Background
In 2008, NISO established the Institutional Identifier (I²) Working Group to develop a robust, scalable, and interoperable standard to uniquely identify institutions and to describe relationships between entities within them. The charge is to develop a standard that includes a globally unique identifier string that is usable in the web environment, together with sufficient metadata to uniquely relate the institution to its identifier. The identifier that is developed must integrate smoothly with existing workflows and processes and enable future workflows within the information chain. The Working Group is also tasked with the implementation of the identifier, including identifying the host and technical needs, addressing legacy uses of institutional identifiers in the digital information space, and identifying complementary initiatives that could be informed by, or interoperable with, the NISO I² standard.

Request for Comments on Institutional Identifier Midterm Work to Date

Feedback Requested by August 2, 2010

The purpose of the Midterm Request for Comments is to provide the NISO I² Working Group with valuable guidance to complete development of the I² standard and to undertake midterm course correction, as needed.

The Midterm Release Report describes the purpose and background of the I² identifier as well as seeks comments and responses to specific questions in four areas:

1. The environment and structure of the Institutional Identifier
2. Expected features of the Institutional Identifier and its central registry (in the Midterm release, existing identifier standards are described and compared)
3. Institutional Identifier metadata
4. Scenarios illustrating the use of the Institutional Identifier

The development of useful information standards depends on input from all sectors of the information community. The I² standard has the potential to improve the reliability and efficiency of many business-related transactions including materials acquisition, e-resource management, and interlibrary loan.