



RDA Volunteer Value Proposition

July 27, 2016

The following statements were developed out of a synthesis of the discussion at the RDA/US Leadership Meeting in Troy, NY on May 16-17, 2016. Participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. *What do you hope to accomplish for your personal professional growth by participating in RDA?*
2. *What have you done for/in the context of RDA that has been successful and what made it so?*
3. *What have you done for/in the context of RDA that has not been successful, and what prevented it from being so?*
4. *What do you hope to accomplish for the benefit of RDA?*

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1. Statement of the value proposition(s)

1.1 to individuals for participating in RDA

RDA offers a unique, global, interdisciplinary forum in which to expose projects, get feedback, lead, be accepted by your peers, increase your knowledge, have a hand in the development of new standards and be on the leading edge of data sharing technologies and initiatives. No other forum offers the same mix of global, interdisciplinary and bottom-up opportunities for participation.

1.2 to institutions for supporting participation in RDA

RDA volunteers gain exposure to a global, interdisciplinary community of researchers, ideas and solutions that can be applied to reduce redundancy across projects and enable researchers to have a higher impact with their work, within and across domains.

1.3 to funders for funding participation in RDA

RDA enables a greater return on investment by producing a global, interdisciplinary community of researchers, ideas and solutions that can be applied to reduce redundancy across projects and enable researchers to have a higher impact with their work within and across domains.

2. Success and Risk Factors for Volunteer-driven RDA Activities

2.1 RDA activities are more successful when...

- There is a high degree of synergy between organizational goals and RDA Goals
- RDA volunteers can align their professional responsibilities with their RDA activities
- They can be boosted by collaboration across RDA-related efforts (e.g. lining up early-career fellows and outreach efforts, support by leadership at workshops)
- They offer specific recognition for participation and a link to career advancement for contributing individuals
- They are focused efforts surfacing from more general community-driven interest group discussions

2.2 RDA activities have a higher risk of failure where...

- They don't take advantage of the multi-disciplinary environment and remain too domain-focused
- There is lack of institutional support or funding for individual engagement. If volunteer work is not closely aligned with day job responsibilities, it leads to lack of active participation and dropped commitments.

3. Metrics for Measuring the Progress and Impact of Volunteer-driven RDA Activities

- Whether small successes have been converted into larger ones (e.g. using a small adoption pilot grant to add credibility to a larger grant proposal)
- Citations to RDA work (but note that it's too hard currently to find published references to RDA recommendations, outputs or sponsored work. This needs to be addressed.)

4. How the RDA organization(s) can facilitate volunteer-driven activities

- Gain recognition and credibility as the "place to be" for standards and as an incubator for work that makes a difference
- Develop exemplar use cases for implementation of RDA outcomes that really work for specific domains and other audiences
- Identify and promote domain champions
- Develop and disseminate best practices for growing the organization and supporting collaborative groups
- Publish and promote the history of RDA activities including context and outcomes
- Identify ways to reward and give credit to volunteers for participation
- Do a better job of identifying the audience(s) for the various recommendations
- Provide good examples and best practices for solutions which find the right balance between too generic and too domain-specific
- Advertise successes from the perspective of the audience (individual, organization, funder).
- Figure out who is missing from the conversation