ISNI DB by workflows. Only manual corrections are possible. ISNI QT explains that this is related to the fact that dates have a strong weight in the matching algorithms in order to prevent mixed identities problems. In case of date conflicts, the request is rejected. This **would need to be adjusted but it is a delicate process.**

d. **Guidelines to prepare the initial batch load.** Tim recommended to contact the OCLC office in Leiden.

e. **Why is an ISNI not assigned?** Clearer information should be provided regarding the rules of unique names.

f. **How are data contributors are notified when an ISNI record contained their source has been updated?** (enriched, merged, splits) SNI QT explains that OCLC provide periodical notifications to direct contributors. However, from the experience of active RAGs, these notifications may need to be improved in order to be more easily usable.

Some participants also expressed needs for:
- Convincing arguments to persuade partners and colleagues of the need to use ISNI
- Clearer information regarding the differences between the ISNI DB and an international authority file such as VIAF.

2) REDUCE DUPLICATES IN THE ISNI BASE

ISNI data contributors are eager to have better tools in order for ISNI duplicates to be merged. There are different solutions envisaged by OCLC/ ISNI IA to do so:

a. **Remove erroneous data from sources** such as TEL and BOWKER for which ISNI was assigned when the DB was created. It was confirmed by founding members around the table that at that time, there was too much trust in the founding members' data, whereas nowadays the ISNI assignment rules are too tight for national bibliographic authority files.

b. **Use a new tool, PDR (Possible Duplicate Resolve)** developed by OCLC that would run on a regular basis.

In order to reduce duplicates, it was also recommended by the attendees to establish a list of good practices in terms of the data to be supplied (what data, their form).

3) LIST OF GOOD PRACTICES

One of the ISNI DB challenge is the matching of existing data related to an identity with incoming data. In order to help this matching, the following practices should be encouraged:

a. **Send the ISNI DB the original title of works in addition to the title used in its own country.**
At the moment, one of the duplicate reasons is related to the fact that most ISNI data contributors only send titles used in their own country. For this reason, the ISNI matching algorithm cannot identify bibliographic data in multiple languages belong to the same identity. This is especially the case for romance books (Harlequin) which are published in various countries.

b. **Names with initials:** choose as the preferred form the name used by the identity to sign his work. As variants, and add the developed form of the name if known as variant forms. This is actually the current practice in most libraries attending the summit.

c. **Duplicates are also created because of different ways of transliterating names in non-Latin characters.** The use ISO transliteration systems should be encouraged to prevent this problem.

d. **Adding metadata such as the ISO transliterated system used and the origin of the name form** (for example Swedish or Finnish for bilingual countries using several ways to write names) would also help preventing duplicates.

4) PREREQUISITES REGARDING THE QUALITY OF DATA TO BE SUPPLIED

The current enlargement of the ISNI DB to new contributors from various domains with different cataloguing practices is also a risk to create more ISNI duplicates.
In order to limit those risks, **a list of prerequisites could be established regarding the quality of data to be supplied for new contributors before they are accepted.**

5) ADDED VALUE OF LIBRARIES DATA

a. Compared with data contributors specialized in one specific domain, **libraries deal with collections of various fields. Thus their authority files are cross domain** and thus facilitate matching data of identities active in different creative fields.

b. **Libraries also have expertise on their national authority data.** Thus ISNI assignment rules should take this expertise into account. Since, the interruption of synchronization of VIAF data in ISNI, assignment of ISNIs to recent identities relies on direct contributors, even for authorities out of their scope.

6) OTHER DATA ISSUES

a. Gender

The question whether gender is a good criteria for disambiguating an identity was debated. Opinions are shared. Some libraries do not include this information in their authority file. Others do but some do not publicly display this information.

E. Rogoz explains that the gender data are in the ISNI DB but is not publicly displayed. The current values are limited to male, female, not applicable. There is a need for coding women and men Trans.

b. Nationalities

In MARC 21, there is no field for nationalities. In many countries, libraries use the field "Associated countries" for identities who live in a country but is a not national citizen.

7) MORE ISNIs FOR ORGANISATIONS

Why is the number of ISNIs assigned to organizations low compared with personal names?

E. Rogoz explained that the ISNI QT has made recommendations to change the ISNI assignment rules for organizations.

Some participants such as ISSN international Center sare considering to become a RAG for imprints (publishers) and scholarly societies. Before doing so, they would like to develop cooperation in order to standardize name practices for this type of identities. E. Rogoz said that dealing with imprints is also an identified need, but prioritization must be given. Tim also mentioned that the music industries have common needs since they want to have ISNI's assigned for music labels.

8) LINKED DATA – HOW TO MAKE ISNI MORE "LINKY"

T. Devenport explained that the ISNI IA is currently finalizing its project of exposing the ISNI database in Linked data. The objective is to make available the public content of ISNI database for Assigned ISNI in different semantic web formats. 2 routes of dissemination are planned:

a. Possibility to query the ISNI DB on real time
b. Access to dumps which would be updated periodically (every 6 months?)

A participant suggested the **use of persistent URIs for all ISNI records** including the existing ones: either DOI or URNs. T. Devenport mentioned that this request was also made by data providers of the audiovisual field as a prerequisite to contribute to the ISNI DB.

9) POSSIBILITY FOR ISNI DATA CONTRIBUTORS TO ENRICH THEIR OWN DATA WITH ISNI DB DATA

Some participants expressed the need for an API to extract data from the ISNI DB to enrich their own DB: for example name forms. M. Sauer Games (OCLC) mentioned that the same need has been identified for VIAF.