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Getting running with ARK persistable identifiers

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Any DDI dataset, ancillary, or supporting file is a candidate for systematic, persistent identification with ARK identifiers. End users, especially researchers, rely on ARKs for long term access to the global scientific and cultural record. Since 2001 some 8.2 billion ARKs have been created by over 1100 organizations —libraries, data centers, archives, museums, publishers, government agencies, and vendors.

They are open, mainstream, non-paywalled, decentralized persistent identifiers that you can start creating in under 48 hours. They identify anything digital, physical, or abstract, and from any domain or discipline. This has been true since 2001; in contrast, the well-known service for dataset DOIs, DataCite, only incorporated in 2009. ARKs are similar to DOIs, URNs, and Handles. All of them:

- were introduced over 20 years ago,
- exist in large numbers (8.2 billion ARKs, 240 million DOIs, etc.),
- start with a string to identify the name assigning authority,
- require the active updating of URL redirects, and
- support research and scholarship, appearing in the Data Citation Index, Wikipedia, ORCiD.org profiles, etc.

In contrast, ARKs are cheaper, more flexible, and less centralized, letting you:

- create unlimited identifiers without paying for the right to do so,
- add any kind of metadata, including no metadata,
- append extensions and query strings during resolution,
- link directly to an article, image, or spreadsheet that is immediately usable by people and software without making them first stop at a landing page, and
- make millions of ARKs resolvable by managing just one ARK, via a mechanism called suffix passthrough.

As a low cost alternative to the DOI (for example), ARK adoption is rapidly accelerating in the global South and in any organization that cannot pay for large numbers. ARK organizations include 10 national libraries, 184 archives, 75 journals, and 145 universities.

We will cover:

- Why ARKs –non-paywalled, decentralized, flexible
- Use cases –Smithsonian, French National Library, Internet Archive
- Metadata for early and ongoing object development
- How to get started –fill out one form
- Minting and assigning ARK identifiers
- Resolvers, resolution, redirection Persistence considerations

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