Contents

1.1 ISNI

The International Standard Name Identifier (ISNI) is an ISO standard that will provide a means to uniquely identify the public identities of creators, including authors, composers, artists, cartographers and performers.

Fictional and historical characters are also considered "public identities", as are legal entities such as organisations and registered companies.

An ISNI is a unique 16-digit number. For guidelines on how this number is displayed, see 3.1.2 (ISNI production database) and 6.4.1.2 (ISNI public database).

For an introduction to ISNI see the website at: http://www.isni.org/

1.2 Identity

ISNI defines 3 major entities:

- Party (person, organisation, fictional character)
- Public identity
- Name

1.2.1 Party

A party can be a natural person (a human being), a legal entity (such as a registered company) or even a fictional character, e.g. Peter Pan.

1.2.2 Public identity

A public identity is the name by which a party is publicly known. Each public identity can be assigned an ISNI.

A party may have more than one public identity, e.g. Charles Dodgson (who created scientific works) and his pseudonym Lewis Carroll who created Alice in Wonderland.

Each public identity relating to a given Party shall have a separate ISNI, e.g. Ruth Rendell and Barbara Vine are two distinct public identities of one Party. Ruth Rendell and Barbara Vine shall be allocated distinct ISNIs.

1.2.3 Name

A party may have more than one name, not all of which are associated with one of its public identities, e.g. maiden names, married names, names of divorced spouses etc.

These other name forms are considered "private" if not associated with any publications. They may be coded either as name variants or as related names but they are not separate public identities and will not be assigned ISNIs.

Alternative spellings of the same public identity are assigned the same ISNI, e.g. William Shakespear and William Shakespeare refer to a single public identity with a unique ISNI.

Linguistic variances of the same public identity receive the same ISNI, e.g. Trotsky, Leon; Trotskij, Leo; Trotskii, Lev.

Transliteration variances of the same public identity also receive the same ISNI, e.g. Trotsky, Leon; Бронштейн, Лев Давидович; לעװ, טראצקי

1.3 Purpose of ISNI

ISNI is a global standard for identifying the millions of contributors to creative works and those active in their distribution, including writers, artists, creators, performers, researchers, producers, publishers, and more.

ISNIs can be assigned to all parties that create, produce, manage, distribute or feature in creative content including natural, legal, or fictional parties, and provides quick, accurate and easy identification.

ISNI facilitates reliable royalty management services. Rights management societies often receive payments then need to research to find the rights holders.

ISNI enables academics and researchers to establish their identity for the purpose of reputation management and communication of their output.

By sharing their data resources, ISNI participants including libraries, rights management and trade organisations will be co-operating to achieve high quality data.

By identifying contributors in all forms of content that are critical to researchers including: videos, recordings, novels, dissertations, journal articles, monographs, datasets, and working papers, ISNI will both help the individual researcher and benefit the wider research community, including libraries, publishers and universities.

1.4 Assigning ISNIs

1.4.1 Assigned status

An ISNI is given an "assigned" status where a record for a public identity has either:

i) 3 or more VIAF sources

ii) 1 or 2 VIAF sources and at least 1 non-VIAF source

iii) At least 2 non-VIAF sources

iv) Unique name assignment

v) Rich record assignment (online and Atom Publishing only)

vi) Single source assignment, e.g. JNAM, RING, BOEK[1]

vii) Manual assignment (ISNI Quality Team using WinIBW)

viii) Records which initially matched the criteria for assignment, but have lost some of their original data sources. For example, records which had 3 or more VIAF sources but lost 1 or more of those sources due to VIAF cluster changes. These records would not lose their assigned status even when they no longer meet the criteria for assignment.

There are currently over 8 million records[2] with an ISNI status of "assigned". Only records with an ISNI status of "assigned" are viewable on the public database.

1.4.2 Provisional/Suspect status

On the ISNI production database records can be found where the ISNI status is not yet assigned due to a lack of sources.

The vast majority of records on the ISNI production database (currently over 15 million) have a status of "provisional". The most common reasons for the "provisional" status are "no match initial database" (there are no matches with records from other sources) and "too many matches" (potential matches have been found with more than one record so links are made between the records and will need to be reviewed before the status is upgraded to "assigned")

Records may also have a "suspect" status. This occurs where the status was previously "assigned" but an error has been identified so the record has been changed to "suspect". Records with "suspect" status are automatically removed from the public database and can only be found on the production database.

