

OhioLINK Database Management and Standards Committee

Encoded Archival Description Task Force

**EAD Starter Packet**

# Contents

1. Introduction
2. Why EAD?
3. Required content for minimally encoded finding aids in OhioLINK EAD repository (collection level)
4. Applying for an LC institution code
5. Recommended reading
6. Selected EAD Web Sites and Searchable EAD Finding Aid Repositories
7. Future developments

# 1. Introduction

OhioLINK is creating and hosting a statewide repository of archival finding aids to increase access to and showcase the rich collections housed in Ohio archival repositories. In December 2004, the OhioLINK Database Management and Standards Committee (DMSC) appointed an Encoded Archival Description (EAD) Task Force to develop standards and guidelines for the creation and use of electronic finding aids within the OhioLINK repository. The EAD Task Force is to complete the following charge by December, 2006:

- Develop specification/template for EAD documents that may be contributed to OhioLINK.
- Follow progress of DLXS (the EAD software) enhancement requests
- Customize software toolkit for multi-institutional environment (e.g., in the context of EAD metadata and content, customize search options, and institutional branding)
- Generate some marketing/training ideas
- Educate members of the DMS committee on progress and findings

During its first year, the Task Force created Content Guidelines defining the range of requirements – from “minimally encoded” to “fully encoded” – needed to contribute a finding aid to the EAD repository. The content guidelines and tools will encourage consistency across Ohio EAD finding aids. In its second year, the Task Force is continuing its work on refining the content guidelines, developing a Web-based template for encoding finding aids, evaluating EAD software, customizing a software toolkit, and developing training ideas. One of the primary advantages of these developments is that institutions across Ohio will be able to create EAD finding aids without having to know or understand the technicalities of XML encoding.

While work continues in laying the foundations for an EAD repository in Ohio, the Task Force recognizes that there are several tasks that individual institutions can do now to get ready for the future of EAD in Ohio. The Task Force has created this packet to help Ohio archival institutions prepare themselves and their finding aids for participating in the OhioLINK statewide repository of archival finding aids. Included is the document “Why EAD?” explaining the advantages of encoding finding aids in EAD, as well as a chart of required elements for a minimally encoded finding aid to be contributed to OhioLINK. Institutions can evaluate their finding aids and make sure the information for the required elements exists in their finding aids. The packet also includes instructions for finding or requesting a Library of Congress Repository Code. This code uniquely identifies each repository in a shared resource environment, and will be required for EAD finding aids submitted to OhioLINK. We have included a list of recommended reading, as well as links to examples of other cooperative EAD projects. The final section of this packet outlines future developments on the road to an OhioLINK repository of EAD finding aids.

**OhioLINK EAD Task Force Members:**

Amy McCrory, Ohio State University, Co-Chair  
Amanda Wilson, Ohio State University, Co-Chair  
Linda Cantara, Case Western Reserve University  
Dianna Ford, University of Akron  
Cara Gilgenbach, Kent State University  
Toni Jeske, Wright State University  
Anne Gilliland, OhioLINK Staff Liason

**Task Force Advisors:**

Nan Card, Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center  
Cynthia Ghering, Ohio Historical Society  
Barbara Strauss, Cleveland State University

**Questions? Comments?**

Please contact the EAD Task Force Co-Chairs for more information.

Amy McCrory: [mccrory.7@osu.edu](mailto:mccrory.7@osu.edu) or (614) 292-8647  
Amanda Wilson: [wilson.1596@osu.edu](mailto:wilson.1596@osu.edu) or (614) 292-6314

## 2. Why EAD?

Institutions encoding their finding aids using EAD will make their collections more accessible, be able to provide enhanced services to their patrons, and ultimately reduce the amount of staff time devoted to finding aid processing because EAD:

1. Is expressed in XML, a structural and preservation format;

The advantage over HTML is that XML tagging describes the document content, whereas HTML merely formats content for display. For example, EAD has a tag for the scope and content of the collection called `<scopecontent>` ("Scope and Content"). A human or a machine examining EAD encoding will know the particular type of information in the `<scopecontent>` tag, whereas in HTML, information appearing in a paragraph or `<p>` tag could be the title of the web page, copyright information, description of a collection's creator, etc. HTML simply tells a browser how to visually display information and link between documents. For example, the `<p>` simply tells the browser to skip a line and begin a new paragraph and the `<h1>` tag tells the browser to display the information at a certain size, but any kind of information could potentially be contained in that tag.

XML format also facilitates repurposing of data. A finding aid in XML can be converted into a variety of different formats for display and access to users. An HTML and PDF version of the finding aid can easily be created via the same EAD document.

