

Leveraging Wikidata for IU Archives Creator Data, One Year Later

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Abstract

This lightning talk explores the impact of creating and enhancing Wikidata entities for archives creators. In spring of 2023, in a project I presented about in a panel on linked data at SAA 2023, I used 278 individual agent records from the Indiana University Archives to create or enhance entities within Wikidata. 158 were reconciled to existing entities, while 120 were created as new entries in Wikidata. Utilizing information from existing biographical notes from the collections, I populated data about the birth and death dates and location, educational background, employment history, notable works, and family relations. Additionally, these entities were linked to existing name authority identifiers from VIAF, LCNAF, SNAC and others. All were linked to the Indiana University Archives repository Wikidata entity via the “archives at” property. Now one year later, I am presenting on the further changes and enhancements to those 278 Wikidata entities by others within the Wikidata community. In that time, 1,250 edits were added by 214 unique editors. Existing entities tended to have more engagement, but even among newly created Wikidata entities, the community enriched the data with additional data sources. This correlates with increased access and use of archival data by diverse audiences beyond the core users of Indiana University Archives materials, potentially driving discovery and use of the archival collections themselves. The aim of this small project was to establish a crosswalk between archives creator data and Wikidata which may be widely applicable to repositories and collections within the archives community. It offers a low barrier way of including Wikidata in archival description creation workflows, and begins to open archival metadata for use and reuse by a wide range of audiences. This analysis demonstrates the contribution of archival creator data to Wikidata can lead to further enhancement and engagement beyond our core archives audiences.

About the authors:

Jeremy Floyd is the Processing Archivist at Indiana University Bloomington Libraries. His professional practice and research interests center on linked open data in archival description, extensible processing for access, and radical empathy in archival labor. Jeremy seeks to provide access to IU Libraries' unique collections, open archival description for use and re-use beyond the institution and elevate the labor and relationships which exist between archivists, collections, researchers, and the communities affected by each. He has a Master of Library Science degree with a specialization in archives and records management from Indiana University Bloomington.