

Building the Reputation as a trusted Repository following international Standards

Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Data Access Portal (DAP) adopts Repository Audit and Certification Catalogue RDA recommendation



“The project investigated certification of Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation’s (CSIRO) institutional repository Data Access Portal (DAP) as a trusted data repository. There were two parts to the project. Firstly, to use the Core Trustworthy Data Repositories Requirements, an outcome of the RDA/WDS Certification of Digital Repositories Interest Group, to undertake a self-assessment of the DAP. This informed what documentation, policies, procedures or DAP developments were needed to satisfy the requirements

and what could be used as public evidence for certification. Secondly, to investigate policies, procedures or DAP further development to host externally owned data in the DAP. To investigate the feasibility of the latter, the project team engaged with CSIRO’s Land and Water research group. An application was submitted to the CoreTrustSeal and the DAP was certified as a trusted data repository in October 2018. “

Mikaela Lawrence, Data Librarian, CSIRO, Australia

The challenge

The challenge was to use the Core Trustworthy Data Repositories, an outcome of the RDA/WDS Certification of Digital Repositories Interest Group, to undertake a self-assessment of the DAP for certification as a trusted data repository. CSIRO is a trusted organisation that undertakes research of fundamental importance to Australia. This research produces data that CSIRO manages over the long-term, enabling reuse as inputs to new research. CSIRO understands the value offered by drawing together research datasets produced by organisations beyond CSIRO and across the research community. This project also investigated leveraging the use of the DAP as a trusted data repository to preserve significant data assets that are produced across a range of Australian agencies both government, authorities and other research organisations for the benefit of industry, policy makers and the broader community.

The RDA outputs adopted

The project undertook certification of the DAP using the Core Trustworthy Data Repositories Requirement with the CoreTrustSeal. It was supported by the Australian National Data Service (ANDS), now known as the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC). ARDC is an organisational member of RDA. Infrastructure and software for the DAP is developed and maintained by the Information Technology and Management department within CSIRO. Undertaking certification as a trusted data repository was an opportunity to assess the repository and its policies and processes against an international common catalogue of requirements. As part of the self-assessment process, existing DAP documentation was used to develop a preservation and collection development policy to meet the public evidence requirements of certification. Also, to accept data into the DAP from external data owners’, policies and procedures were created to appraise an application and list conditions for deposit.



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The benefits of adopting the RDA output

Having the DAP certified with the CoreTrustSeal contributes to CSIRO's reputation as a trusted organisation and ensures the DAP is following international standards. There has been feedback from CSIRO's researchers that the CoreTrustSeal certification for the DAP really matters in building trust when they point data users to their published data and software. Also, knowing the DAP

has been certified as a trusted data repository assists with decision-making in repository choice. It provides confidence in the long-term access and reliability of the data. An immediate impact of the project was that documentation was readily available to address a funder's requirement of making data open.

The adoption process

The trusted data repository project began in March 2017 and the application, using the common catalogue of requirements, was finalised in November 2017. The CSIRO application to the CoreTrustSeal was accepted in February 2018 as part of a pilot for the new certification organisation. The DAP received its seal in October 2018.

Staffing for the project included two data librarians or 1.0 full-time equivalent over an 8 month period. Minor resources on the project included a project manager, project sponsor and another data librarian who attended fortnightly meetings. Weekly meetings were held with ANDS who supported the project. A CSIRO Senior

Legal Counsel was involved in developing policies and procedures for data deposit applications by external organisations. A researcher from the Land and Water research unit and an external water researcher had minor involvement in developing a test case for the DAP to host externally owned data.

The project had four distinct phases. The main time was spent on understanding the requirements, gathering documentation and evidence, developing publicly available documentation and lastly completing the application for certification.

Lessons learned

An area for improvement identified was to implement a schedule of planned review for the disaster recovery process. Internal documentation about the DAP was excellent and helpful to develop the collection development and preservation policies. It was an opportunity to review and update some of the DAP technical documentation. Due to the investigation of hosting externally owned data, it provided better understanding of the risk management and legal framework for external depositors. It provided confirmation of the DAP infrastructure and processes as robust and trustworthy.

Given the increasing interest in trusted data repositories within the research data landscape, we would recommend an understanding of the common catalogue of requirements for repository staff and their role in FAIR data. Applying for access to the CoreTrustSeal Application Management Tool provided additional understanding of the certification process and access to staff who were responsive to questions.

About the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO) Data Access Portal (DAP)



The Data Access Portal (DAP) is an institutional repository to capture and discover the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO) research data assets. The mission of the DAP is to publish research data from CSIRO's research and ensure its ongoing access. It has been available since 2012 and currently has over 3000 collections covering a wide range of scientific disciplines with 18 of the 22 Australian New Zealand Standard Research Classification research fields represented.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is Australia's national science research agency. We solve the greatest challenges using innovative science and technology.

DAP Stakeholder Community

The Data Access Portal is an institutional repository for researchers from CSIRO to deposit their data for the purposes of long-term archiving, sharing and reuse. The designated community of the DAP includes decision-makers, researchers, collaborators, industry, students and the general public. The data assets are relevant to the Australian community. For some collections or discipline areas such as astronomy, the relevance is worldwide.

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