

Getty Vocabulary Program Web Services APIs: Overview

Getty Information Technology Services (ITS), working closely with the Getty Vocabulary Program, recently developed a set of Web Services APIs for the Getty vocabularies. There is a separate set of APIs for each vocabulary—AAT, TGN, and ULAN. Beta testing was conducted in 2009.

The Getty Vocabularies Web Services are a suite of programming interfaces available to licensees of the Getty Vocabularies for the retrieval and update of vocabulary information in real-time. The vocabularies web services are meant to complement the products which are presently used to distribute vocabulary information: The Vocabularies on the Web, which are updated on a monthly basis, and the full data download site, which is updated yearly.

In order to access the Getty Vocabularies Web Services, a user must be a current licensee of the Getty Vocabularies data with an active username and password to the Getty Vocabularies Download Center. Please write to vocab@getty.edu to enter into a licensing agreement. The same login credentials issued to access the Getty Vocabularies Download Center may then be used for accessing the Vocabularies Web Services. For further information on Web Services, see the User Instructions.

The APIs are encoded in Unicode (UTF-8). However, the proprietary codes currently in use by the Getty Vocabulary Program for encoding diacritics will continue to be used for the annual AAT, TGN, and ULAN data exports in July 2009. It may become necessary to develop additional APIs in the future, but in this initial phase, each set of Web Services for the Getty Vocabularies will include the following APIs:

1. GetSubjectTerms - takes a subject ID and returns all the terms, along with the language, contributor, and source information associated with them.
2. GetTermMatch - will give the consumer the option of doing an exact "contains" or text search on vocabulary term and note fields.
3. GetSubject- returns all publishable data elements associated with a VCS subject record.
4. GetParents - returns the preferred and/or alternate parent hierarchies for a given subject record.
5. GetChildren - returns all immediate children of a given subject record.
6. GetRevisionHistory - returns information on edits made to vocabulary data based on date range and input parameters that indicates which piece of revision history information is desired.
7. SyncSubjectId - returns the current subject ID for a given subject ID. This accounts for any records that may have been merged.
8. GetMergedSubjectIDs - returns a list of records with their old and new IDs that have been merged over a given date range.

To license the data, write to vocab@getty.edu. For information on becoming a contributor to the Getty vocabularies, go to http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/contribute.html.