

## Authority Research for Demographic Group Term Proposals L 440

**BACKGROUND:** *Proposed demographic group terms and their associated “used for” references should reflect both the terminology used in current literature on the demographic group in question, and the system of language, construction, and style used in **Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms**.*

*The purpose of doing authority research and listing the sources consulted as well as providing information found in those sources in the demographic group authority record is either to demonstrate the form(s) in which the word or phrase being proposed as an authorized term has been found in existing literature, or to document the fact that no information about the term can be found in the reference sources consulted.*

*The information in the authority record serves three purposes: (1) to provide an indication of the relationship of the term to the work being cataloged; (2) to provide information on the cataloger’s choice of terminology for the authorized term, the UF and BT references, and the scope note (if provided); and (3) to provide definitions, information on the intended scope and usage of the proposed term, its relationship to, and distinction from, similar existing terms, and any peculiarities or other pertinent information about the proposed term.*

*The above information is used to guide the proposal through the editorial approval process and also serves as a permanent record for future reference and consultation.*

*There are three categories of authority information to be recorded in the 670 (Sources found), 675 (Sources not found), and 952 (Cataloger’s permanent note) fields of the authority record: (1) citation of sources consulted, including the work being cataloged; (2) citation of LC pattern; and (3) other information pertinent to the choice of terminology or the meaning of the term. All demographic term proposals must include one or more of these categories of information. For information about the MARC coding of these fields see L 405.*

### **1. Citation of sources consulted.**

#### **a. General principles.**

**(1) Work being cataloged.** The resource that prompted the proposal must be cited. At a minimum, provide the title and date.

*LC and CIP Partner practice:* Also provide the LCCN of the resource as the first element of the citation.

# Authority Research for Demographic Group Term Proposals L 440

## 1. *Citation of sources consulted.*

### a. *General principles. (Continued)*

(2) ***Additional authority research required.*** Thorough authority research demonstrating that the wording chosen for the proposed term is appropriate must be done for all groups. The final selection of terminology and form may be the result of both pattern and research, in which case both should be cited.

It is not acceptable to cite only the resource being cataloged for a new demographic term. Other sources appropriate to the subject area in question should be cited to demonstrate that the concept was properly investigated.

(3) ***Number of citations.*** There is no general rule as to the number of citations to a term that must be found in order to demonstrate literary warrant for the form of a term. Depending on the nature of the term being established, there may be abundant authority or virtually none at all. Failure to find any previous citation to the word or phrase being proposed as an authorized term after doing a reasonable amount of authority research is normally not a factor in determining the acceptability of the proposal so long as it is demonstrated that proper authority research was carried out.

(4) ***Where the term is found in a source.*** The word or phrase being proposed as a new term may appear in a reference source as an entry term, an index term, a term used in the running text, chapter titles, illustration captions, etc., as well as in titles of other resources cited in the authority record. The way the term is entered or indexed in the source cited should be indicated.

(5) ***Relationship between a source and the specific term being proposed.*** Sources cited should apply specifically to the term being proposed. For example, citing the presence of the word **basketball** in a general dictionary is not sufficient authority in itself to justify the term **Basketball players**.

(6) ***Listing sources in the authority record.*** All sources that were consulted should be listed in either 670 (Sources found) or 675 (Sources not found) fields. If a 670 field is used, then the location of the information found and the information itself – either quoted or paraphrased in English – should be included. Information should support the terminology used in the authorized term, references, and the scope note (if provided). It should include, for example, a definition and variant words or phrases used to refer to the demographic group.

# Authority Research for Demographic Group Term Proposals L 440

## 1. *Citation of sources consulted.*

### a. *General principles.*

#### **(6) *Listing sources in the authority record.* (Continued)**

The citation for the resource being cataloged should clearly indicate the work's relationship to the term being proposed. If the resource itself does not provide a description or definition that can be included, then a short cataloger-supplied summary in English should be included instead.

**b. *Sources of authoritative information.*** The type of print or online sources to be consulted for any given proposal varies according to the nature of the term being proposed. The most frequently consulted types of sources include the following:

- General dictionaries (e.g., *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*), which must be cited for all terms of the type normally found in general dictionaries
- General encyclopedias (e.g., *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *World Book Encyclopedia*)
- General indexes (e.g., *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*)
- Subject heading lists and thesauri (e.g., *Library of Congress Subject Headings*)
- Reference sources (e.g., subject dictionaries, encyclopedias, and thesauri) and other authoritative works in the field in question, if the proposed term is specific to a particular discipline (e.g., *The CIA World Fact Book*; *The Occupational Outlook Handbook*)
- Web sites, especially those of organizations associated with the term in question (e.g., American Institute of Architects)

*Note:* Crowdsourced web sites and social media such as Wikipedia, DBpedia, Twitter, etc., are not generally considered to be authoritative when proposing demographic group terms. They can be useful sources nonetheless, because entries often provide references to authoritative print sources or web sites.

Crowdsourced sites may be the best sources available in rare circumstances. If that is the case, evidence of research in authoritative sources should always be provided, using a 675 field if necessary, in addition to the citation for the crowdsourced site.

## Authority Research for Demographic Group Term Proposals L 440

### 2. Citation of LC pattern.

*a. General rule.* Cite a relevant and analogous existing pattern in a 952 field.

*b. Citing demographic group terms.* Cite a relevant and analogous term from LCDGT for any of the following types of new demographic term proposals.

- Proposal to establish an analogous term in the same category.

*Pattern:* Russian Orthodox Church members

*Proposal:* Romanian Orthodox Church members

- Proposal to establish a term using a parenthetical qualifier that has been used in other terms.

*Pattern:* Bengali (South Asian people)

*Proposal:* Sindhi (South Asian people)

- Proposal to establish a term using a different parenthetical qualifier when the base term is identical.

*Pattern:* Georgians (Republic of Georgia)

*Proposal:* Georgians (State of Georgia)

*3. Other information.* The proposal may also include, in a 952 field, any other information useful in the editorial approval process. This includes such items as an informal explanation of the distinction between a proposed term and a superficially similar term, etc.

*4. Procedures for citing sources and LC patterns.* See L 443.

*5. Examples of citations.* See L 405 for examples of authority records with citations.

# Authority Research for Demographic Group Term Proposals L 440

## AUTHORITY RESEARCH CHECKLIST

The following is a summary of the minimum authority research requirements for proposals for new demographic group terms. Consult the main text portion of this instruction sheet for more specific details concerning each of these requirements.

### USE OF REFERENCE SOURCES

- For all concepts of the type usually found in general dictionaries, a general dictionary should be cited in the 670 or 675 field. [sec. 1.b]
- For all concepts being newly established, appropriate sources should be cited. Patterns may also be cited, but not in lieu of authoritative reference sources. [sec. 2]
- The work being cataloged must be cited, but not as the only source consulted. [sec. 1.a]
- For demographic groups that are specific to a discipline, sources specific to the discipline should be cited. [sec. 1.b]
- The sources cited should apply specifically to the proposed term as a whole, and not just to one word or element of the term. [sec. 1.a(5)]

### USE OF PATTERNS

- Pattern(s) cited should be truly analogous. [sec. 2.a]
- *Patterns for adjectival qualifiers*  
A pattern should be cited to demonstrate that the term in question has been analogously qualified before. A second pattern may be cited to demonstrate that the adjectival form has been used in the demographic group thesaurus before. [sec. 2.b]
- *Patterns for parenthetical qualifiers*  
Patterns may be cited only to demonstrate previous usage of the qualifier, not in lieu of appropriate research for the substantive portion of the term. [sec. 1.a(2)]