

# What is JATS 2.0, and Should You be Worried?

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Version 1.0 (November 2019)





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## What is JATS 2.0

- Nothing yet, still a vision
- An exploration
- Nothing for years to come (promise!)
- Something the JATS Standing Committee is working on *now*

Short Answer: A “backwards-incompatible” version of JATS

## What Does *Backward Compatible* Mean?

Since JATS 1.0 (and even before), JATS has promised all versions (1.1, 1.1d1, 1.2, 1.3d1, etc.) will be backward compatible

- Any document valid to any JATS tag set (1.1) will be valid to all more recent tag sets (1.2) *if you change:*
  - the @dtd-version attribute on <article>
  - the DOCTYPE Declaration
- No changes to the content of the article or the tagging necessary

## **Backward Incompatible Means**

Your current JATS-tagged document might not be valid to the new tag set without retagging if:

- There is a new required element
- Something that used to be optional is now required
- There used to be two ways to tag something (A and B)
  - you used technique A
  - technique A is gone, you must tag using technique B

## **Why are We Considering JATS 2.0?**

### **(rationale)**

- The world has changed:  
Best in 1998 may not be best now
- JATS users have requested changes, and:
  - been turned down for reasons of backward compatibility
  - the change was made, but awkwardly because of backward compatibility
- We have bent over backwards to be backward compatible for years!
- We have been accruing “Technical Debt” for years

## First, Guidelines were Written

### (How are we thinking about this?)

- Changes must do one of the following:
  - improve the expressive power of the JATS vocabulary
  - reduce redundancy/duplication in the vocabulary
  - improve processability of JATS documents
- Changes must conform to the principles of the JATS Compatibility Model\*
- Changes should be considered as individual changes as well as in the context of all other changes

\* [https://groups.niso.org/apps/group\\_public/download.php/16764/JATS-Compatibility-Model-v0-7.pdf](https://groups.niso.org/apps/group_public/download.php/16764/JATS-Compatibility-Model-v0-7.pdf)

## Principle: Not Redesigning from Scratch

- Not a totally new vocabulary
- Not necessarily the one we would write if starting *now*
- Just a maintenance release of JATS
- A cleanup not a demolition

## **For Example, We will NOT**

- Rename the tag sets
- Get rid of Blue or Green
- Move from DTD to RNG or Schematron
- Remove MathML 2.0 (leaving only MathML 3.0)
- Make all JATS versions provide OASIS CALS tables
- Get rid of specific face markup (<bold>)  
and use only generic <emphasis type="bold">
- Put JATS in a namespace

## **Then We Collected Change Requests**

- Requests previously rejected for backward incompatibility
- Compromises we made to be backward compatible
- New requests generated by the announcement of JATS 2.0
- Musings from minutes of the JATS Standing Committee



## What Kinds of Changes have been Requested?

- Redesign volume and issue metadata (more containers)
- Improve support for multilingual/multiscript documents
- Make a distinction between inline-code and block-code
- Put more elements into <sec-meta> and allow it more places
- The whole <date>, <history>, <event>, <pub-history> is a mess, fix it.
- Eliminate all attribute values lists, make everything CDATA (free text)

## My Favorite Proposed Change

- Make a new simplified JATS subset
  - Specifically designed for schema-driven editing and tool use
  - Intended audience: journal production workers and editors
  - For example, it will include journal metadata

## **Is the JATS Standing Committee Serious?**

### **(Is there a time-frame for all this?)**

- We promised to provide lots of notice
- *Notice was given at JATS-Con 2019 in May 2019*
- JATS 2.0 will not become a standard before 2021 (and maybe not even then)
- Committee drafts (V2.0d1, 2.0d2, etc.) will be distributed for testing before release of JATS 2.0 for voting.

Yes, we mean it, JATS 2.0 is probably/certainly/maybe coming

We will finish 2.0, and then see if the improvements are worth the pain.