Optimising the representation of an Organisation in ISNI

The organisation data in the ISNI database comes from a variety of sources, from databases that serve different purposes and source the data in different ways. Name forms and coding conventions can differ significantly between the sources with the result that parts of an organisation’s structure may be incomplete, outdated, or the relation of the various parts of the structure may not be apparent. This can make discovery and selection of records difficult for end users. For these reasons, it is recommended that ISNI member organisations perform an audit of their current ISNI organisational records and optimise their representation within ISNI.

This document intends to help an ISNI member organisation to improve its own representation. Organisations that are not members of ISNI are able to request improvements via the public view of the ISNI database or to engage the services of an ISNI Registration Agency such as Ringgold. Member organisations also have the option to make direct additions and enrichments.

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Documenting basic organisation structure

Start by listing on a spreadsheet the current main structural entities of your organisation and the dates of their creation. This is the basis for establishing ISNIs that can be used for multiple uses such as researcher affiliation, altmetrics and grant applications. Depending on the use case, the ISNI can be used for the top level of the organisation or at a finer level. Each ISNI will eventually be correctly linked and related to represent the organisation’s hierarchical structure. Each university faculty, for example, can be related from the top level ISNI for a university with the relationship type “has Unit” and each university department can be related from the faculty record also with a relationship type “has Unit”.

Example of a basic organisation structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/Department</th>
<th>Start date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Engineering</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil and Environmental Engineering</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science and Engineering</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering and Telecommunications</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering - Faculty Administration</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining Engineering</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum Engineering</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photovoltaic &amp; Renewable Energy Engineering</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveying and Geospatial Engineering</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Search for existing records on the ISNI database. Refer to the document “ISNI search guidelines” to maximise retrieval. Using the member database you will have access to both assigned and provisional data. For duplicates that need merging, note existing ISNIs. Where there is a provisional record that does not yet have an ISNI, note the PPN (Pica Production Number). If you find data errors such as incorrect name variants or incorrect name versions, also note either the ISNI or PPN.

You may need to repeat this process once you have completed your initial clean up to ensure you have found all possible variants.

Example of search results from ISNI database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/Department</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>ISNI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Engineering</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>0000 0004 0377 1345 + merge PPN 121502988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>0000 0004 0490 8665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil and Environmental Engineering</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>0000 0004 0459 8265 + merge PPN 122188527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science and Engineering</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>0000 0004 0469 1224 + merge PPN 110131142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Adding your source to an existing record

You will need to add yourself as a data source to all records that have been assigned an ISNI to ensure they remain in the system in the event that another data source pulls the record.

To add yourself as a data source (adding your source):

- Go to the record and click **Edit Record**.
- Add **Identifier** by clicking on the symbol [+](image) to the left of ‘Add Identifier’
- A new **Identifier** entry will appear with your organisation auto populated in the ‘identifier type’ field. Unless you have an established institutional identifier scheme that you wish to use, copy the PPN and paste it into the Identifier field.
Note that you must Add Name at the same time as you Add Identifier before you save changes. It is important to consistently enter the top level organisation name in the Organisation field. Users searching for sub-units using a truncation mark at the end of the search string (i.e. * or ? symbols) can then retrieve all names commencing with your search string, i.e. all units and subdivisions (as long as they include the parent as the first part of the name).

Provisional Record
Provisional records are not publically visible and can only be seen by an ISNI member when logged in to the member database. Records are provisional when they only have one data source and this data source is not your organisation.

To assign an ISNI and make the record public add yourself as a data source following the procedure above. Once you have saved changes you will see the ISNI Status change from “provisional” to “assigned.”

Merging records
Merge records marked as possible matches

- To merge records that are already marked as ‘Possible match’, click the ‘compare’ link next to the Possible match message.
• Then click on ‘Equal’ on the following screen.

Request merge for records not identified as possible matches

• Press ‘edit record’ in the first record

• Select the External Information and Notes tab.

• Add a General note by clicking on the symbol + to the left of General note. dd a note requesting to merge with other records and include the ISNIs of the records to be merged.

Example:
University of Wales, Aberystwyth Department of Sport and Exercise Science has two records that need to be merged.

And

• Click on ‘edit record’ in the first example and then select the ‘External Information and Notes’ tab, add a note as per the example below and then click ‘Save changes’.
This will trigger an email to the ISNI Quality Team. Check back in 48 hours to confirm changes have gone through.

Creating a record

- Click on the WebCat link at the top of the page.
- Click on Add an identity: organisation link. This will bring up a form to add the details of the organization that needs to be added.
- Use a placeholder identifier e.g. 0000 initially. Once the record is saved and a PPN has been assigned, edit the record and change the placeholder identifier to the PPN. In order for the ISNI for the unit to be assigned, it will be necessary to include the following metadata:
  - Organisation type (university or college)
  - LOCODE
  - Organisation URL
Creating Relationships between Organizations

When adding and enhancing records, add the relationships between the records to represent the organisational hierarchy using hasUnit and isUnitOf relationships. It is important to decide how your records should be structured before commencing this process and how this will vary by organisation. See the Appendix for a case study. To create a relationship link:

- Take note of the PPN of the organization you wish to create a relationship link to.
- Search for the linking organization and click “Edit Record”. Select the “Associations” tab.
- Add Relation to organization by clicking on the symbol
- The easiest way to add a relationship is to enter both the name and the PPN. If you do not know the PPN you can use the Link Relation function to search on the name. Currently this results in the system dropping the organisation from the entry when you save.
- Add details of the related organization and click on Link Relation.