For information relating to how ISNIs are displayed in a record, see 3.1.2 for the production database display and 6.4.1.2 for the public database.

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[1] For a list of non-VIAF contributors to ISNI and their respective codes, see 1.5.2

[2] This is the current figure, correct on 4 September 2014. For updated statistics, see http://www.isni.org/

1.5 ISNI data

The VIAF database (http://viaf.org/) is the main base file for ISNI. VIAF contains name authority work carried out by 34 agencies in 29 countries worldwide (as of July 2014). 24 VIAF participants are national libraries[3].

ISNI includes personal and corporate name authority records. It does not include meeting names, geographic names, subjects and name/title authority records. Sparse VIAF records which only include a name are dropped on loading. ISNI is currently loading updates monthly from VIAF.

There are over 30 non-VIAF contributors to ISNI. Their data files are initially matched against VIAF before being matched with other non-VIAF sources.

The Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF) is an ISNI Registration Agency and no longer a VIAF source on the ISNI database.

1.5.1 VIAF sources

The participating institutions in VIAF are as follows. The code in the $2 subfield in the ISNI record identifies the institution in the data.

Example

Spitzer, Marian$d1899-1983$3public**$2VIAF$2LAC** – the data source is the Library and Archives Canada

Name	Code**
National Library of Australia	NLA
Library and Archives of Canada	LAC
National Library of the Czech Republic	NKC
Bibliotheca Alexandrina (Egypt)	EGAXA
Flemish Public Libraries	VLACC
Denmark (Danish Bibliographic Center) - test	DBC
SUDOC (Système Universitaire de Documentation (France))	SUDOC
Deutsche Nationalbibliothek	DNB
Getty Research Institute (Getty Union List of Artist Names)	JPG
National Széchényi Library (Hungary)	NSZL
National Library of Israel	NLI
Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico (Italy)	ICCU
Japan (NDL) - test	NDL
Norway (BIBSYS)	BIBSYS
NUKAT Center (Poland)	NUKAT
Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal	PTBNP
Biblioteca Nacional de España	BNE

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[3] For further information about VIAF and a current list of VIAF contributors, see http://viaf.org/ & http://www.oclc.org/viaf.en.html.

National Library of Sweden	SELIBR
Swiss National Library	SWNL
RERO (Réseau Romand, Switzerland)	RERO
Library of Congress / NACO (Name Authority Cooperative Program)*	LC
Vatican Library	BAV
Russian State Library - test	RSL
Wikipedia (en)	WKP
Biblioteca de Catalunya	BNC

*Includes name authority records created by the British Library and other participants

1.5.2 Non-VIAF sources

There are over 30 participating non-VIAF sources[4]. The code in the $2 subfield in the ISNI record identifies the source in the data.

Example

$aLewis, Rachel**$2PROQ** – the data source is PROQUEST.

Name	Type	Remarks	Code
Access Copyright	Rights Management	Canada, mostly authors	ACCE
American Musicological Society	Professional Society	US, mostly composers	AMS
Authors' Guild	Professional Society	US, authors	AGLD
Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society	Rights Management	UK, mostly authors	ALCS
Boekenbank	Rights Management	Belgium, mostly authors (loading 2013)	BOEK
Books in Print	Trade	US, mostly authors	BOWK
British Library Sound Archive	Cultural	Performers and composers	BLSA
British Library Theses	Education	Researchers	BRTH
Centrum Dienstverlening Auteurs en aanverwante Rechten	Rights Management	Netherlands, mostly authors	CEDA
Centro Español de Derechos Reprográficos	Rights Management	Spain, mostly authors	CEDR
Digital Author Identifier	Research	Netherlands	DAI
European Library	Cultural		TEL
Irish Copyright Licensing Agency	Rights Management	Ireland, mostly authors	ICLA
International Performers Database Association	Rights Management	37 societies, performers	IPDA
International Confederation of Societies of	Rights Management	225 societies, mostly composers	CISA*

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[4] For a current list of ISNI sources, see: http://www.isni.org/content/data-contributors

