

Showing What We Have:
Exploring Linked Data
for Archival Description

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What is linked data?

“The principle that lies at the heart of Linked Data: bringing together diverse data sources in order to allow researchers to make new connections.”

- Jane Stevenson, *Linking Lives Evaluation Report*, 15 November 2012, through [ArchivesHub](#)

Potential value for archives

- De-silo separate domains and institutions
- Improving the quality and consistency of our data
- More efficient description workflows
- Encouraging reuse of archival data
- Exposing richness of collections

Challenges and barriers

- Technical complexity
- Lack of tools
- Messy or inconsistent data
- Need for more data (URIs) to link
- Traditional finding aid structure
- Preserving provenance and context

Making it work

- Greater dialogue
- Better tools
- Leveraging existing description
- Education and openness to experiment
- EAC-CPF and archival authority work

“If [linked data] gets implemented... it will demonstrate and add value to archives... An archivist will be able to **tell a much richer, more thorough story** about their collection if they use linked data principles. It will go beyond, ‘This is what I’ve got.’ Yes, it’s great to have those biographical histories and scope notes about the collection... But those things will be able to be improved and enhanced and made much more multimedia-rich if they use linked data. That’s where the potential comes from.”

– Eric Lease Morgan, Notre Dame University

Questions?

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