

The Unicode/10646 Approval Process:
A Short Report from the Script Encoding Initiative, UC Berkeley by D. Anderson

1. New characters must be written up in a proposal document, composed of:
 - Forms (downloadable from <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/n3002-form.pdf>)
 - A listing of the characters, with a representative image, a proposed name, character properties (i.e., is the character a number or a mark of punctuation or letter?)
 - Documentation showing how the characters are used in texts
 - Bibliography listing recent reference works

Useful guidelines are available on the Unicode website:

<http://www.unicode.org/pending/proposals.html>

Good examples of successful proposals:

Greek characters: <http://www.tlg.uci.edu/Uni.prop.html>

Ancient and modern script proposals by Michael Everson:

<http://www.evertype.com/formal.html>

2. Find scholars and specialists to review the proposals.
 - a. Explain clearly the role of encoding (i.e., that characters -- not variants -- are being encoded in the proposal)
 - b. Get information from scholars and users on:
 - Are all the characters included?
 - Are the glyphs representative?
 - Are the names appropriate?
 - Verify character properties are correct
 - c. Make changes based on scholars' input

Note: Scholars and users should agree on the proposal; deep disagreement amongst the users may prevent the proposal from being approved.

3. All new character proposals must be approved by two standards bodies:
 - a. ISO Working Group 2 (composed of 32 voting national body representatives)
 - Several rounds of balloting
 - Comments made by national body representatives during each balloting
 - b. Unicode Technical Committee (UTC)
 - There are often questions posed by the UTC that need to be answered before approval

Note: The entire process from first proposal until acceptance is usually **2-5** years