

Persistent Identifiers

Rolf Krahl 回

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Persistent Identifiers (PIDs): Definition

- A persistent identifier (PID) is a long-lasting reference to a document, file, web page, or other object. (Wikipedia)
- A PID should:
 - identify some well defined thing,
 - be globally unique,
 - be resolvable, and
 - be persistent.
- There are PIDs for many things: publications, data, people, research organizations, samples, software, and instruments and lot more.
- In short: whenever you want to reference something in an unambiguous, reliable and lasting manner, you want to use a PID.

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Important side remark

The "persistence" is not a technical property, but a social contract!

Rolf Krahl (HZB)

- A PID is usually registered along with some metadata (the PID record).
- The PID record should provide at least enough information about the thing it refers to, so one can understand what it is.
- The PID record should be machine readable.
- Very useful information to put in the PID record: references (e.g. PIDs) to other related resources, see next slide for examples.

Use cases for PIDs:

- Resolve to the object, e.g. for a journal article from the entry in a reference to the article's landing page.
- Identify and disambiguate things.
- Make robust, machine understandable statements about the identity of things and their related things:
 - "These are the authors of the journal article."
 - "This journal article is based on that dataset."
 - "The dataset has been obtained from measuring that sample."
 - "The measurement has been performed at that instrument."
 - "The measurement was using that PaN experimental technique."
 - "*This* electronic lab notebook documents what was done for the sample preparation."

These relations form the so called PID graph.

- Probably the most common and best established PID type.
- Commonly a DOI.



- FAIR Data Principles require that "(meta)data are assigned a globally unique and persistent identifier".
- Needed for being able to unambiguously reference the dataset.
- The raw dataset is the starting point to create most research outputs. Obviously we want to be able to trace it back from those outputs.



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Relevant PID Types: Data Publications

- We want recognition of data as scientific output on its own right.
- Therefore it must be properly published with good bibliographic metadata and a PID to be citable.
- Journals start to require that the underlying data to be published independently from the journal article.





Image: A matrix

- Being able to reference the instrument that collected the data from the dataset's PID record.
- Document the provenance of the data.
- Track the scientific output of the instrument.
- Various PID types: DOI, Handle.



Image: A matrix and a matrix

- Need to track the sample history from the creation to the measurement.
- Being able to reference the sample that has been measured from the dataset's PID record.
- Document the provenance of the data.
- Give credit to researchers being involved in the sample preparation.

GSN

• Dedicated PID type: IGSN.

- Again, software should be considered a scientific output on its own right.
- Being able to reference the software being used to create the data.
- Document the provenance of the data.
- Not yet well established, various PID types, often DOIs.

Relevant PID Types: People & Organizations

- Who did create this research output?
- And what organization he or she is affiliated with?
- Give credit where credit is due. And be accurate in addressing those people.
- Track the scientific output of the research organization.
- Dedicated PID types: ORCID iD for people, ROR for organizations.



Relevant PID Types: Research Activities

- A new emerging PID type at the horizon: RAiD, the Research Activity Identifier.
- Identify research projects and activities.
- Creates a single place for storing and retrieving project information.
- Could be useful as a "PID hub" to link everything (by the respective PID) related to the activity: people, organizations, inputs, outputs, resources being used ...



• Could be created for a proposal for beam time at the facility.

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Many more things to PIDify:

- funding,
- data managements plans,
- terms in a controlled vocabulary,
- licenses,
- standards,
- . . .

.∋...>

- PIDs are not only for journal articles and data: many different things may (and should) be attributed a PID.
- Also DOIs can be used for many different things.
- There are other PID types than DOIs: in some cases, there are good reasons, not to use a DOI.
- PIDs are most useful when they refer to each other, e.g. when the PID record includes the PIDs of other related entities.
- This forms a PID graph, where information can be automatically aggregated.