SOCIETY OF American Archivists

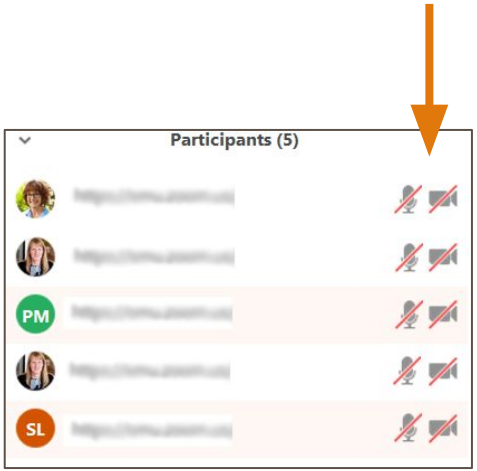
Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards

# Be part of the major revision of the Encoded Archival Description (EAD)

Call for Comments Open Sessions Series, Session 2, 22 May 2024

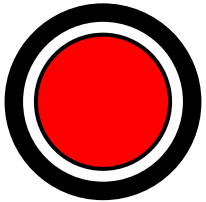
Call-in numbers: https://zoom.us/zoomconference
Meeting ID: 896-7642-6088

All lines are **muted**





Use **chat** for questions



This webinar is being recorded and
will be available on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/user/saastaff

Society of American Archivists
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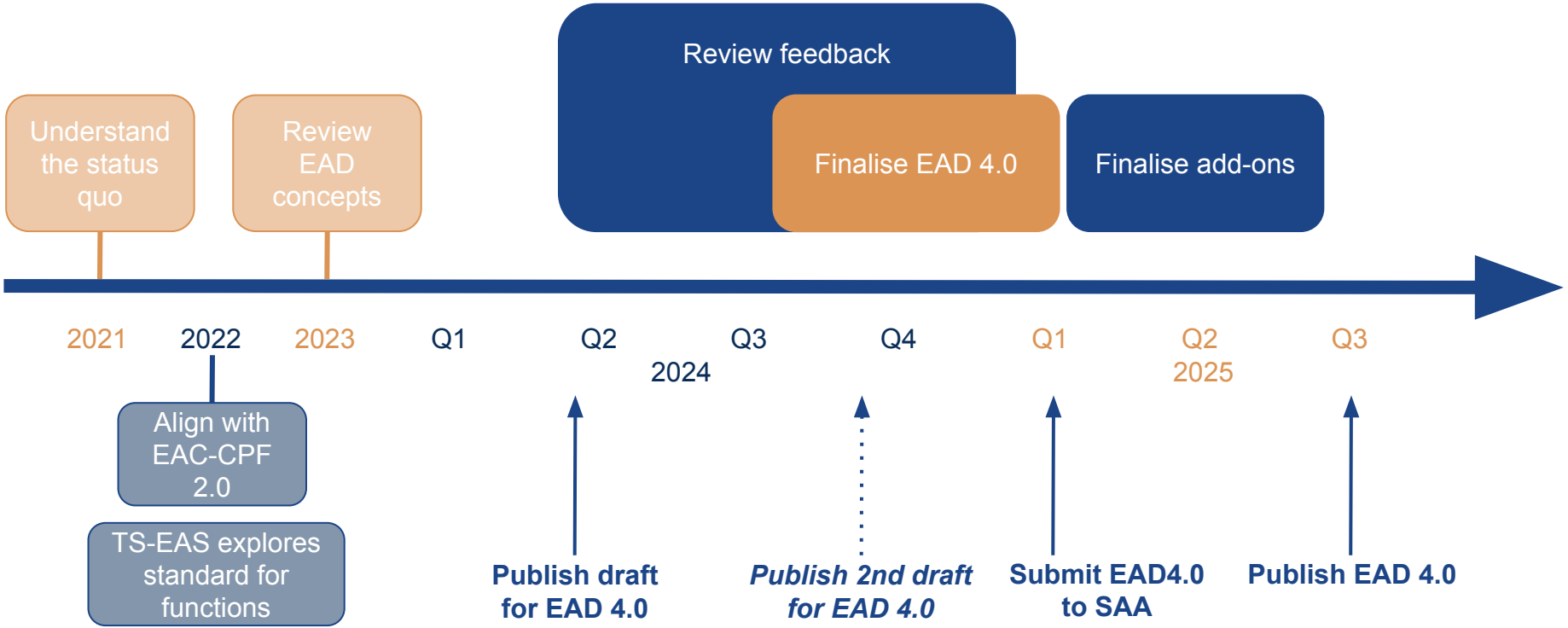
Call for Comments Open Sessions Series, Session 2, 22 May 2024

