

Workshop: subject terminology for arts research

Introduction

This workshop is an investigation into the use of subject classification systems and terminology for arts research in institutional repositories. The terminology used has an impact on both the deposit process as researchers upload their content, and on users finding arts research online. Some of the different approaches to subject terminology include:

- **Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)**¹ - these are used by many institutions² and are the default setting in EPrints.
- **Joint Academic Coding System (JACS)**³ - chosen for the Kultur project instead of the LCSH as their 'N Fine Art' section appeared too limited⁴.
- **Text-mining** of full text items and advanced search capabilities through the MERLIN tool⁵
- **Keywording/tagging** by depositors/repository staff/users

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives for this workshop are for participants:

- to share and reflect on how different subject classification methods may help and/or hinder repository users in both depositing and retrieving arts research material
- to compare and contrast the words that might be used for searching (brainstorm activity) versus the metadata used in the actual record
- to generate discussion about subject headings and search mechanisms in current use by members of the Kultur II Group

Getting Started

Each of the five groups will receive a different arts research object, which for practical purposes is presented as an A4 screenshot. There will be two short, 15 minute, activities with this object, and then a 10-15 minute summary to the rest of the room at the end.

Using the following pages to promote and record discussion, each group will spend time discussing the advantages and disadvantages of subject terminology both for depositors and those searching for arts research in institutional repositories or search engines.

At the end of the session each group needs to appoint a representative, who will spend a few minutes to present a summary of the group's discussion.

¹ <http://authorities.loc.gov/>

² <http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue32/eprint-archives/>

³ http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=158&Itemid=233

⁴ <http://kultur.eprints.org/Metadata%20report%20Final.pdf>

⁵ <http://lasso.ucl.ac.uk/merlin-ui/>

Kultur II Group researchers and repository managers engaging with arts research deposit

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Activity One - brainstorm subject terms

(15 minutes)

View your example arts research object (image or screenshot on laminated A4) with its set of very basic metadata, and as a group on the piece of paper jot down any subject words, tags, or other metadata, which you think would help retrieve this item via a search.

Suggestions:

- What words would you enter into Google (or another search engine) in order to get to that image/object?
- What words would you enter into the institutional repository search feature in order to find that image/object?
- What words do you think a depositor/researcher would add to describe the piece of arts research?

Activity Two - view full record and discuss subject terms

(15 minutes)

View the full set of metadata for the piece of arts research and consider the following:

- Were there any surprises in the full metadata record such as subject terms that you would have added or not included?
- How many of your subject words or 'tags' are included within the metadata record, within the fields and/or within the full text?

Discuss your own experiences with your institutional repositories:

- What is working or not working with the search mechanism for your repositories at the moment?
- What is working or not working with your use of subject terminology?

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