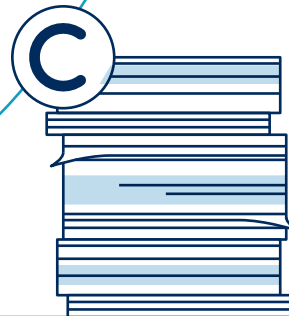
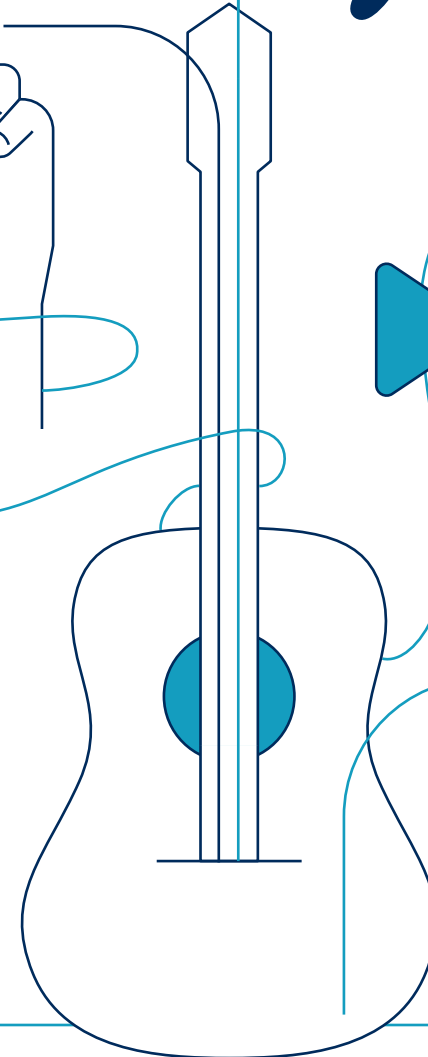
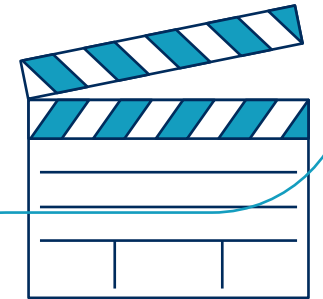
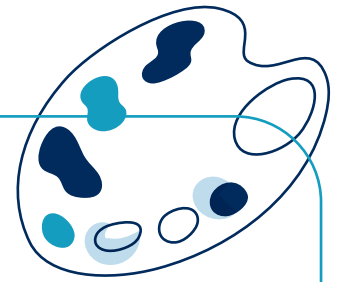
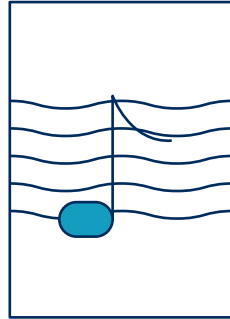
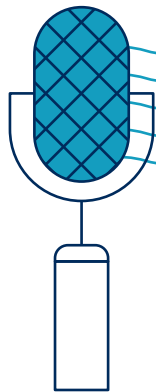


WHEN THE NAME IS NOT ENOUGH:

A report on the benefits of the ISNI identifier for copyright management

KATERINA SORNOVÁ _____



**When the name is not enough:
A report on the benefits of the ISNI identifier for copyright management
organisations**

Katerina Sornová

National Library of Finland 2024

The Ministry of Education and Culture has granted a subsidy to copyright management organisations for redesigning cultural and creative services, developing production and operating models, and promoting digitalisation. Further information on this structural support for the cultural and creative sectors can be found on the Ministry's website¹.

The support is part of Finland's Recovery and Resilience Plan, funded by the NextGenerationEU programmes, the EU's one-off emergency instrument.

The report was drawn up as part of The Adoption of ISNIs in Copyright Management Organisations project (2022–2023), which received funding from the EU.



Kansalliskirjaston raportteja ja selvityksiä 2/2024

ISBN 978-952-84-0115-5

ISSN 2242-8119

Link: <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-84-0115-5>

Cover: Mari Huhtanen

Keywords: ISNI, standard identifier, agent identifier, contributor identifier, Finnish copyright management organisations, Finnish CMOs, creative sector contributors, copyright infrastructure, benefits, identification, metadata

¹ <https://okm.fi/-/kulttuuri-ja-luovien-alojen-uudistumisen-rakennetuki> (in Finnish and Swedish only).

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ABSTRACT

The report examines the benefits of the ISNI identifier to Finnish copyright management organisations (CMO) and how it promotes the development of services and practices based on data concerning works and contributors in the sector.

The adoption and extensive use of ISNIs provides CMOs with better opportunities for identifying domestic creative-sector contributors, particularly in the international context. At the same time, they set certain requirements for the quality of contributor-related metadata and for the harmonisation of metadata collected about contributors. The adoption of ISNI identifiers is expected to bring about new practices in the creative sector and to contribute to the utilisation and management of digital data in the sector. In addition, the use of ISNIs will facilitate collaboration with a broad range of parties.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and objectives of the report

The report was drawn up as part of The Adoption of ISNIs in Copyright Management Organisations project (2022–2023)², during which ISNI identifiers were widely adopted for creative-sector contributors represented by Finnish copyright management organisations. The report was coordinated by the National Library of Finland, which also coordinates the ISNI project and ISNI operations on the national level as the ISNI registration agency. The report is available in Finnish and English in the National Library's publication archive.

The copyright management organisations involved in the project represent contributors in music, literature and the visual arts, as well as some contributors in the audiovisual sector. Gramex is the copyright management organisation for recorded artists and producers, Kopiosto for creative industry professionals, performers and publishers, Kuvasto for visual artists, Sanasto for literature and Teosto for composers, lyricists, arrangers and music publishers. Even though the advocacy and copyright management organisation Audiovisual Producers Finland (APFI) and the copyright management organisation Avate for scriptwriters, actors and directors were not involved in the ISNI project, the report aims to take into consideration the perspective of creative contributors in the AV field as well.

Already now, CMOs use several international identifiers to identify contributors in the creative sector. Exceptions to this are those in the AV field who do not have any contributor identifiers. The report examines the benefits of the adoption of ISNIs for each CMO and the associated opportunities for using the identifiers. In addition, consideration is given to what the adoption of ISNIs will bring to the sector.