**Presenters**
Karin Bredenberg, Kommunalförbundet Sydarkivera (SE), co-chair TS-EAS
Kerstin Arnold, Archives Portal Europe Foundation (DE), EAD team lead

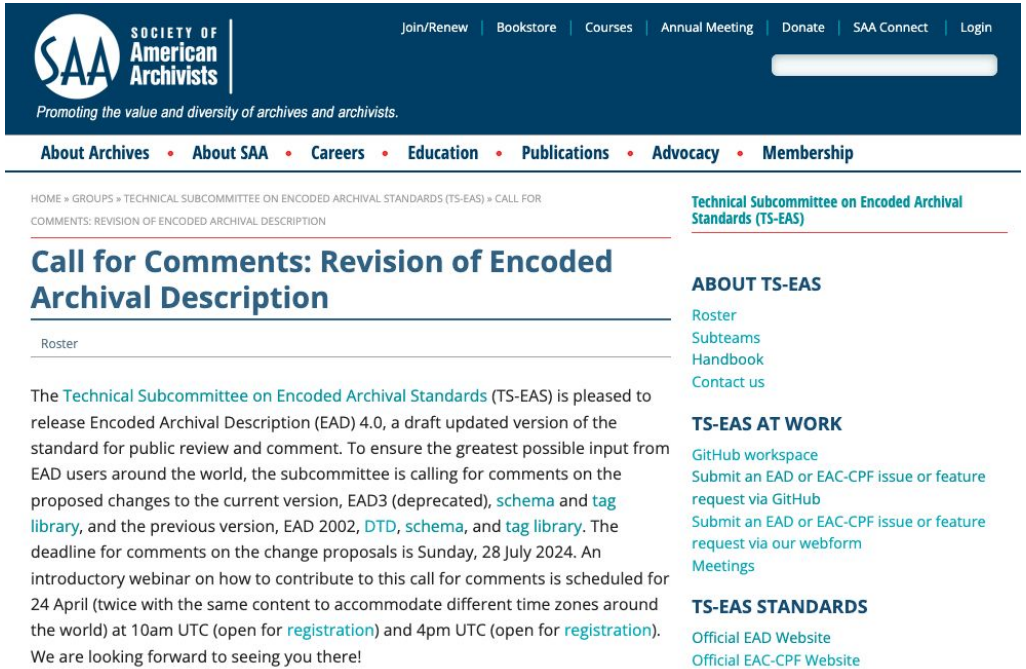
# The major revision of EAD

# Overall timeline



# The Call for Comments

# Find all information on the SAA website



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## Call for Comments: Revision of Encoded Archival Description

Roster

The Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards (TS-EAS) is pleased to release Encoded Archival Description (EAD) 4.0, a draft updated version of the standard for public review and comment. To ensure the greatest possible input from EAD users around the world, the subcommittee is calling for comments on the proposed changes to the current version, EAD3 (deprecated), schema and tag library, and the previous version, EAD 2002, DTD, schema, and tag library. The deadline for comments on the change proposals is Sunday, 28 July 2024. An introductory webinar on how to contribute to this call for comments is scheduled for 24 April (twice with the same content to accommodate different time zones around the world) at 10am UTC (open for registration) and 4pm UTC (open for registration). We are looking forward to seeing you there!

Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards (TS-EAS)

**ABOUT TS-EAS**

Roster
Subteams
Handbook
Contact us

**TS-EAS AT WORK**

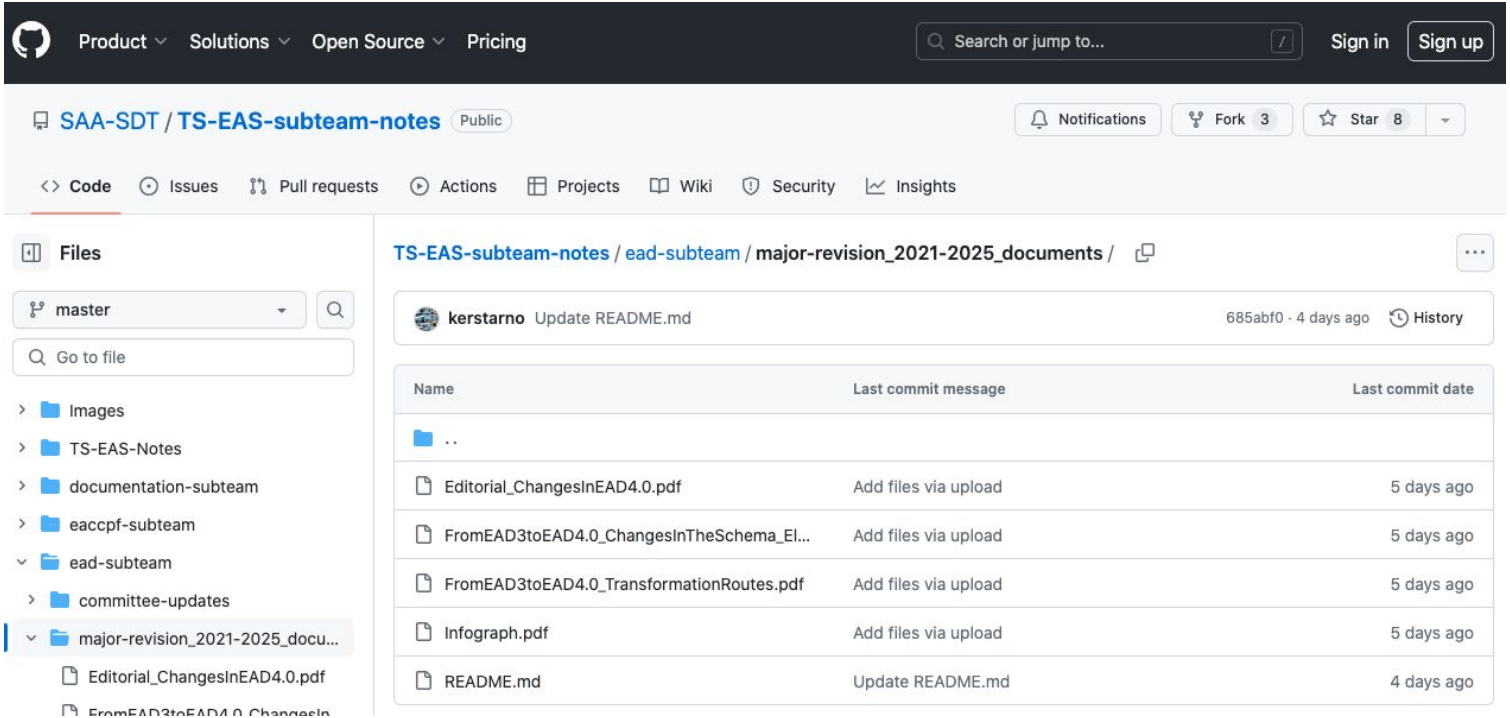
GitHub workspace
Submit an EAD or EAC-CPF issue or feature request via GitHub
Submit an EAD or EAC-CPF issue or feature request via our webform
Meetings

**TS-EAS STANDARDS**

Official EAD Website
Official EAC-CPF Website

https://www2.archivists.org/groups/technical-subcommittee-on-encoded-archival-standards-ts-eas/call-for-comments-revision-of-e-0

# Find all information on the TS-EAS GitHub page




https://github.com/SAA-SDT/TS-EAS-subteam-notes/tree/master/ead-subteam/major-revision_2021-2025_documents

# Currently available documentation on EAD 4.0

- Posts on the Descriptive Notes blog
- Editorial
- Revision notes (compared to EAD3)
- The EAD 4.0 draft schema
- Transformation routes (compared to EAD3)
- Changes in the schema
- Example files

