

RDA Finland Autumn 2017 Meeting – minutes

10th October, 2017

HTC Keilaniemi building, Espoo

26 participants + 10 online

Welcome

Director **Leif Laaksonen** from CSC opened the meeting. Finnish RDA meetings have traditionally been organised after RDA Plenaries.. The next RDA Plenary will be held in Berlin in March, 2018. The RDA Europe project is going to be re-structured as the current project will end in the end of February 2018 and the next one, RDA EU4, starts in March 2018.

RDA and Plenary 10

Program Director **Irina Kupiainen** from CSC gave an overview on Plenary 10 which was held in Montreal in September 2017. Altogether there were 430 participants from 30 countries, mainly from North America and Europe. 73 breakout sessions took place and 6 new outputs were presented. RDA Plenary is a great place to meet other likeminded actors interested in research data issues.

RDA has a strong bottom-up element since it is voluntary, expert- and community-driven. At the moment RDA has over 6100 individual members worldwide, and the growth has been steep. RDA has 18 so called flagship outputs out of which 4 have been recognised as EC's ICT Technical Specifications which means that they are now eligible for referencing in public procurement in the EU. During RDA Plenaries, RDA working and interest groups convene, but also lots of other meetings, e.g. BoFs and funders' meetings, take place. RDA work has had an impact on concrete data sharing practices and policies, and EC's endorsement of RDA outputs as ICT technical specifications are one example of this.

Anyone can adopt RDA recommendations and outputs. The variety of the outputs is big, some are more technical and some are less. So far, there is 75 adoption cases in different domains. More information about becoming an adopter can be found on the RDA website. There is also an ongoing call for supporting and other RDA outputs which is eligible to those interest and working groups who have produced something that could be shared to broader audience.

As RDA has grown, ways of structuring and supporting the grass root level work has been developed. In P1, there were 240 members from 30 countries, and by P10, there are over 6100 members from 130 countries. Hence, there is a need to develop strategies, sustainability and coordination within RDA and among the Working and Interest Groups. For example, Europe and US have quite a dominant role. In addition, humanities and medical and health sciences are still under-presented. Gender and diversity issues also need more emphasis, for realizing the full potential of RDA.

The level and type of Finnish RDA members' activity was raised in the discussion. Currently there is no structured information about which IGs and WGs Finnish members are participating in. However, by scanning group pages and outputs on RDA website this could be clarified. RDA Finland could look into this.

It was also stated that national level uptake of RDA output and linking RDA activities with national initiatives and policies would be beneficial. Finland and Finnish RDA members could also contribute to RDA's future development on the strategic level.

Another question was raised on possible linkages or overlap between the European GoFAIR initiative and RDA, and it was stated that GoFAIR is more top-down with a European scope,, whereas RDA is global, bottom-up initiative.

Planning RDA Europe 4, Finnish Node Activities

Project Coordinator **Riina Salmivalli** from CSC gave an overview of the plans regarding RDA Europe's future. RDA EU4 starts in March 2018, lasting a bit over two years. The project has nine objectives on the European level: for example, the aim is to address DSM issues and to become a centerpiece for EU Open Science Strategy through consolidated EU nodes.

In RDA EU3, there are quite many European partners, but in RDA EU4, there are five beneficiaries and currently nine third parties. There will be more national nodes as the project goes forward. Nodes act as the central contact point between national/regional data practitioners and RDA, for example by organizing events to disseminate and promote RDA activities and outputs. The idea behind the nodes is that all EU member states would have RDA activity contact points, unfortunately this hasn't been the case in RDA EU3. RDA's national groups can be found in RDA website, and also RDA Finland page is listed there.

RDA EU has organised early career support programme calls, summer schools and calls for implementing RDA outputs. Some of the meeting participants have actually utilised these possibilities.

Salmivalli gave instructions on a workshop to be held after coffee break. Participants were asked to use post it notes in listing RDA "pains and gains".

RDA working & interest group activities

IT Project Manager **Ville Tenhunen** from University of Helsinki presented some of the activities of RDA working and interest groups. Main part of the RDA activities take place in these groups which are open: any RDA member can initiate or join these groups. Working groups are short-term, 18-months long, aiming at producing a recommendation or output. As also Kupiainen mentioned earlier, Tenhunen also highlighted the concrete impact of RDA outputs: 4 RDA Recommendations for open data sharing have been published as EC's ICT Technical specifications. It is important to acknowledge that these recommendations were made by WGs, not by RDA council or secretariat or any other RDA body, but actual WG members. RDA's interest groups are open-ended and they can initiate a WG if needed.