The report extensively discusses metadata, contributors and contributor data. Metadata are structured data composed of individual data elements, which define and describe other data³. *Agent* or *contributor* refers to persons or organisations. In this text, agent or contributor typically refers to contributors and rightsholders in the creative sector who are clients of copyright management organisations. *Contributor metadata* (or *contributor data*) denotes metadata used to describe contributors or data describing them stored in the databases of CMOs.

1.2 Report structure

The report was written from the perspective of copyright management organisations, with national ISNI operations serving as the framework. The aim is to take international connections into consideration, but the main focus of the report is on Finland. While this report examines the benefits of the adoption of ISNI identifiers particularly from the perspective of CMOs, the findings related to benefits are even more broadly applicable.

The following section describes the ISNI identifier and organisation in general terms and briefly outlines ISNI operations in Finland. At the same time, the nature of the data stored by CMOs is examined in the light of the data submitted to the ISNI database. The third section is the core of the report. The benefits of the ISNI identifier are explored from various perspectives, and the assumed benefits have been divided into three categories: 1) benefits related to the ISNI identifier itself, 2) benefits gained through common use, and 3) benefits gained through the ISNI ecosystem.

Legal questions pertaining to the disclosure of contributor metadata, or the processing of personal data, are not discussed in this report. They are the focus of a report entitled 'Impact of the General Data Protection Regulation and the national personal data protection legislation on the copyright

² Hereafter 'ISNI project' or 'project'.

³ There are several definitions for metadata. For example, according to the ISO/IEC 11179 standard, metadata are specific data that define and describe other data.

infrastructure: Data protection & copyright infrastructure⁴ commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The legal report examines potential restrictions on disclosing personal data to the ISNI database and other portals associated with copyright management. It also comments on the roles of CMOs in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the EU and the grounds for processing personal data relevant to the topic.

Moreover, this report does not discuss suggestions related to metadata quality submitted by CMOs during the project, nor does it examine the development needs of related systems.

⁴ Link to the report 'Impact of the General Data Protection Regulation and the national personal data protection legislation on the copyright infrastructure: Data protection & copyright infrastructure': <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/164385>.

2. WHAT IS AN ISNI IDENTIFIER?

2.1 About the ISNI identifier and organisation

ISNI (*International Standard Name Identifier*) is an identifier defined in an international ISO standard,⁵ identifying the public identities of persons and organisations globally, uniquely and persistently. A public identity is the name form a person or organisation uses in public. If a person publishes works under both their own name and a pseudonym, both are public identities and have separate ISNIs. If a person publishes works under a pseudonym only, then only the pseudonym is a public identity, and an ISNI identifier is applied for that name only.

An ISNI identifier consists of 16 characters, of which 15 are numbers and one is a check character, which can be a number or a letter. The identifier has no semantic meaning. For example, the ISNI for author Tove Jansson is 0000 0001 2147 8925. While the identifier is displayed in four-digit human-readable format, it can also be stored in machine-readable format without blank spaces (0000000121478925). The same identifier can also be presented as a functional URI⁶: <https://isni.org/isni/0000000121478925>.

ISNI identifiers are governed and assigned by the ISNI International Agency⁷ (hereafter also ISNI Agency or ISNI-IA). Among the duties of ISNI-IA is to promote the global use of ISNI identifiers and to ensure that ISNIs are assigned as freely and efficiently as possible. The ISO standard sets out several binding guidelines to the ISNI International Agency pertaining to, among other things, the governance, structure and assignment principles of the identifier. The guidelines also emphasise the importance of quality criteria for metadata. The requirements and recommendations defined in

the standard are aimed at ensuring that ISNI identifiers remain unique and persistent throughout their lifespan.

ISNI identifiers are generated in the ISNI database⁸, which is maintained by the ISNI Assignment Agency (ISNI-AA) from the Netherlands. In principle, any party that has registered as an ISNI Member and collects metadata on contributors for their own needs and from the perspective of their operations can become an ISNI data contributor, including libraries, publishers, CMOs, streaming services or producers (see the data contributors included in the ISNI Community⁹).

The ISNI database contains metadata submitted to it by various data sources. ISNI identifiers are assigned to contributors whose metadata fulfils the quality criteria set by ISNI-IA. The international ISNI database contains an enormous amount of metadata, submitted to it from around the world and aggregated by automated means with complex algorithms. The aim is to continuously locate and clean up any identifiers that have been assigned on incorrect grounds. The ISNI Quality Team¹⁰ is responsible for maintaining and correcting the content of the ISNI database.

The goal of the international ISNI database is to aggregate sufficiently unique and high-quality metadata on the basis of data submitted to the database, which can be used to uniquely distinguish between individual contributors and their public identities. However, its goal is not to collect comprehensive personal data or create complete bibliographies. Key data collected include names, different spellings and forms of names, and

5 SFS ISO 27729: Information and documentation. International standard name identifier (ISNI).

6 URI (*Uniform Resource Identifier*) is a URL address that functions as both a web address and an identifier.

7 ISNI International Agency: <https://isni.org/>.

8 International ISNI database: <https://isni.org/page/search-database/>.

9 Data contributors included in the ISNI network: <https://isni.org/page/isni-community/>.

10 Through its operations, the ISNI Quality team (ISNI-QT) strives to ensure that the quality and reliability of metadata in the ISNI database are preserved. The operations of the QT are coordinated by the national libraries of France and the United Kingdom. For further information on data quality procedures in ISNI operations, see the ISNI-IA website: <https://isni.org/page/data-quality-procedures/>.

samples of published output associated with identities. Other data that help in unique identification include dates of birth and death, full name, nationality, and organisations related to the individual.

2.2 ISNI operations in Finland

In Finland, the beginning of ISNI operations dates back to 2013, when the National Library of Finland joined the ISNI International Agency. In June 2020 the National Library became an ISNI registration agency. While the membership and registration rights are subject to a fee, holding the status of registration agency makes it possible for the National Library to carry out unrestricted searches in the international ISNI database through the ISNI interface and submit data to the database on behalf of other data contributors. The National Library's ISNI operations are aimed at the reliable identification of Finnish contributors to the scholarly and creative sectors with the help of ISNIs and the establishment of a national collaboration network for ISNI operations.