# Documentation being prepared

- A draft Tag Library for EAD 4.0
- Revision notes (compared to EAD 2002)
- Transformation routes (compared to EAD 2002)
- More example files
- A draft conversion from EAD3 to EAD 4.0
- Best Practice Guide extensions for EAD 4.0

# Open drop-in sessions

- Informal
- Brief introduction to one major strand of the revision
- Open mic for questions, comments, and suggestions

- First session on how to contribute to the call for comments, 24 April 2024
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGttrBWj9wU
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MzZDWr-zGY
- Today's session on EAD becoming more interoperable

# Open drop-in sessions

# Open drop-in sessions

- Third session on EAD 4.0 being extensible, 18 June 2024
  - https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAscuCopz4tGNAzYgdjcTFQ7Zxs8VCQUMkW#/registration
- Fourth session on EAD 4.0's sustainability and exchangeability
  - http://societyofamericanarchivists-316.my.webex.com/weblink/register/r8a0c096c3e8a2b5e33114f17ce7113f6

# Benefits of EAD 4.0: Interoperability

# Reasons to align standards

- Standards as building blocks for managing, publishing, and sharing information
- Ensure that information can be universally understood
- Facilitate the adoption of similar approaches across different domains regardless of national contexts
- Make it easier for systems to communicate with one another and to exchange and process data

# Benefits of aligning standards

- **More easily accessible** to anyone involved in the process of creating, managing, and processing archival descriptions by using **more general terminology**
- **More directly relatable** to other standards used by the archival community and related sectors by using **more of the same terminology**
- **Easier to** (technically) **manage** when used in combination with other standards by **reducing** unnecessary **differences**

# Alignment between EAD and EAC-CPF

- EAD and EAC-CPF (Encoded Archival Context - Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families) each cover a distinct aspect of archival description
  - Archival materials on the one hand
  - Creators of these materials on the other hand
- Designed to complement each other
- In practice, quite a bit of an overlap between both
  - In broader concepts such as the principle of provenance
  - In detailed aspects such as the encoding of dates or places

# The principle of shared elements and attributes

- Ensure that elements and attributes with the same name in both standards are intended to be used in the same way
  - Confirm that they are defined in the same way in both standards (same content model and data type)
- Evaluate whether elements and attributes with similar names are meant to be used in the same way
  - If they are, decide on an aligned definition in both standards in that case (i.e. applying the same name and the same content model and data type)
  - If they are not, find more distinctive names and emphasise difference in intent by different definition (of content model and data type) in each standard

# The changes in EAD 4.0

The following slides only mention some higher level changes.
For the full overview, see e.g. the Revision notes (compared to EAD3).

# camelCase spelling

- Introduced with the previous version of EAC-CPF in 2010, considered during the revision towards EAD3
- Typographic and consistent way to separate words in a phrase by capitalising the first character of each word except for the first word, and not using spaces
- XML convention and best practise
  - XML is case-sensitive, i.e. <bioghist> was never the same as <biogHist>

# camelCase spelling

- Enhances readability for the human eye
- Makes it easier to recognise an element or attribute name’s origin
- Helps in learning and interpreting the standard

*Especially important considering the broad international community of users, many of whom do not speak English as their first language*

# camelCase spelling

- Some examples
  - archDesc, biogHist, custodHist, otherFindAid, relatedMaterial, scopeContent
  - dateRange, dateSet, fromDate, toDate, languageSet, physDescStructured
  - conventionDeclaration, maintenanceAgency, otherAgencyCode, otherRecordId

# Renaming

- Introducing camelCase spelling also provided an opportunity to review element and attribute names more generally
  - Especially abbreviated names and those consisting of acronyms entirely
  - Aligning with terminology of other standards such as ISAD(G), DACS, or RiC
- Some examples
  - accessrestrict and userestrict become accessConditions and useConditions
  - acqinfo becomes sourceOfAcquisition
  - did becomes identificationData
  - dsc becomes descriptionOfComponents
  - odd becomes otherDescriptiveInfo

