DDI Agency Registration

The DDI agency registration system is a means of capturing unique agency IDs and performing the top level resolution services for referencing DDI objects. Top level resolution identifies the location of the agency maintaining the specified DDI object and transfers the request to that agency for further lower level resolution.

An agency can be any organization or individual who wishes to create DDI-Lifecycle metadata. Public access to that metadata can be supported by internal resolution services or through a designated service, but a resolution service is not required for registration. Sub-agency’s may be registered with DDI or directly administered by the parent agent. DDI will only provide information on those agency and sub-agency IDs within its registration system.

Current systems administering top level domains (like .com, .ca, .edu, etc.) have different criteria for registration. For example:

* .ca the applicant must provide proof of Canadian residence in order to register
* .edu evaluates both eligibility as an educational institution and manages the content of the top level name (consider that both University of Michigan and the University of Minnesota locally go by “UM” or “U of M”, however their URLs are umich and umn respectively
* .com works on a first come first serve basis

DDI must determine its criteria for agency IDs. There is a minimum requirement of meeting the technical criteria. Outside of the strict technical criteria there is considerable room for discretion. The administration of this system is responsible for enforcing criteria, not setting them.

TIC is requesting support for the following proposal or agreement on an alternative. The proposal addresses the following:

1. Agreement on the use of the country code of the primary headquarters for multi-national commercial entities as determined by the entity
2. Use of a single DDI specified top-level-domain for international non-commercial and intergovernmental organizations
3. Requirement of basic contact information which will be validated by email reply and verification of a site URN with some form of identifying information (content above “construction site”)
4. No additional verification regarding validation of the registrant and their ability to speak for the agency in question; registration system will provide information on what is being declared by the act of registration but will not do further checking on the accuracy
5. Authorizing the DDI registration maintenance agency to verify this information and to deny registration to those not meeting these requirement, providing the reason for denial

# Policy proposal

Currently the description of the agency ID allows any organization or individual to register as many agency IDs as they wish to manage. The technical requirements are as follows:

This identifier follows basically the rules of reversed domain names and is case-insensitive. This way, the DNS resolution of DDI agency identifiers is supported. The hierarchy of domains descends from the left to the right label in the name; each label to the right specifies a subdivision, or subdomain of the domain to the left. The left-most label of agency-id conveys the top-level domain. It SHOULD be a country code corresponding to ISO 3166-1-alpha-2 codes [[ISO3166](#ISO3166)]. The next subdomain identifies the agency within that top-level domain. Further optional subdomains can follow. The Namespace Specific String uses a subset of the allowed characters in [[RFC2141](#RFC2141)]: letters, digits, hyphen, dot, colon, and underscore. Escaping is not used.

agency-id :=
 (
 <top-level-domain>
 \. <agency-name>
 (\. <sub-agency-name>)\*
 ){1,255}

Recommendation:

1. The system will automatically check for compliance with the regular expression as discussed above.
2. Multi-national companies SHOULD use the ISO 3166-1-alpha-2 code of their primary headquarters. This will not be validated.
3. International organizations, such as EUROSTAT, World Bank, etc. will be assigned the alpha code “int” as this is a 3 digit code and will not conflict with current or future codes used by ISO 3166-1-alpha-2. All international organizations will have the same top level code.

DDI Registration system will not require a currently functioning local resolution system at the point of registration. Instructions will clarify that this information is required once metadata is officially “published” (made available for reference and reuse) outside of the originating organization. However, the DDI registration system requires specific contact information and some verification that the organization, individual or project is in existence.

To meet technical and content needs, the DDI Agency Registration system requires basic information which will be validated by maintenance agency staff. Staff supporting the registration system is authorized to verify the following information:

* A unique ID complying with the regular expression for a DDI agency as defined by the schema (automated check)
* Contact information for both a technical and administrative contact for each agency ID
* A web site providing content regarding the agency and/or project registering an ID

# Registration process

Using the information provided by the web site concerning the requirements and agency submits a request for a specific agency ID. The required elements of the request will include:

* Declaration of agency or sub-agency registration
* Organization type: International/Intergovernmental Organization, Multi-national business, Other country based organization, Project, or Individual
* Organization name
* Top level domain: the ISO 3166-1-alpha-2 code or “int”
* Agency identification meeting the configuration of the regular expression
* Technical contact (name and e-mail)
* Administrative contact (name and e-mail)
* Associated web site (for organization or project)
* Acknowledgement of authority of the submitter to register that agency and to provide, directly or through a third-party, the resolution system need to provide access to “published” objects [note that the resolution service is not required for registration]
	+ Agency registration without resolution system information can be updated at that time the agency wishes to support public access to their metadata through the top-level DDI Resolution Service

## Technical validation

Technical approval is based on compliance with following requirements:

* Top level is a valid country code for all submissions other than organization type: International/Intergovernmental Organization which must be “int”
* Unique identifier within the context of the DDI Agency Registration system
* Length of section following country code (63 maximum)
* ASCII characters, case insensitive, subset of the allowed characters in [[RFC2141](#RFC2141)]: letters, digits, hyphen, dot, colon, and underscore. Escaping is not used.
* Completion of all required fields

## Decision guidelines and control for approval

Staff will evaluate the following in terms of meeting the guidelines set forth by the Expert Committee:

* Validate e-mail address for technical and administrative contact
* Verify that web address has content meeting the minimum specification defined by the Expert Committee

All submissions meeting the technical requirements and guidelines will be accepted and entered into the DDI Agency Registration system. Those not meeting the minimum specification will be rejected via an email to the submitter noting the reason for rejection.

# Content for website

The web site will consist of information pages, registration form, update form, and search system.

## Information

* Description of the purpose of registration and the services that need to be provided by an agency to support search and retrieval of published objects within the agencies control.
* Description of the roles and expectations of the technical and administrative contact
* Explanation of sub agency ids - when administered by DDI alliance and when administered locally by DDI agency
* Agency can create sub-agency id without contacting alliance as long as them are administering it internally

## Instructions for registration

* Steps of registration
* Syntax and form of agency ID and examples of each type
* What happens when submission is made and what to do if you don't get response
* The email address of the DDI Agency Registration system at the DDI alliance for questions (need to establish a specific e-mail i.e., DDIregistry@ddiallinance.org)

## Search system

* String based search system
* Description of search system
	+ Statement that only those sub agencies managed by the DDI resolution system are listed. Sub-agencies managed by the agency internally will not be listed.
	+ Empty search field will result in full list (alphabetical)
	+ A search with a country code or “int” followed by a dot, i.e., “de.” will result in a listing of all registered agencies within Germany