

Annotation

What do we annotate? In DDI we need to capture annotation for various purposes

- For the creation of the metadata documents (expressed as Functional Views)
- For the creation of the metadata instance of a class
- For documenting instances of data, studies, or non-DDI Views content

RULE: The what of annotation is always the instance of the class containing the annotation. Annotation then captures the who, when, and why for the instance of the class.

An annotation is intended to parallel Dublin Core-like content created for the purpose of resource location and for crediting creators of various pieces of metadata or data. A complete document on the purpose and intent of Annotation is provided in the following document:

Hoyle, Larry, Mary Vardigan, Jay Greenfield, Sam Hume, Sanda Ionescu, Jeremy Iverson, John Kunze, Barry Radler, Wendy Thomas, Stuart Weibel, Michael Witt DDI and Enhanced Data Citation IASSIST Quarterly, Vol. 39_3-4 pp. 30 - 46
<http://iassistdata.org/sites/default/files/vol39_3-4_hoyle2.pdf>.

Annotation should be treated as a whole and individual properties should not be used to support content outside of this context.

RULE: Annotation should not be used to express similar uses of a specific class that parallels a property in Annotation.

Different types of annotation are appropriate in different contexts. Annotation properties should be thought of within the full relational context of annotation. Individual properties may have similar classes in DDI but are used independently in other contexts.

There are a few properties that parallel some properties in an annotation:

- Name – Title
- ID – InternationalID
- Overview – Abstract

The difference in these properties is in their intended purpose and usage; a Name is a "linguistic signifier" within a specified context whereas a Title is a "full authoritative title" for the purpose of annotation. The properties of the class have a context of DDI and may/may not be machine actionable within the context of DDI. The properties of Annotation have the purpose of providing information on resource location and a means of assigning credit. For example, an instance of a class may have an official Title for the purpose of general discovery and have one or more Names within different contexts for the purpose of processing the metadata. While the DDI property Name can achieve its purpose without additional information, a Title is the "official title of an annotation" and corresponds more to the Dublin Core elements and purpose of resource location and providing credit. As a standalone object a Title is rather meaningless.

There are a number of other classes that use Annotation for purposes other than as an inheritance from Annotated Identifiable.

RULE: Annotation can be used to provide a citation for an object that is NOT the instance of the class containing it. For example, non-DDI Views objects like a data file, a PDF image of a questionnaire, etc. In general these should use the class ExternalMaterial or an extension of ExternalMaterial as the type (or target) class. The object name within ExternalMaterial, "citationOfExternalMaterial" makes it clear that this is not the annotation of metadata object but of an external object.