# The <control> element (some changes)

- Sequence of sub-elements adapted
  - Mandatory elements first (i.e. recordId, maintenanceAgency, maintenanceHistory)
- recordId cannot be left empty anymore
  - When using EAD as an export format, having an identifier for the EAD XML file itself becomes pivotal in ingest and update scenarios
- Use of sub-elements to maintenanceAgency has been loosened
  - Only one of agencyName OR agencyCode has to be present
- Predefined value lists for attributes removed from the schema can now be defined within control
  - E.g. for @level or @unitDateType

# From <control><filedesc> to <findAidDesc>

- filedesc moved out of control and renamed to findAidDesc
  - Sibling element of control and archDesc, directly under ead
- Now optional and repeatable
- Intended for encoding information about any instance of “the finding aid” (printed, different digital file formats, the EAD XML file itself)
- Re-uses elements that also exist in other parts of EAD rather than a set of elements only applied in this specific context
  - title, citedRange, agent, date, place
  - formattingExtension for formatted longer texts (comparable to the element frontmatter with the sub-element div in EAD 2002)

# The encoding of dates

- Adoption of the triad of date, dateRange and dateSet
- datesingle (e.g. in unitDateStructured) replaced with date
- Common set of attributes for date, fromDate, and toDate
  - @standardDate, @notAfter, and @notBefore for normalised dates updated to the newest version of ISO 8601 integrating the Extended Date/Time Format (EDTF)
  - @calendar, @era, and @certainty to include a literal expression of the context and certainty - or uncertainty - of a date
  - The new @status to indicate a date e.g. as “unknown” or an end date in a date range as “ongoing”

# The encoding of places and place names

- The simple geogname has been replaced by place in most contexts

- place enables a choice between providing a placeName, placeRole, placeType, address, contact, or geographicCoordinates
  - One of these has to be present
- place as well as placeName, placeRole, and placeType enable the inclusion of controlled access terms

# In-line tagging for shared elements

- Reduced mixed content model
- Only one mixed content model rather than different variations
- Focus on:
  - An element to refer to external resources for further reading (reference)
  - An element to indicate that part of a longer text identifies an entity such as a person, an organisation, a place, or a date (referringString)
  - An element to emphasise part of a longer text for e.g. difference in display (span)

# Internal referencing

- Extended use of @target, which is now available with all elements
  - Enables creating a pointer to the @id of any other element within the same EAD XML file
  - Allows pointing to several other elements at the same time (data type: IDREF**S**)
- Introduction of @conventionDeclarationReference, @maintenance-EventReference, and @sourceReference
  - Available with all elements that can contain text, are available outside of the control section, and work in the same as @target
  - Support assertion description by connecting a statement in the descriptive part with a source, a rule, an agent, and a date/time

# External referencing

- Extended use of attributes to link to controlled vocabularies, thesauri, and authority files
  - Now available with nearly half of the elements in EAD 4.0
- @identifier renamed to @valueURI
  - Avoiding confusion with @id
- @source renamed to @vocabularySource
  - Being more precise and avoiding an attribute and an element with the same name
- @vocabularySourceURI added

# External referencing

- reference available to refer to external resources for further reading
- Either analogue or digital resources (@href, @linkTitle, @linkRole)
- As part of the mixed content model in elements such as abstract or p, but also e.g. unitTitle
- As direct sub-element with conventionDeclaration, localTypeDeclaration, rightsDeclaration, and source

# Your questions, comments, suggestions

# Our questions for you

# Do you describe records creators separately from describing archival materials?

E.g. in a separate module of your collection management system or using EAC-CPF next to EAD.

# Do you encode information about published finding aids (of any format)?

If yes, which information do you usually capture?

# Do you use any national or local value lists?

For @level and other attributes.
If yes, in which contexts and are these lists published online?

# Do you support in-line tagging?

If yes, in which context(s) and for which type of information?

# Are there any elements or attributes that could be named more precisely or clearly in your opinion?

If yes, which ones and do you have suggestions for alternative names?

# We want to hear from you!

Contribute to the Call for Comments by

- Reporting a bug or request a feature
  - On GitHub
  - Via our web form
- Sending us a general comment or question
  - Via email to ts-eas@archivists.org

We are also always looking for real-life encoding examples.

# Thanks  very much for your attention and your questions / comments!

Remember the remaining Open Sessions planned on:

Tuesday, 18 June, 6am UTC
Tuesday, 9 July, 4pm UTC