The metadata related to contributors included in the national bibliography¹¹ maintained by the National Library were entered in the ISNI database in 2018–2020. Data on new and updated contributors managed by the National Library are submitted to the ISNI database on a weekly basis. Metadata related to contributors, or agents, including ISNI identifiers, have been published as open data in the National Agent Data repository¹² under the Finto service. Currently, the National Library database holds nearly 185,000 ISNIs, of which a significant share is associated with Finnish contributors to the creative sector.

The goal of the National Library of Finland is to make ISNI identifiers available particularly to contributors in the creative sector at the early stages of the process for producing metadata for their works, so that they can be utilised as widely as possible. The ISNI projects carried out by CMOs

lay the groundwork for future operations and establish the preconditions for the wider adoption of ISNI identifiers in various sectors. The price of individual ISNI identifiers is nominal, but on the national level the role and recognition of the National Library as an ISNI registration agency must be bolstered in order to safeguard the maintenance and development of the infrastructure created in the projects.

2.3 Contributor data submitted to the ISNI database and held by CMOs

The higher the quality of metadata submitted to the international ISNI database, the better the preconditions for aggregating data from various data contributors. The amount of metadata should be sufficient and unique enough to determine, through automated comparison, whether the data refer to the same individual or organisation, or several individuals or organisations. If the data are not comprehensive, no ISNI identifier will be assigned.

The ISNI International Agency has set certain principles¹³ for the quality of metadata, and based on these the National Library of Finland has compiled recommendations for data to be submitted to the ISNI database (Table 1). In the table below, information submitted on individuals is divided into compulsory, recommended and supplementary metadata.

Based on ISNI submissions made by the National Library of Finland in recent years, it can be said that the submitted data should be accompanied at least by information on the actual name of the person (first name or names and last name, any previous names as well as different spellings and other forms associated with the name) and their year of birth. In addition to the above, information on at least one work is required. In the absence of any data on works, data on online sources of information (e.g., Wikipedia, Discogs, websites) is required. If the person has several pseudonyms or professional names, information on them and the works associated with

11 The National Library's mission is to preserve, maintain and ensure access to Finland's published heritage. In conjunction with the description of the national bibliography, related agents (persons and organisations) are described in addition to the data itself. The purpose of the metadata is to ensure that parties associated with the data can be identified uniquely, even after a hundred years.

12 Kanto – National Agent Data: <https://finto.fi/finaf/en/>.

13 Data Completeness & Assignment Rules: <https://isni.org/resources/pdfs/data-completeness-and-assignment-rules.pdf> (PDF).

each pseudonym is also required. From the perspective of keeping data up to date, system-specific record identifiers associated with each identity are also relevant. Not all details are required, but comprehensive details make it easier to combine data in the ISNI database.

While CMOs store data in management systems on their clients similar to the data described above, data about clients have been constructed slightly differently.

CMO operations focus primarily on collecting data about works and individuals for whom copyright royalties are sought, not so much the administration of the individuals' identities. From the perspective of CMOs, information relevant to their operations includes first and last names, dates of birth and death, contact details, and personal identity codes. Certain organisations also store data on works with their work identifiers, but, for example, organisations that manage collective rights have no reason to collect data on works. Banking and taxation details are also needed for copyright royalty payments.

In addition to personal identity codes and system-specific internal identifiers, contributors are identified by their international (field-specific) contributor identifiers (such as Interested Party Information, IPI or International Performer Number, IPN) that help in allocating copyright royalties in international contexts. An increasing number of international partners and the sister organisations of Finnish CMOs are using ISNI identifiers in addition to or instead of the above.

Table 1. Personal data submitted to the ISNI database

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Compulsory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last name and first name(s) • Record identifier of the data contributor |
| Recommended | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dates of birth and death • Other forms and spellings of the name associated with the public identity • At least one work related to the contributor • Professional names/pseudonyms, if any • Online sources of data • Organisations related to the person • Identifiers related to the person (e.g., IPI, IPN, ORCID, ISNI) • Instrument or vocal register associated with the person |
| Supplementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country or nationality associated with the person • Sector in which the person is or has been active |

3. BENEFITS OF THE ISNI IDENTIFIER TO CMOs

The potential benefits of ISNIs have not, as far as is known, been examined as broadly as here. The benefits presented here are based on the analysis carried out by the National Library of Finland, the aims and objectives listed by ISNI-IA¹⁴, and the benefits commonly recognised among the ISNI Community. The aim of the report is to examine the potential benefits of adopting the ISNI identifier from the perspective of both various copyright management organisations and the entire sector.

Here the benefits are roughly divided into three categories: 1) benefits related to the ISNI identifier itself, 2) benefits gained through common use, and 3) benefits gained through the ISNI ecosystem (Figure 1).

In this grouping, the ISNI identifier is at the core of operations. A network is established around the common use of an identifier, while the ecosystem provides a well-functioning framework for the use of the identifier. Common use and the environment are closely linked. Group boundaries are changeable, and the benefits presented are partially intertwined.



The ISNI identifier is

- *Unique and globally used*
- *Shared openly and securely*
- *Functional and persistent*

The common use of ISNIs promotes

- *Collaboration and data exchange across sector boundaries*
- *The interoperability and quality of metadata*
- *The allocation of copyright royalties*

The ISNI ecosystem makes it possible to

- *Optimise operations and digitalisation*
- *Expand the collaboration network*
- *Develop new services*

Figure 1. Illustration of the benefits presented in the report

¹⁴ ISNI Aims & Objectives, reviewed: 2020-04-22: <https://isni.org/resources/pdfs/isni-aims-and-objectives.pdf>.

While the benefits associated with the adoption of the ISNI identifier can already be partially identified on a theoretical level, time will tell how it will shape the CMO sector and what kind of collaboration or new services it will enable in practice in the future.

3.1 Benefits associated with the ISNI identifier itself

The biggest benefits of the ISNI identifier primarily originate from its structure and the operating principles laid down in the ISNI standard. The benefits can be summed up in a couple of sentences and keywords: ISNI is an identifier used *globally* to *uniquely* identify the public identities of persons and organisations. In addition, ISNI is persistent and can be used *openly* and *securely* (Figure 2).

ISNI is unique and globally used

The ISNI identifier can be used to uniquely identify any individuals and organisations contributing to creative activities, including authors, musicians, composers, visual artists, performers, producers, publishers and musical groups.

