Overview

What is the Name Resolution Service (NRS)?

The Name Resolution Service (NRS) is a Harvard Library service for creating, maintaining, and resolving URNs, also called persistent identifiers or Names. URNs are location-independent names for network-accessible resources. “Name Resolution” is the process of converting a URN into the URL to the resource. If a resource’s URL changes, the mapping between the resource’s URN and URL can be updated; the URN itself, however, remains unchanged and valid. URNs provide curators and researchers with confidence that the URL cite will always point to the same resource, or to a page saying it is no longer available. The intention of the URN is that it should never point to a different ‘resource’ once it is created.

The NRS has several services:

1. An administrative service that manages the metadata necessary to perform naming services
2. An Admin UI to allow registered users to create and maintain URNs
3. An API that allows registered applications to interact with the administrative service without using the Admin UI
4. An HTTP-based resolution service that performs naming resolution
5. An API that returns information about URNs rather than resolving the URN

Who can use NRS?

Any Harvard organization is eligible to use NRS.

How are persistent identifiers created?

The process of creating a persistent identifier is also known as “naming” a digital resource. The majority of persistent identifiers are created for digital objects at the point of batch deposit to the Digital Repository (DRS). Objects already stored in the DRS can be named by using the DRS Web Admin interface. NRS has its own Admin interface that supports naming of objects inside or outside of DRS.