METADATA POLICY

Effective Year: 2026

1. Introduction

This Metadata Policy governs the creation, submission, validation, management, updating, and preservation of metadata within the Metascholar Digital Object Identifier (MDOI) system. The policy ensures that every registered digital object is described with accurate, complete, structured, and reliable metadata to support identification, discovery, access, citation, interoperability, and long-term preservation.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish metadata standards that guide members, organisations, repositories, publishers, researchers, and system administrators in submitting and maintaining high-quality metadata records. The policy supports the MDOI Foundation's goal of providing persistent identifiers, structured metadata management, reliable resolution, and trusted digital object stewardship.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all metadata submitted to the MDOI system for digital objects including scholarly articles, datasets, theses, books, software, institutional records, reports, educational resources, media files, and other knowledge assets. It applies to individual users, organisational users, metadata editors, administrators, and all parties authorised to create or manage MDOI records.

4. Core Metadata Requirements

Each MDOI record must include the minimum required metadata fields necessary for identification and resolution. These include the title of the digital object, assigned MDOI identifier, resource URL or landing page, publication or creation year, and resource type. These fields are mandatory because they support persistent identification, accurate citation, and reliable discovery.

5. Descriptive Metadata

Users are encouraged to provide rich descriptive metadata to improve visibility and discoverability. Recommended fields include authors or creators, abstract or description, keywords, subject area, language, version, publisher, contributors, and relevant disciplinary classifications. Descriptive metadata must accurately reflect the content and intellectual responsibility of the registered object.

6. Administrative Metadata

Administrative metadata must record information relating to registration, ownership, verification, visibility, and lifecycle status. This may include registration date, depositor name, organisation, record status, visibility status, verification status, and account ownership. Administrative metadata supports governance, auditing, accountability, and long-term record management.

7. Technical Metadata

Where applicable, users should provide technical metadata such as file format, file size, checksum, access rights, licence information, repository link, software version, or file-related preservation details. Technical metadata supports file integrity, preservation, interoperability, and proper reuse of digital objects.

8. Relational Metadata

Members are encouraged to provide relational metadata that links one digital object to another. This may include related identifiers, relation type, and previous version, funding information, cited works, referenced datasets, or linked institutional records. Relational metadata strengthens scholarly connection, citation tracking, version control, and knowledge-network development.

9. Metadata Accuracy and Integrity

All metadata submitted to the MDOI system must be accurate, complete, verifiable, and up to date. Users are responsible for ensuring that the metadata reflects the actual digital object being registered. False, misleading, incomplete, plagiarised, or unauthorised metadata may be rejected, corrected, suspended, or removed by the MDOI Foundation.

10. Metadata Completeness

The MDOI system may use a metadata completeness score to assess record quality. Records missing essential fields such as title, abstract, keywords, contributors, landing page, licence, or resource type may be flagged for correction. Users must respond to metadata quality alerts and update incomplete records within a reasonable time.

11. Controlled Vocabulary and Standardisation

The MDOI Foundation may require the use of controlled vocabulary for selected fields such as resource type, record status, visibility, relation type, language, and subject category. Controlled vocabulary ensures consistency, reduces ambiguity, and improves interoperability across repositories, indexing platforms, and digital knowledge systems.

12. Metadata Visibility

Metadata may be associated with public or hidden records. Public records are discoverable and citable, while hidden records remain private but persistently registered. Visibility status does not affect the validity of an assigned MDOI identifier. The Foundation may define which metadata fields must remain visible for resolution, verification, or compliance purposes.

13. Metadata Updates and Maintenance

Members are responsible for maintaining metadata throughout the lifecycle of a registered object. Metadata must be updated when titles, authorship, landing pages, access rights, versions, file links, or publication details change. Updates to metadata do not alter the persistence of the assigned MDOI identifier.

14. Metadata Validation

The MDOI Foundation may validate submitted metadata before or after registration. Validation may include checking completeness, formatting, duplicate-like records, invalid URLs, broken landing pages, unauthorised submissions, inconsistent resource types, and non-compliance with metadata standards. Records may be returned to users for correction where necessary.

15. Metadata Preservation

The MDOI Foundation shall take reasonable measures to preserve metadata records for long-term access, resolution, and stewardship. Metadata may remain within the system even if a user account is suspended, terminated, or inactive, especially where preservation is necessary to maintain identifier persistence and citation reliability.

16. Metadata Ownership and Use

Members retain ownership of their submitted content and associated intellectual property. By depositing metadata, members grant the MDOI Foundation a non-exclusive permission to store, process, and display, distribute, preserve, and make metadata available for identifier resolution, discovery, interoperability, indexing, and system integrity purposes.

17. Metadata Interoperability

The MDOI Metadata Policy supports interoperability with global research infrastructure, repositories, digital libraries, indexing systems, and institutional platforms. The Foundation may make metadata available in machine-readable formats to support integration, discovery, citation, and knowledge exchange.

18. Prohibited Metadata Practices

Users must not submit metadata that is false, fraudulent, misleading, plagiarised, unauthorised, unlawful, malicious, or designed to misrepresent the identity, ownership, origin, or nature of a digital object. Users must not use metadata fields to insert harmful code, spam, deceptive links, or content that violates intellectual property, privacy, or ethical standards.

19. Compliance and Enforcement

The MDOI Foundation reserves the right to review, correct, restrict, suspend, or remove metadata records that violate this policy. Serious or repeated violations may result in account suspension, termination of dashboard access, or restriction of registration privileges. Enforcement actions shall be guided by fairness, transparency, system integrity, and the need to protect trusted identifier infrastructure.

20. Amendments

This Metadata Policy may be updated periodically to reflect technical improvements, metadata standard changes, legal requirements, user feedback, and developments in digital knowledge infrastructure. Continued use of the MDOI system after policy updates constitutes acceptance of the revised policy.

21. Conclusion

This Metadata Policy provides the foundation for trusted, accurate, interoperable, and sustainable metadata management within the MDOI system. By complying with this policy, members contribute to reliable identifier resolution, improved discoverability, long-term preservation, and responsible digital knowledge stewardship.