Even though the ISNI standard was only published in 2012, the ISNI identifier has already established its place in the field of identification. At the moment, ISNI is used in many fields around the world, and it is comparable to other widely used international identifiers, such as the ISBN identifier for books or the ISRC identifier for sound recordings.

The ISNI identifier, which is composed primarily of numbers, is understandable throughout the world. Contributors can be easily identified regardless of their earlier names or different spellings or transcriptions of their names, or special characters in their names. ISNI can also be used to distinguish between contributors of the same name reliably and easily, even without knowing their full name or birth year. Including an ISNI identifier in the metadata of works associated with creative contributors from the beginning of their distribution cycle makes the identification of authorship and copyright easier. This, in turn, makes activities such as the allocation of copyright royalties paid from abroad to the relevant contributors increasingly accurate.

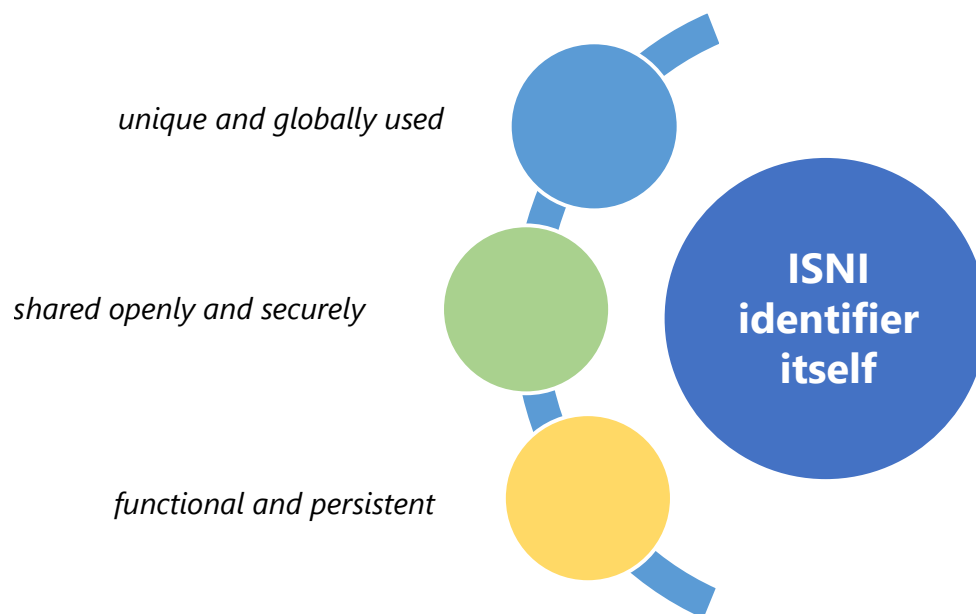


Figure 2. Benefits associated with the ISNI identifier itself

From among the clients of copyright management organisations, the use of an identifier recognised globally in various fields most benefits Finnish contributors active abroad and those in whose fields other identifiers (such as IPI or IPN numbers) are not used. However, the adoption of ISNIs also benefits the partners of CMOs, as the identifier facilitates the unique identification of individuals, thus enabling the secure exchange of personal data.

ISNI can be shared openly and securely

The widely recognised benefits of the ISNI identifier include the opportunities for its open use. For Finnish recipients of copyright royalties, the most reliable of the personal identifiers used by CMOs is undoubtedly the personal identity code. However, for reasons of information security, personal identity codes cannot be freely used in data exchange or combined with metadata related to works. In addition, other identifiers used by CMOs to identify contributors (such as IPI and IPN numbers) are not used openly.

ISNI constitutes personal data, just like other identifiers used in the sector, and relevant legislation must be taken into consideration in the processing of personal data¹⁵. From the perspective of CMOs, the most important legal ground for processing is the legitimate interest of the data subject. For example, when ISNI identifiers are included in the metadata of works or used in the exchange of metadata or marketing as identifiers associated with and identifying contributors, such action is always aimed at benefitting the client and the allocation of copyright royalties to the right persons increasingly efficiently.

As the ISNI identifier is global, open and widely used, its use in the systems of Finnish CMOs facilitates the identification of contributors to creative works and improves the reliability and interoperability of the data related to contributors. Adopting a common, global and well-functioning identifier lays the groundwork for closer cooperation and improved service provision to CMOs' customers.

ISNI is functional and persistent

A functional identifier is a unique and persistent reference to a digital source of information. While the ISNI identifier as such is not functional, it can also be presented in the form of a functional URI identifier. The features of persistent identifiers include their formation according to the same invariable pattern. This is also the case with ISNI: the prefix isni.org/isni/ is combined with a 16-character ISNI identifier. Together, they constitute a unique whole, prefixed by the protocol scheme [https](https://isni.org/isni/{ISNI}) ('<https://isni.org/isni/{ISNI}>').

The URIs associated with ISNI identifiers are persistent in both structure and functionality, as the functionality of URIs derived from ISNIs is preserved. For example, if a person has been erroneously assigned two ISNI identifiers,

¹⁵ For further discussion on the legal aspects, see the report entitled 'Impact of the General Data Protection Regulation and the national personal data protection legislation on the copyright infrastructure: Data protection & copyright infrastructure' commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture (<https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/164385>).

which are later merged into a single identifier, the URI associated with the revoked ISNI will be preserved and redirected to the current identifier.

In fact, ISNI-IA, which manages the ISNI database, is tasked with ensuring that ISNI identifiers and metadata associated with public identities are preserved in the database in as unique a form as possible, and that the principles and quality criteria for assigning identifiers are uniform. This task is not entirely straightforward; the more data contributors there are in the ISNI database, the more challenging this task becomes. In a rapidly growing database, the diverse data provided by data contributors may not always be appropriately linked, even if the metadata meet the requirements set by ISNI-IA. The algorithm for data aggregation is continuously being developed.

