

Social Dynamics of Data Interoperability IG Charter

Submitted to RDA Secretariat on 21 September 2019

Name of Proposed Interest Group: Social Dynamics of Data Interoperability

Introduction *(A brief articulation of what issues the IG will address, how this IG is aligned with the RDA mission, and how this IG would be a value-added contribution to the RDA community):*

Extensive work has been, and continues to be done on data interoperability at the technical and information domains. However, a large portion of the challenges in building interoperable information infrastructures are the result of the interplay between organisations, institutions, economics, and individuals. Collectively these form the social dynamics that foster or hinder the progress towards achieving technical and information interoperability.

These are some of the most difficult challenges to address. Currently there is only a limited body of work on how to address these challenges in a systematic way. In keeping with the mission of the RDA, the focus of this group is to focus on what is required to build the social bridges that enable open sharing and re-use of data.

The focus of this interest group is to identify opportunities for the development of systematic approaches to address the key social challenges and to build a corpus of knowledge on building and operating interoperable information infrastructures.

User scenario(s) or use case(s) the IG wishes to address *(what triggered the desire for this IG in the first place):*

Within Australia, the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) set forth the need to establish a National Environmental Prediction System (NEPS). This requires the collaboration, coordination and (most importantly) the interoperability between a range of facilities, organisations and government entities for this system to work effectively. A number of facilities involved have recently come to the realization that the Social dynamics between the facilities is a key factor in the success (or failure) of this initiative.

Within the United States, initiatives such as the Pacific Research Platform, the National Research Platform, and the Eastern Regional Network are a few examples of cross-institutional initiatives whose success is dependent as much on social dynamics as on overcoming technical challenges.

The problem exists at smaller scales as well. At the institutional level, the need to drive adoption across IT, IT Security, Research units, and Libraries provides a persistent challenge.

The BoF session held at the 13th Plenary session highlighted that similar challenges exist within other research domains.

Objectives (*A specific set of focus areas for discussion, including use cases that pointed to the need for the IG in the first place. Articulate how this group is different from other current activities inside or outside of RDA.*):

Currently there is no other IG within the RDA that has a specific focus on the social dynamics, (ie: the interplay between organisations, institutions, economics, and individuals) relating to interoperable information infrastructure.

The main objective of this IG is to:

- Identify organisational, institutional, economic, and individual aspects that increase the friction to achieving information interoperability.
- Develop a corpus of knowledge, including models, frameworks and patterns that can be applied by practitioners to develop the desired social dynamics that foster information interoperability.
- Identify and develop case studies of solutions that demonstrate the application of the corpus of knowledge on this topic.

Loosely related to this IG are the following existing IGs within the RDA:

- Ethics and Social Aspects of Data IG

Participation (*Address which communities will be involved, what skills or knowledge should they have, and how will you engage these communities. Also address how this group proposes to coordinate its activity with relevant related groups.*):

The participation in this IG is left open and broad to anyone who has an interest in the social dynamics as it relates to building interoperable data infrastructures. Specific skills and knowledge that would be useful for this IG include,

- Social psychology
- Organisational behaviour and organisational psychology
- Economics
- Legal frameworks
- Digital anthropology
- Digital ethnography

The following RDA IGs are related to this IG,

1. Data economics
2. Ethics and social aspects of data IG
3. Community capability IG
4. Ethics and Social Aspects of Data IG

This IG will keep these related IGs informed of its activity, and seek to coordinate with them on topics that overlap or have a common interest. It is feasible that in the future we could hold joint sessions at plenary events around common topics.

Outcomes (*Discuss what the IG intends to accomplish. Include examples of WG topics or supporting IG-level outputs that might lead to WGs later on.*):

There are two primary outcomes of this IG:

1. Create a community of interest on the Social dynamics of interoperable information infrastructures;
2. Create a corpus of knowledge on the topic.
3. Identify and develop case studies of solutions that demonstrate the application of the corpus of knowledge on this topic.

Some initial topics that could lead to Working Groups include,

- Problem and solution patterns in Information Infrastructure;
- Governance & participation models;
- Frameworks for trust;
- Incentives and disincentives for collaboration and participation;
- Specific institutional partnerships known to exist, how they came to be, and their varying degrees of success

Mechanism (*Describe how often your group will meet and how will you maintain momentum between Plenaries.*):

The group will aim to have at least 1 virtual meeting between sessions. It will also establish a mechanism (possibly the mailing-list) for offline discussions.

Timeline (*Describe draft milestones and goals for the first 12 months*):

Research and identify organisational, institutional, economic, and individual challenges to achieving interoperability	Month 1-6
Identify case studies	Month 7-12
creation of knowledge corpus	Month 12-24
Apply knowledge corpus to case studies	Month 24+

Potential Group Members (*Include proposed chairs/initial leadership and all members who have expressed interest*):

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	EMAIL	TITLE
Kheeran	Dharmawardena	kheerand@cytrax.com.au	Co-Chair

Greg	Madden	gregmadden@psu.edu	Co-Chair
Heidi	Laine	heidi.laine@csc.fi	
Jay	Pearlman	jay.pearlman@fourbridges.org	
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Stefanie	Kethers	stefanie.kethers@ardc.edu.au	

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