This process only creates a one way link between the records. To have the second organisation also link back to the first, you will need to repeat this process.

Older Entities: Former names and superseded organisations

Organisations change over time but historical structural entities may remain important as the publications with which they are associated continue to be cited and used. Data coming from library sources are derived from bibliographic publications and thus include the names of historic entities. These historic entities can be related to and linked to the entities that replaced them, making it possible to retrieve, for example, all publications or all affiliated researchers associated with a university department, regardless of name and infrastructure changes over time.

These older entities may be discovered while you are mapping your basic organisational structure. During the search, note the other records found. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISNI</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre for advanced software engineering research</td>
<td>1 provisional 088327612</td>
<td>1965-2003 Superseded by 0000 0004 0469 1224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineering Undergraduate Society</td>
<td>1 provisional 091706343</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil engineering society</td>
<td>1 provisional 101196148</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Civil Engineering materials</td>
<td>1 provisional 09812384X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Electric Power Engineering</td>
<td>2 provisionals 093281544; 093738009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of civil engineering</td>
<td>1 provisional 121094863 - has incorrect poss)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of electrical engineering and Computer science</td>
<td>1 provisional 122196244</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Geomatic engineering</td>
<td>1 provisional 122857364 (incorrect poss,)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Highway engineering</td>
<td>1 provisional 100932827</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of mechanical and industrial engineering</td>
<td>1 provisional 12189925X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Nuclear engineering</td>
<td>1 provisional 097125288</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Research Laboratory</td>
<td>0000 0001 2166 068X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to affiliate and unit relationships, previous organisational names for older entities can be designated as either former names or superseded names.

### Former Names
For simple name changes use the former name/latter name relationship. E.g. COFA was renamed UNSW Art & Design in 2014:

![Diagram of Former Names](image)

### Superseded Organisations
Where several internal organisational units have amalgamated together to create a new organisational unit, use the superseded by/supersedes relationship. E.g. multiple Faculties were merged into a single Faculty of Science in 2001:

![Diagram of Superseded Organisations](image)

*Note: the original Faculty of Science was amalgamated into the two Faculty structure in 1997, however, for simplicity this organization is not given a “superseded by” relationship but is assumed to be continuous with the main Faculty of Science record established by the final amalgamation into a single Faculty in 2001.*
Appendix: Case Study – UNSW Australia

In 2015, UNSW Australia became a member of ISNI in order to be able to optimise the representation of the organisation in ISNI.

UNSW library personnel started their clean-up by generating a list of the current organisational structure and using this as a basis to search ISNI for possible matches. They located and documented records which matched the existing structure represented former names for existing parts of the structure or represented superseded parts of the structure. Through this process they also identified any gaps in how their existing structure was represented in ISNI.

Using the data they had collected, UNSW developed a structure for the records to represent UNSW within ISNI and a strategy for how they were update the records to reflect this structure.

UNSW has 9 faculties, and nearly 200 schools, centres and institutes. UNSW Australia decided to represent their organisation within ISNI using the following record structure:

Each record for both the faculties and the schools within UNSW Australia has an “is unit of” relationship to the UNSW Australia record. In addition, the UNSW Australia record includes “has unit” relationships to each faculty record but not to each school. Each faculty record includes “has unit” relationships to each school.

This was selected as the record structure for a number of reasons. By building the “is unit of” relationship into both the schools and faculties, UNSW Australia is ensuring that if someone locates one of these records, they will be linked back to the top-level UNSW Australia record. However as there are so many schools, centres and institutes, it was decided that the UNSW Australia record would become too convoluted if they included “has unit” links to all of those records.
For former names and superseded units, it was decided to only clean up existing ISNI records and not create new records for missing historical organisational units. New records were only created for missing units from the current organisational structure.

In order to align the records in ISNI with this new structure in the most efficient way, UNSW Australia worked through their records in the following order:

1. Clean-up and consolidate any records relating to UNSW Australia as a whole by:
   a. Merging any duplicate records.
   b. Adding details to document name variants and former names.
   c. Noting the PPN from the final top level UNSW Australia record to expedite linking to the faculty and school level records.

2. Faculty level records were then targeted for cleaning and consolidating including:
   a. Merging any duplicate records.
   b. Adding details to document name variants and former names.
   c. Building relationships for records representing superseded parts of the organisation.
   d. Adding any missing units from current organisational structure.
   e. Noting the PPN from each final faculty record to expedite linking to the UNSW Australia record and the school level records.
   f. Establishing “is unit” and “has unit” relationships to the UNSW Australia record.

3. Schools, Centres and Affiliated Organisations were targeted last for cleaning and consolidating including:
   a. Merging any duplicate records.
   b. Adding details to document name variants and former names.
   c. Building relationships for records representing superseded parts of the organisation.
   d. Adding any missing units from current organisational structure.
   e. Noting the PPN from each final school-level record to expedite linking to the UNSW Australia record and the faculty-level records.
   f. Establishing “is unit” and “has unit” relationships to the appropriate faculty-level record.