3.2 Benefits of common use

From the perspective of common use, the benefits of the ISNI identifier are its broad distribution and potential for use in a range of fields. Moreover, the use of ISNIs promotes the interoperability of metadata, improves the quality of metadata and enhances the allocation of copyright royalties (Figure 3). The use of a common identifier in and outside copyright

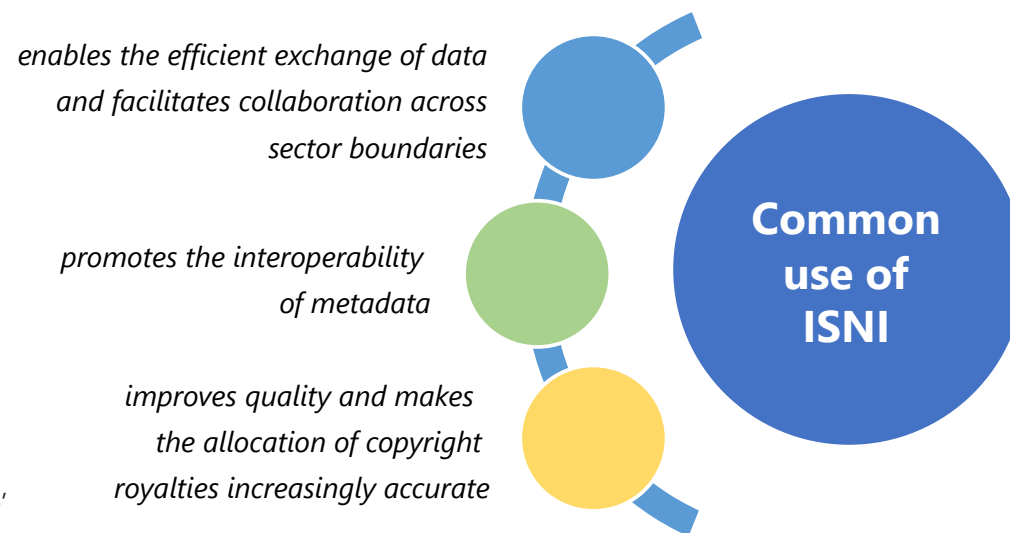


Figure 3. Benefits of the common use of ISNI

management organisations promotes the reliable and secure identification of data associated with Finnish contributors in the creative sector

ISNI enables the efficient exchange of data across sector boundaries

From the perspective of common use, the possibility of using ISNI identifiers across sector boundaries can be considered one of their biggest benefits. The ISNI identifier is often aptly referred to as a bridge identifier, as it bridges organisations that use different identifiers. ISNIs are in use in more and more sectors, spreading from libraries and the publishing and book distribution sector to other sectors, particularly the music industry and the copyright management sector.

The increased use of ISNIs is also evidenced in statistics. In 2012, there were a little over 9,000 registered ISNIs, while 10 years later the number was already roughly 14 million. In terms of adoption, 2021 has been the most significant year so far, with 6.7 million ISNI identifiers assigned. Growing interest in ISNI is also evidenced in the expansion of the international ISNI network. In 2023, the ISNI network encompassed a total of just over 70 member organisations and registration agencies, 10 more than in 2022 (ISNI-IA statistics from 2022 and 2023).

In the statistics for 2023, the sectors of ISNI membership organisations and registration agencies are divided as follows: libraries and archives accounted for the largest share (36%) and music industry operators the second largest (24%), followed by universities and other educational institutions (17%), publishers (10%), and CMOs and similar (6%). Book distribution organisations and parties managing identifiers make up roughly a 4% share (ISNI-IA statistics from 2023, Figure 4). Compared to the distribution in 2022, the number of operators in the music industry has grown the most.

It should be borne in mind that the statistics do not directly reflect all of the sectors in which ISNIs are used. For example, registration agencies active in

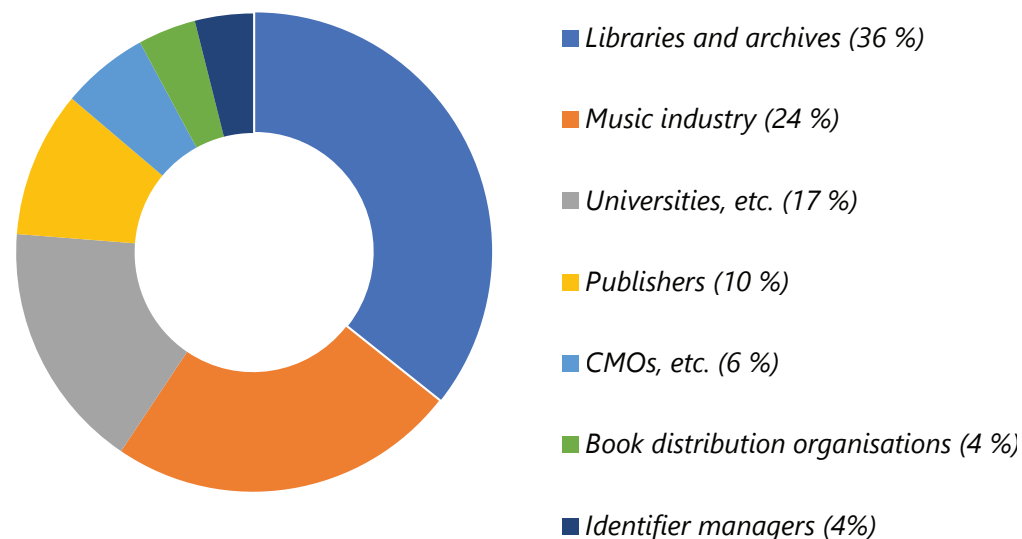


Figure 4. ISNI registration agencies and members by sector (2023), based on ISNI-IA statistics

the library sector may distribute identifiers to organisations active in other sectors, but such activities are only recorded as taking place in the library sector.

In Finland, the wider adoption of ISNIs in various sectors was initiated in 2022. Finnish CMOs have broadly adopted the identifier following the related project. The use of the ISNI identifier is also being piloted in an ongoing collaborative project¹⁶ coordinated by the CMO Kuvasto. And if the international trends are to be believed, ISNIs will soon be taken up also in the publishing and book distribution sector.

¹⁶ Further information on the project entitled 'Artists Unite! Collaborative and interoperable metadata using ISNIs': <https://www.kansalliskirjasto.fi/en/projects/artists-unite-collaborative-and-interoperable-metadata-using-isnis>.

ISNI promotes the interoperability of metadata

Interoperable metadata usually means that the data are stored in an interoperable format in a jointly agreed manner. This way, the same information can be found under a single element, regardless of who has stored metadata or the platform used for their storage. The more uniform metadata, the better their interoperability.

