Expanding the U.S. Federal Data Curation Community: Year 01 at the National Transportation Library

Abstract

At the RDA Eighth Plenary Meeting, staff from the National Transportation Library (NTL), part of the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), introduced the research data community to the efforts NTL is making to open data created by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), its contract researchers, and BTS to researchers and the public. Over the past year NTL’s work has expanded far beyond the walls of the USDOT. NTL’s data curation and digital library staff are engaged in federal and national efforts to improve the quality of U.S. government data as it is created, as well as the preservation of these datasets over their lifecycles. Our goal is to improve the quality of government research and statistical databases, allowing our data users – from other federal agencies to the citizen scientist – to make well-informed and robust decisions.

This poster will highlight NTL and partner activities around:
- Data curation community-building across federal agencies;
- Federal data management and curation reskilling, including curriculum development;
- Trusted repository certification among peer federal agencies;
- Creating a network of academic research repositories which are conformant with the USDOT public access plan to ease the researcher’s decision making around choosing a repository for their data;
- NTL data package requirements for federally-funded public access data to be deposited in the NTL repository, &;
- Challenges we face as we mature and expand NTL’s data sharing infrastructure and practices.

DM/DC Community Building

The NTL Data Curator proposed and co-chairs CENDI Data Curation Discussion Group (DCDG) to:
- Establish actionable principles, tools, and workflows;
- Promote efficiency and consistency;
- Work through challenges;
- Avoid “reinventing the wheel.”

Growing membership from:
- Dept. of Energy (DOE)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- National Aeronautics & Space Administration (NASA)
- National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST)
- National Library of Medicine (NLM)
- National Science Foundation (NSF)
- National Transportation Library (DOT)
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)
- U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO)
- Research Data Alliance (RDA)
- And others (see Leighton for list)

Transportation Research Data Repository Network

Proposal: Create a network of USDOT Public Access conformant and trustworthy transportation repositories.


The development of such a network of repositories, with substantial transportation data curation, preserving the output of transportation research in conformance with USDOT Public Access rules and recommendations, would be a major step forward in transportation data preservation.

First step: NTL seeks funding for 2018 meeting of interested repositories.

Interested? Contact Leighton Christiansen at lchristiansen@bts.gov or add a sticky note or business card below.

DM/DC Reskilling

For Academic Researchers

Public Access

Speed Dating

For State DOT Researchers

For Federal Employees

Trustworthy Repository Certification

NTL’s Digital Librarian leads CENDI’s Trusted Repository Working Group, which evaluates standards and guidelines for Trusted Repositories, as well as well-organized and well-attended series of webinars featuring international thought leaders.

Our Challenges

- Small staff
- Lack of standards usage at federal level
- Legacy workflows
- Lack of understanding of data management among federal research organizations

Your Suggestions

- Small staff
- Lack of standards usage at federal level
- Legacy workflows
- Lack of candidate repository formatDate

NTL Repository Data Packages

A “Data Package” is:
- the dataset, the DMP, and all other documentation needed to contextualize the dataset for any and all users.

NTL Repository Data Packages

Includes:
- README.txt
- NTL Recommended practice: File names should be lowercase, consistently formatted, and surrounded with an underscore (ex: D03_8801)

DM/DC/Reskilling

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