2. Mirrors the structure of a finding aid;

EAD was designed specifically for archival finding aids. EAD includes tags defined for all of the traditional finding aid data elements, including biographical and historical notes, restrictions, collection and series titles, physical location, appraisal, and repository information.

3. Creates searchable and indexable data fields out of traditional elements of archival description;

Because of the meaningful tags available in EAD, software can be customized for targeted searching and retrieval. For example, subject browsing and searching can be configured using the "controlled access" terms identified in the finding aid. Additionally, EAD finding aids allow software to search across finding aids from multiple institutions, finding aids from one institution, or finding aids from one repository within an institution.

4. Is supported by OhioLINK, with guidelines, templates, and search and retrieval software;

OhioLINK will support EAD finding aids from all institutions in Ohio, not only member institutions (as long as the records of the contributing institution are publicly available). In addition to these guidelines, training options to assist institutions beginning or thinking about implementing EAD projects are in development. OhioLINK is hosting the repository, which will provide browse and search functionality, as well as increase access to collections throughout the state.

5. Automates MARC record creation for collections;

In addition to creating multiple versions of a finding aid (e.g., HTML, PDF, etc.), a surrogate record for a finding aid, such as a MARC record, can be created. XML not only allows elements to be defined, but also provides units called attributes (abbreviated “@”) which facilitate better description of the information within an element. For example, the attribute “encoding analog” (expressed as: @encodinganalog) can be used to match data elements in EAD to those of another encoding standard (e.g., MARC or Dublin Core). An encoding analog value of “245\$a” in the “title of the unit” of a collection matches the collection title to a MARC 245 title field. Scripts have been created that will read an EAD finding aid and produce content appropriate for a MARC record.

6. Is required by national granting agencies, such as National Endowment for the Humanities.

### 3. Content Required for a Minimally-Encoded OhioLINK EAD Repository Finding Aid

The chart below shows information that must be supplied in order to create a minimally-encoded (basic, collection-level) finding aid in the OhioLINK EAD Repository. When preparing finding aids for inclusion in the Repository, be sure that you can supply data for each of the elements listed. The EAD Task Force Content Guidelines provide more information on each of these elements.

<b>Content Required for a Minimally-Encoded OhioLINK EAD Repository Finding Aid</b>			
<b>Element Name</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Mandatory if Applicable</b>	<b>Element Tag</b>
Arrangement (statement of arrangement)	X		<arrangement>
Biography or History		X	<bioghist>
Conditions Governing Access		X	<accessrestrict>
Conditions Governing Use		X	<userrestrict>
Controlled Access Headings (subject headings)	X		<controlaccess>
Corporate Name		X	<corpname>
Creation (encoder of finding aid)	X		<creation>
Date (of publication of the finding aid)		X	<date>
Date of the Unit (the collection)	X		<unitdate>
EAD Identifier (ID of the finding aid; serves as file name)	X		<eadid>
Extent (of the collection)	X		<extent>
Family Name		X	<famname>
Geographic Name		X	<geogname>
ID of the Unit (number or code used to identify the collection)	X		<unitid>
Language Usage (language of the finding aid)	X		<language>
Language of the Materials	X		<langmaterial>
Repository Code	X		<mainagencycode>
Origination		X	<origination>
Personal Name		X	<persname>
Preferred Citation	X		<prefercite>
Repository	X		<repository>
Revision Description (description of revisions to the finding aid)		X	<revisiondesc>
Scope and Content	X		<scopecontent>
Subject		X	<subject>
Title of the Unit (title of the collection)	X		<unittitle>
Title Proper of the Finding Aid	X		<titleproper>

## 4. Acquiring an LC Institution Code

Within the context of an OhioLINK Finding Aid repository, each participating institution will be required to have a Library of Congress institution code. These short alphabetic codes are used in union catalogs such as OCLC WorldCat and the OhioLINK central catalog to differentiate ownership of particular items and collections. Your institution may already have such a code if you participate in cooperative catalog projects.

- **How do you find out if your institution already has a code?**

Read about how to search the MARC Codes database at:

**<http://www.loc.gov/marc/organizations/orgshome.html#searches>**

- **How do you request a code?**

Instructions for obtaining a code are available at the Library of Congress "MARC Code Lists for Organizations" page, **<http://www.loc.gov/marc/organizations>**. Please note that requests take **several weeks** to process, so it is recommended that you apply for your code **two to three months in advance** of setting up your user profile at the OhioLINK EAD Repository. You must have a valid MARC code before you can begin encoding and contributing finding aids to the online repository.

## 5. Recommended Reading

***The American Archivist*. Volume 60, numbers 3 and 4 (Summer and Fall 1997).**

NOTE: Entire content of these two issues was devoted to EAD. The contents of these issues were also published in book form as *Encoded Archival Description: Context, Theory, and Case Studies*. Edited by Jackie M. Dooley. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1998.