Before the contributor data of Finnish CMOs can be submitted to the international ISNI database, it must be ensured that the metadata fulfils the quality criteria set by ISNI-IA and that they have been structured in accordance with the instructions provided to ISNI data contributors. In other words, the metadata of CMOs are made as interoperable as possible with the metadata of other ISNI data contributors to facilitate metadata on the same identities to be integrated into the ISNI database and aggregated.

The data on creative sector contributors stored in the management systems of Finnish CMOs are largely identical. Even though each organisation structures the data in accordance with their sector, needs and recording practices, the metadata are relatively consistent with each other. Information relevant to all CMOs include the names and forms of names, contact details, and years of birth and death of the recipients of copyright royalties, as well as their personal identity codes and other identifiers used in the sector. In addition, banking and taxation details are needed for copyright royalty payments. Certain organisations store work-related data associated with individuals, on the basis of which copyright royalties are paid. Some CMOs manage collective rights, making it unnecessary to collect data on individual works.

In CMOs, the identification of individuals is primarily based on the personal identity code. In addition, sector-specific identifiers are used in identifying individuals: Gramex uses IPN numbers, while Kopiosto, Kuvasto, Sanasto and Teosto use IPI numbers. Exceptions to this are contributors in the AV field who do not have any contributor identifiers. The addition of ISNI identifiers to the management systems of CMOs

improves the interoperability of metadata and enables the shared use of metadata without personal identity codes. The identifier makes it possible to automatically distinguish identical or similar names from each other without having to process birth years or other sensitive personal data in public services. The increasingly interoperable and high-quality metadata of CMOs serve as a good basis for the further development of new ISNI processes, metadata streams and services.

ISNI improves metadata quality and makes the allocation of copyright royalties increasingly accurate

One way to improve the quality of metadata is to use identifiers that comply with international standards. In other words, adding ISNI identifiers to CMO management systems improves the quality of contributor data.

Copyright royalties are paid for the use of specific works (with the exception of collective compensation) and allocated on the basis of information stored in the associated metadata. In other words, information on the parties involved in the creation, editing and production of a work, as well as other relevant activities, is important in terms of the copyright and intellectual property rights associated with the work, alongside the year of creation, publication circumstances and date.¹⁷

High-quality metadata are used to ensure that information on works and related contributors are findable, understandable and correct. If, in addition to basic details, international identifiers associated with works and related contributors are included in metadata already at the time of publication, the availability of such information will remain good and high quality throughout the lifespan of such works. The identifiers included in the metadata ensure the persistence of data, which in turn makes it easier to allocate copyright royalties.

High-quality metadata that include identifiers are also useful in the online environment. Current search engines and artificial intelligence solutions

¹⁷ Metadata ja tekijänoikeuslaki (article about Metadata and the Copyright Act, in Finnish only): <https://www.epressi.com/media/userfiles/153785/1667474680/metadata-ja-tekijanoikeuslaki.pdf>.

utilise machine-readable metadata in information retrieval, increasing the visibility of interoperable and high-quality metadata. In other words, the findability of information pertaining to contributors and their works is improved when the ISNI identifier is included in the metadata, as the identifier links works associated with the same contributor and, correspondingly, distinguishes between contributors of the same name.

3.3 Benefits originating in the ISNI ecosystem

In this section, the benefits of ISNI are examined from the perspective of the ecosystem. The ISNI ecosystem here refers to the infrastructure and structures that serve as the basis for the assignment and use of ISNI identifiers as well as enable their adoption and utilisation. In an international context, the infrastructure can encompass several national ecosystems.

The ISNI ecosystem can be seen as 1) promoting digitalisation and boosting operations, 2) furthering the expansion of the collaboration network, and 3) enabling the development of services based on ISNIs (Figure 5).

The benefits brought about by the ISNI ecosystem are interlinked with the benefits of the common use of ISNIs. For example, while the common use of ISNIs promotes the exchange of data across sector boundaries, the ecosystem makes the exchange of data efficient and reliable. Correspondingly, while the use of a common identifier facilitates collaboration, the ecosystem furthers the expansion of the collaboration network and enables the development of new services.

ISNI promotes digitalisation and optimises operations

The adoption of the ISNI identifier by copyright management organisations will bring new practices to the sector and contribute to developing the use and management of digital data in the sector. The use of the globally used identifier opens up new opportunities with regard to transmitting metadata related to works and creative contributors.

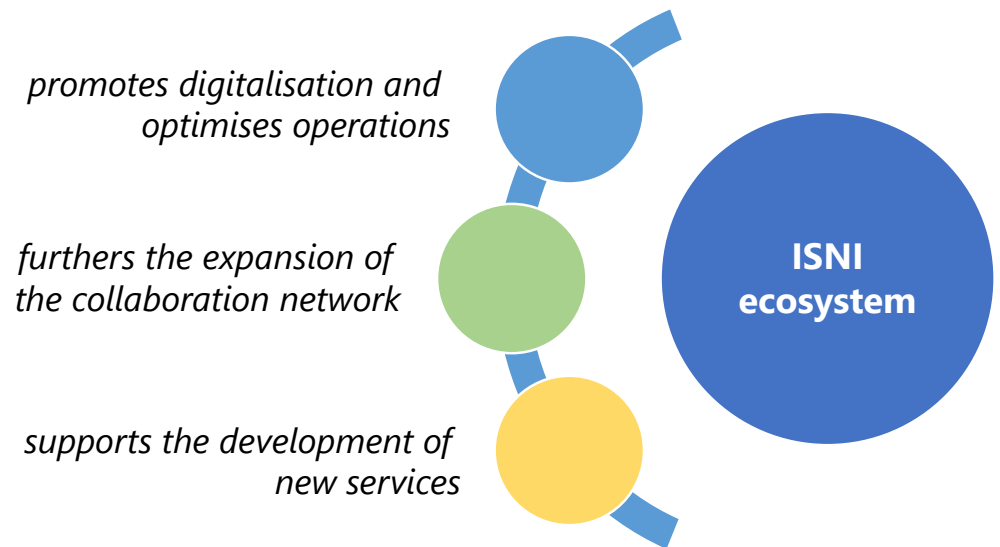


Figure 5. Benefits originating in the ISNI ecosystem

Persistent, unique and functional identifiers are vital for the digitalisation and optimisation of operations. The ISNI identifier improves the machine-readability of contributor data and enables efficient data exchange. The ability to uniquely refer to, for example, contributors with the same name is a prerequisite for automated data processing. With the help of ISNI, metadata on contributors can be exchanged smoothly and efficiently between different operating environments through citations.