Authors and Composers (CISAC)			
JISC names	Education	UK researchers	JNAM
La Trobe University	Cultural		AUVLU
Modern Languages Association	Professional Society	US, mostly authors	MLA
MusicBrainz	Encyclopaedia	International	MUBZ
Open Library (Repec and AuthorClaim)		International	OPENL
ORCID and DataCite Interoperability Network (ODIN)	Research		ODIN
Prolitteris	Rights Management	Switzerland, mostly authors	PROL
Proquest Theses	Education	International, mostly researchers	PROQ
Publishers Licensing Society, UK	Belgium		PLS
Ringgold	Trade	International, institutions	RING
Scholar Universe	Trade	International, mostly researchers	SCHU
SwissPerform	Rights management		**
VG WORT	Rights Management	Germany	VGWO
WorldCat Theses, OCLC	Libraries		OCLCT
ZETOC	Research		ZETO

*Sources not yet loaded to production database, list will be updated regularly

**Codes to be confirmed

1.6 Reviewing ISNI data

1.6.1 Quality Team

The ISNI Quality Team consists of the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the British Library. The role of the team is to provide quality assurance of the ISNI database by:

i) Working closely with the OCLC technical development team to provide quality review and feedback on test loads and full file loads

ii) Evaluating the database through random sampling to agreed levels to provide an overall level of confidence in the accuracy of the ISNI database as a whole

iii) Developing editing processes for error correction, feedback and reporting mechanisms and workflows to support ongoing ISNI operations

iv) Contributing to the writing of technical documentation

v) Responding to error reports from data contributors (both VIAF and non-VIAF) and from the general public

Types of quality assurance work carried out by the Quality Team include:

- Accuracy of matches from different sources
    - Detection of duplicates
    - Detection of multiple identities in one record
- Detection of source records that cause bad matches or non-matches and analysis of the reasons
    - Detection of problems per source (such as duplicate records per identity in one source)
- Names problems
    - Names mismatches
    - Names / variants *versus* related names
- Date anomalies
- Titles not belonging to the same identity
- Identification of pseudonyms (or other identities of the same party) *versus* different parties bearing the same name

Note that the Quality Team does not tidy up data elements in source data that do not impact on the accuracy of the unique identification of the public identity, e.g. variant roles, classes, or other presentational variations in data elements from disparate sources.

1.7 ISNI databases

There are 3 ISNI databases:

1.7.1 ISNI Public database

The public database is available on the internet at: http://www.isni.org/

This is the public view of ISNI and a user ID is not needed to search and retrieve records.

Only records with an ISNI status of "assigned" can be viewed on the public database.

For information about searching, navigation and the data contained in records on the public database – see guidelines in Chapter 6.

1.7.2 WinIBW – ISNI production database

The production database contains all records with an ISNI, regardless of status – assigned, provisional or suspect.

All editing is carried out on the production database – merging, splitting, deprecating and manual amendments to the data.

Access to the production database is restricted to the ISNI Quality Team.

For guidelines on using the production database see –

Chapter 2 (Searching & navigation)

Chapter 3 (Data display)

Chapter 4 (Editing/Functionality)

Chapter 7 (Organisations)

There are 3 views of the ISNI production database:

1) http://isni.oclc.nl/DB=1.2 viewable via http://isni.org public database – only sees assigned and has limited view of fields in the records. Maintenance is via the yellow box only.

2) https://isni-m.oclc.nl/DB=1.3 – member view of the database – members view the entire database and see all data except that marked private. They have maintenance capability via the web form and can make corrections to their own data only.

3) https://isni-m-oclc.nl/DB=1.1 – Quality Team view of the database. Maintenance is via the web interface and WinIBW.

There are also 3 other versions of the database:

- **Development** (OCLC only – for individual developers)
- **Test** (OCLC only – for integrated testing of software)
- **Accept** (OCLC and members – for testing new loads and new program versions). The URLs for the accept environment are https://isni-m-acc.oclc.nl/DB=1.3 and https://isni-m-acc.oclc.nl/DB=1.1. ISNI accept is overwritten by a new file from ISNI production from time to time.

1.7.3 ISNI Accept – Test database

The ISNI Accept test database is a practice database and is used to test functionality.