---

***Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACs)*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004. (ISBN 1931666083).**

NOTE: This work supersedes *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts (APPM)*, compiled by Stephen L. Hensen. It provides descriptive standards for archival materials and collections.

---

**Dow, Elizabeth H. *Creating EAD-Compatible Finding Guides on Paper*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005**

---

***Encoded Archival Description on the Internet*. Daniel V. Pitti, Wendy M. Duff, editors. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2001.**

---

***Encoded Archival Description Tag Library, Version 2002*. Prepared and maintained by the Encoded Archival Description Working Group of the Society of American Archivists and the Network Development and MARC Standards Office of the Library of Congress. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2002.**

NOTE: This publication is available online on the Encoded Archival Description: Official EAD Version 2002 Web Site (<http://www.loc.gov/ead/tglib/index.html>)

---

**Roe, Kathleen. *Arranging & Describing Archives & Manuscripts*. Archival Fundamentals Series II. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005**

## 6. Selected EAD Web Sites and Searchable EAD Finding Aid Repositories

### **Encoded Archival Description: Official EAD Version 2002 Web Site**

**<http://www.loc.gov/ead>**

Provides background information on the development of EAD; official documentation on EAD version 2.0 including the tag library; links to other sites related to EAD including tools and helpers; instructions on how to join an EAD discussion list.

---

### **EAD Help Pages (of the EAD Round Table of the Society of American Archivists)**

**<http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/ead>**

Includes the "EAD Cookbook" which provides practical, step-by-step assistance with the implementation of EAD; includes documentation on EAD as well as links to funding and training sites

Also includes **EAD Sites Annotated**

**(<http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/ead/sitesann.html>)**

A list of EAD implementers, with notes on how they encode their finding aids

---

### **Digital Research Library of the University of Pittsburgh**

**<http://digital.library.pitt.edu>**

Includes EAD-encoded finding aids for collections. **HINT:** From the homepage, click on "Historic Pittsburgh" link in the left-hand column. One of the options in this section is to search finding aids. This site provides an example of how EAD-encoded finding aids can be searched collectively.

---

### **EAD Finding Aids at the Library of Congress**

**<http://www.loc.gov/rr/ead>**

Another site that allows the user to search and browse EAD-encoded finding aids. The homepage also provides useful explanatory notes on what archival finding aids are, what EAD is and how best to search the finding aids.

**Online Archive of California**  
**<http://www.oac.cdlib.org>**

The OAC brings together historical materials from a variety of California institutions, including museums, historical societies, and archives. Over 120,000 images; 50,000 pages of documents, letters, and oral histories; and 8,000 guides to collections are available. **HINT:** Click on "Advanced Search" to see another set of options for how finding aids and other resources on the site can be searched.

---

**RLG Encoded Archival Description Advisory Group**  
**[http://www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page\\_ID=409](http://www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page_ID=409)**

This working group helps shape standards for base-level application of Encoded Archival Description (EAD). Includes link to the RLG Best Practices for the use of EAD.

---

**Washington Research Library Consortium**  
**<http://dspace.wrlc.org/doc/community-list>**  
**<http://dspace.wrlc.org:8080/gsd/cgi-bin/library?c=f aids&a=q>**

The WRLC is an example of preserving finding aids in DSpace and building a custom interface from the preserved digital assets using Greenstone Digital Library software. **HINT:** Click on "Titles" to see a list of all finding aids in a collection. In finding aid records, use the second link to see the repository interface and search across all finding aids.

---

**Yale University Finding Aid Database**  
**<http://webtext.library.yale.edu/finddocs>**

Allows the user to search for finding aids for collections located across the institution. One can also limit the search to specific repository holdings. Provides yet another example of a search interface and search options.

## 7. Future Developments

The EAD Task Force is recommending the following future projects to encourage and support the adoption of EAD finding aids throughout the state of Ohio.

1. Content guidelines (standards) for the production of EAD finding aids in the OhioLINK context will be made available on the Web.
2. A central repository for EAD finding aids which will allow for searching across collections and institutions while still allowing for institutional "branding" and identification will be created. This repository may be part of the OhioLINK Digital Resource Center now being planned.
3. The EAD Task Force is currently investigating the possibility of developing a Web-based application that would allow institutions to create EAD-encoded finding aids that are compliant with OhioLINK standards, but would not require staff to be familiar with the technicalities of EAD tagging and xml encoding.
4. Support and training programs, such as Web-based tutorials, guides, and in-person training opportunities, will be developed in order to help ensure the success of EAD implementation across the state.