In the long term, the automation of various stages of the process related to the exchange of data between CMOs will also reduce costs and make operations increasingly efficient. During the automation of operations, organisations review processes related to data exchange, striving to clarify and improve them. Automation enables the organisations to apply ready-made solutions to other operations as well.

The ISNI identifier helps to optimise the automated processing and aggregation of metadata. For example, new kinds of connections are established between the data stored in different systems by adopting ISNIs for visual artists in the collection management systems of the CMO Kuvasto

and art museums. By eliminating the need for manual data aggregation, ISNI facilitates the processing of metadata in Kuvasto's annual reports, enhancing their operations.

ISNI furthers the expansion of the collaboration network

The international infrastructure and ready-to-use technical framework of ISNI enable new forms of collaboration and support the expansion of the collaboration network. The structures of the ecosystem open up new opportunities for ISNI users in both their own systems and in data exchange between different systems, facilitating in particular bilateral data integration. In addition to technical solutions, the collaboration network furthers the development of operations and new practices.

During the ISNI project, the ISNI identifier will be comprehensively adopted by Finnish CMOs, which is a significant step forward in the wider deployment of the identifier in Finland. Finnish CMOs have several Finnish and international partners whose data and reports are used to allocate copyright royalties to rightsholders. In addition to CMOs' sister organisations, these partners include streaming services, media and production companies, libraries, art museums, archives and publishers (Figure 6).

By examining stakeholders and partnerships relevant to CMOs from the perspective of ISNI utilisation and data exchange, new areas where the adoption of ISNI could be promoted next can be highlighted. The Finnish public broadcaster Yle shares reports on the use of works to all CMOs, on the basis of which the organisations link the relevant information to the data of the contributors they represent. For example, Teosto utilises music usage reports submitted by Yle, matching them with contributors in the music sector. Data received from other music users, including online music services, commercial television and radio operators, VOD services¹⁸ as well as concert and festival organisers, are also used for the allocation of



Figure 6. Stakeholders important to Finnish CMOs from the perspective of ISNI use

royalties. In contrast, Kopiosto and Sanasto utilise, among other things, library data, which is used to pay lending compensation to book illustrators, authors and translators. Kuvasto's partnerships extend to, for example, the museum and art retail sectors, while Avate could benefit from collaboration with the National Audiovisual Institute KAVI. Sister organisations are important partners for all CMOs.

The use of the ISNI identifier is becoming increasingly common globally, especially in the music industry, which may also be reflected in Finland.

¹⁸ VOD denotes video-on-demand platforms, such as Netflix.

The most significant music streaming services (Spotify, YouTube¹⁹, Apple²⁰ and Amazon) adopted ISNI in the 2020s, a trend with which Finnish CMOs should also follow. The ability to utilise the metadata of streaming services by automated means could provide even more accurate information on the use of music performed and written by Finnish contributors. In addition, the adoption of the ISNI identifier by the music industry organisations Gramex and Teosto also enables collaboration with partners whose metadata neither contain the IPN numbers for performers used among SCAPR organisations²¹ nor the IPI numbers for contributors in the music industry maintained by CISAC.²²

The potential for utilising and spreading ISNIs will be explored in more detail in a long-term vision document²³ to be published separately at a later date. In the vision, needs will be extensively surveyed from CMOs to publishers and the cultural heritage sector, outlining targets for development, for example, in terms of deepening cooperation at the national level. Since CMOs pay copyright royalties also abroad as well as receive royalties from abroad, the opportunities for using ISNIs must also be analysed from an international perspective. The use of ISNI by Finnish CMOs can in the future make the allocation of international royalties increasingly accurate, as the identifier helps organisations identify creative contributors active abroad and allocate international royalties. From the perspective of CMOs, it would be interesting to determine to what extent and how Spotify, Netflix, YouTube or other international giants use ISNI identifiers.

ISNI supports the development of new services

In the ISNI ecosystem, attention has been paid to the availability, machine-readability and linkability of data, as well as the use of unique URLs and standards that improve usability.²⁴ On the basis of machine-readable metadata, CMOs can build services founded on novel technical solutions. Linked data²⁵ is a growing technology aimed at enabling the aggregation of data from various sources in a machine-readable format and their reuse in a new environment.

Functional and unique identifiers make it easier to aggregate contributor data from various sources. URI identifiers formed from ISNI identifiers are machine-readable identifiers for linked data, serving at the same time as web addresses (URLs) through which users can read contributor metadata in an international database in their browser. In the ISNI database, data are linked to the databases of data contributors or to datasets used as data sources. In other words, individual ISNIs are based on a semantic entity composed of various linked sources, which can be applied in new solutions utilising metadata.

With the help of ISNIs, CMOs can promote the development of services and practices specifically based on data pertaining to works and contributors. In the exchange of data related to contributors and works, ISNI²⁶ can be used separately from the metadata associated with the identifier without losing connection to context and content. In other words, meaning and context are preserved, and metadata related to contributors can be searched for through the identifier.

19 A press release on the adoption of ISNIs by YouTube (ISNI-IA): <https://isni.org/page/article-detail/youtube-knows-who-you-are--a-ccc-podcast-with-tim-devenport/>.

20 A press release on the adoption of ISNIs by Apple (ISNI-IA):

<https://isni.org/page/article-detail/isni-press-release-november-2022-apple-music-encourages-isni-submissions-partner-wide/>.

21 SCAPR: The Societies' Council for the Collective Management of Performers' Rights (<https://www.scapr.org/>).

22 CISAC: The International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (<https://www.cisac.org/>).

23 During the second stage of the ISNI project, a long-term vision will be drawn up for the use of ISNI identifiers at the national level. For further information on the other goals of the second stage, see the project website: <https://www.kansalliskirjasto.fi/en/projects/adoption-isnis-copyright-management-organizations>.

24 For further information, see the ISNI website: <https://isni.org/page/linked-data/>.

25 Linked data denotes structured data located in a variety of sources with links within and between the sources (Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences: https://tieteentermipankki.fi/wiki/Avoin_tiede:linkitetty_data, in Finnish). In English, see <https://www.w3.org/wiki/LinkedData>.