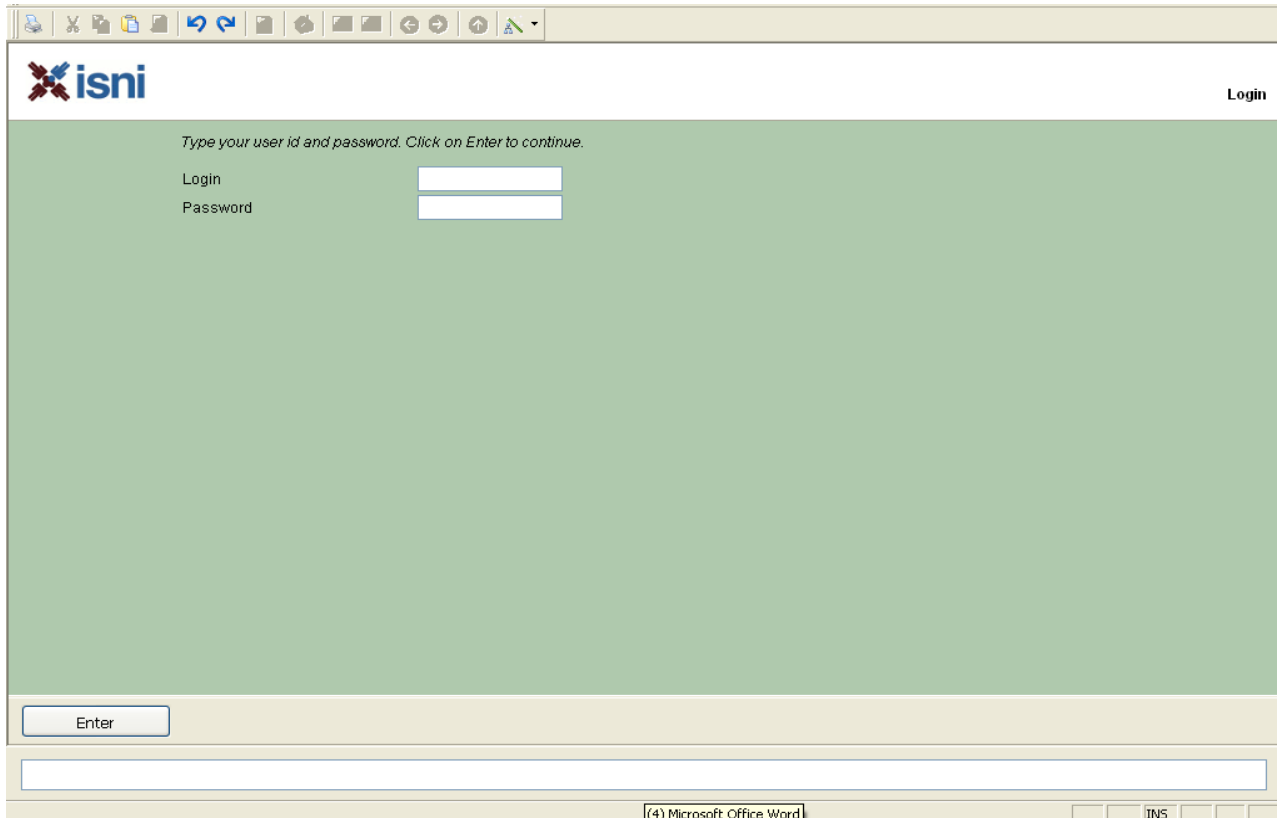To enter ISNI Accept double-click on the "WinIBW" icon on the desktop. The following screen will appear:

Enter the following command into the search bar at the bottom of the screen[5]:

pica3://isni-m-acc.oclc.nl:26035/

The following display will appear.

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[5] For guidance on using the search bar, see 2.2

Login name and password are the same as on the ISNI production database.

On entering login name and password, a "Welcome" or Menu screen is displayed.

ISNI Accept can be accessed from any point when logged into the production database. If using the production database enter the command pica3://isni-m-acc.oclc.nl:26035/ into the search bar and the login/password page for ISNI Accept will appear.

However, to return to the production database ISNI Accept will need to be closed down.