26 Even in the case of ISNIs stored in systems in machine-readable format as a series of numbers, creating links based on the established formula is easy.

CMOs strive to develop the digital services they offer to their clients and digitise their operations in a multitude of ways. Even though many identifiers are used in the sector, there is reason to believe the ISNI identifier will establish its place among CMOs.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of the report was to examine the potential benefits of the ISNI identifier to the Finnish copyright management organisations. The identified benefits, divided into three categories, are listed in the figure on the next page (Figure 7). While the perspective of the report was specific to CMOs, the findings on the benefits of the identifier can in many respects be applied more broadly.

The use of ISNIs will benefit not only CMOs and their clients, but also their partners. A key benefit of the extensive adoption of ISNIs by CMOs is the reliable and secure identification of contributors in the creative sector with an international identifier regardless of their field of art.

With the help of ISNIs, artists can be identified reliably and in a secure manner, which in turn increases the efficiency of royalty allocation. In international contexts in particular, the unique identification of contributors is a key element in an increasingly networked world, where the diversity of channels for the consumption of art is continually increasing.

The adoption of ISNIs in Finnish CMOs will, at its best, lay down the conditions for optimising their operations and redesigning data exchange processes, as well as promoting digitalisation. Furthermore, the use of ISNIs can be expected to result in the establishment of new practices throughout the sector and contribute to the development of the use, availability and management of digital data. In Finland, this could mean in practice, for example, the smoother processing of reports pertaining to copyright royalties.

The increasing use of the identifier in various sectors and around the world can be considered a favourable trend among ISNI users. The wider the use of ISNI, the more opportunities it will bring and the more the benefits of its use will increase. Widespread adoption of the ISNI identifier and the integration of related processes with those of Finnish CMOs will also promote the use of ISNIs in other fields. Increasing awareness of ISNI will increase the benefits and opportunities associated with the identifier. In fact, it is the duty of the national ISNI registration agency to communicate

on the ISNI identifier and promote its widespread adoption in the Finnish context.

Finnish CMOs are pioneers of a kind; while ISNI identifiers are already in use in many countries, a comprehensive national solution independent of individual fields for the entire copyright sector is a significant initiative, even internationally. In recent years, Finnish CMOs have invested in improving the quality of administrative metadata and the redesign of management systems. High-quality metadata are the key to improved copyright management. ISNI plays an important role in this, contributing to the achievement of these goals.

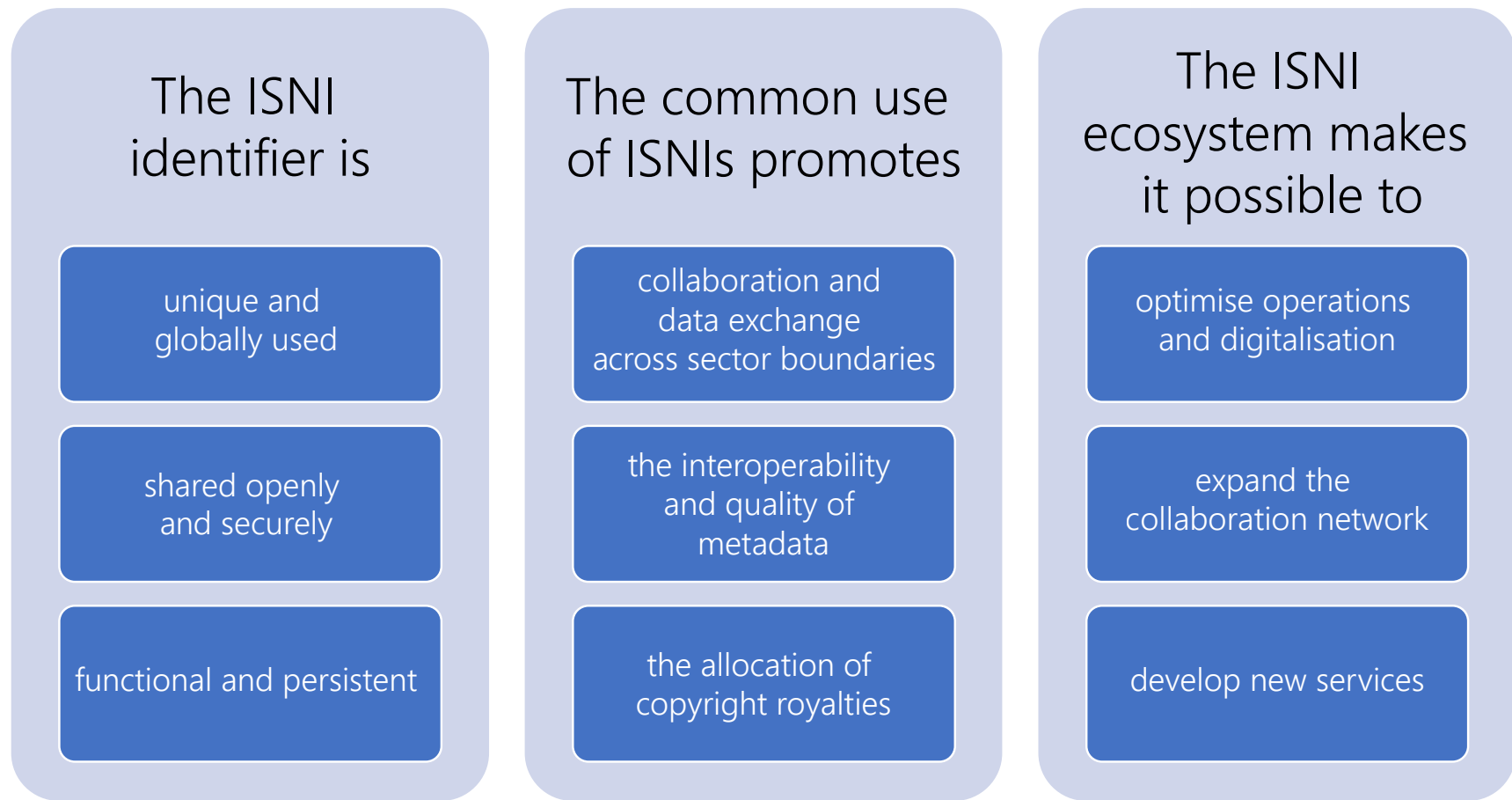


Figure 7: Benefits identified in the report



NATIONAL LIBRARY
OF FINLAND