1.7.3.1 Searching/Navigation

Searching & navigation on ISNI Accept is the same as on the production database - see guidelines in Chapter 2.
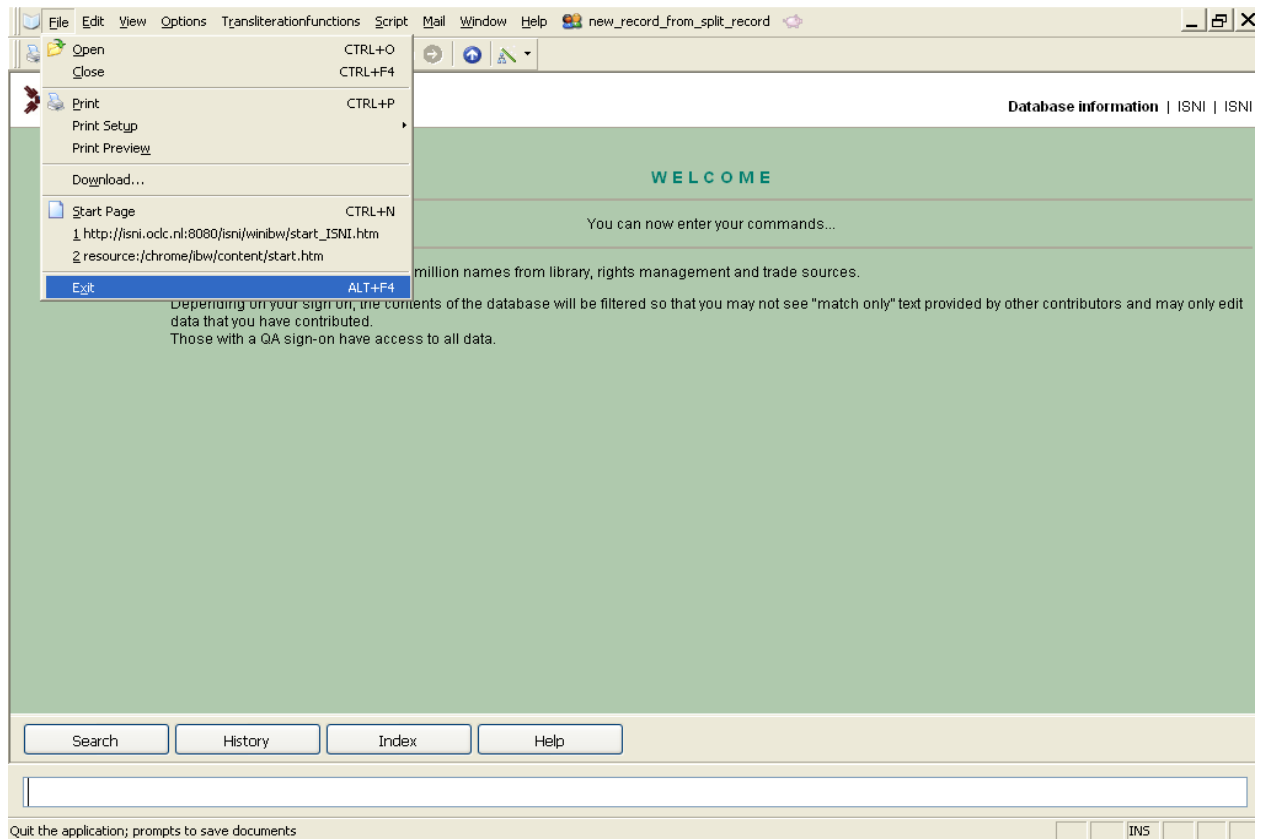
1.7.3.2 Display

The data display on ISNI Accept is the same as on the production database - see guidelines in Chapter 3.
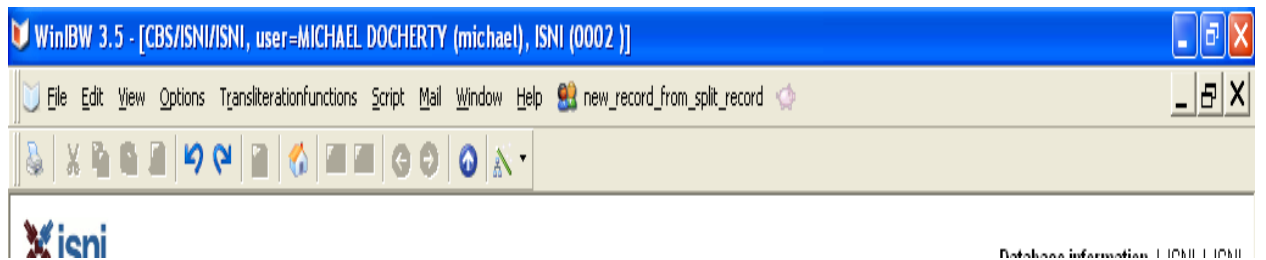
1.7.3.3 Editing

Editing records and using the functionality are the same as on the production database – see guidelines in Chapter 4.

1.7.3.4 Logging out of ISNI Accept

To Log out from ISNI Accept go to file at the top of the screen and select Exit.

Alternatively, click on the white cross at the top right hand side of the screen.

To return to the production database double-click on the "WinIBW" icon on the desktop.