Tenhunen also gave a brief introduction to some RDA groups. For example, WG for storage service definitions formulates well-defined terms that describe storage services, so the focus is on definitions and terminology. In addition, IG for national data services focuses on country reports and national cases.

National view on research infrastructure development work

Senior Advisor **Sami Niinimäki** from the Ministry of Education and Culture presented the current trends in data management and scientific computing. The importance of high-performance data analysis is growing, and the increasing data volumes require an evolving hardware environment and new methods. Artificial intelligence, AI, is also a very hot topic

and AI applications such as machine learning and robotics raise lot of discussion and interest. In addition, user-friendly data analytic environment is needed in order to utilise data efficiently.

Niinimäki presented some ongoing work at the ministry related to the national research infrastructure (RI) development. The data management and scientific computing development program for 2017-2021 has recently started, and the vision work for higher education and research in 2030 has been initiated. Digital Preservation Infrastructure (DIPI) aims to promote FAIR principles and optimal management and use of research data and digital culture heritage. In addition, national current research information system 2020, "Tutkimus-VIRTA", is being developed, aiming at easing researchers' tasks as they would not have to fill in similar data to multiple systems.

Anu Nuutinen from Academy of Finland gave a heads-up of the upcoming seminar (13th Nov), which focuses on identifying skill gaps and service needs in regards to data management and scientific computing development program 2017-2020. The seminar is by invitation only, and if you wish to participate, please contact Anu Nuutinen (@aka.fi). With the ministry's investment in data management and scientific computing development program (altogether 35 Meur), the infrastructure will be updated, but in addition, it is crucial to define what kind of services are needed by the researchers. Training is also one important aspect.

In addition, the work on Research and Innovation Council vision and roadmap to 2030 has started. The aim is to make Finland the most attractive and competent environment for experiment and innovation.

Reflections on national level implementation of RDA outputs and introduction to CODATA policy work

Secretary of Finnish Committee for Research Data **Heidi Laine** presented the structures and activities of FCRD and CODATA. FCRD is one of approx. 30 national committees of ICSU in Finland and the national member of ICSU data committee, CODATA. FCRD also follows RDA, World Data System and EC's data policies. CODATA was established in 1966 and the original, but still current purpose was to tackle the deluge of scientific data and improve its management and preservation. CODATA's strategy has three components: data policy, data science and data education. CODATA's Data Policy Committee provides expert input on the development and implementation of data policies to a range of international initiatives.

Laine also presented some reflections on national level implementation of RDA outputs. The challenge can be that many outputs are very specific and technical. Thus, RDA's implementation pilots could be more emphasized and the target audience for outputs could be clearly defined.

Finally, Heidi Laine talked about FCRD's role in supporting researchers. For example, FCRD knows the landscape and actors and they speak both "researcher" and "policy". FCRD has utilised RDA WG for Data Citation work in producing FCRD Tracing Data Project's first draft for a national data citation roadmap for Finland. On the 20th Oct, there will be a stakeholder workshop on this subject organised in Tieteiden talo, Helsinki.

Discussion on RDA pains and gains

Salmivalli and Kupiainen facilitated the discussion related to RDA's gains and pains. Positive effects of RDA included e.g. networking and professional development, active participation

of the members, concrete support and benefits for own work projects and avoiding reinventing the same wheel again. A concrete example of RDA-specific gains was given in regards to RDA's PID activities that have been very useful and many Finns have participated in. RDA was viewed as a good platform for different kinds of actors and organisations to meet and discuss. In addition, collaboration between RDA and CODATA has been beneficial and has possibly brought a bit more dynamics and work on practical level of activities.

In the "pains" section, it was raised that, many policy and legislation related uncertainties still exist in the EU, and further cooperation and coordination is needed between initiatives and projects in order to avoid duplicate work. It was stated that liaison efforts and collaboration has been an issue for many years also in other projects and initiatives. Affiliated membership of RDA could be one way to increase the interaction between projects. Overall, more coordination and clearer communication is needed, for example in regards to RDA website. Finnish RDA activities also needed more clarity: for example, what are the Finnish RDA members doing and where, or could ATT and RDA activities be combined?

All these points raised by the participants will be examined and addressed in the planning of RDA EU4 and Finnish Node activities.

Conclusion

Finally, Kupiainen summed up the meeting's findings. Inter-operability, skills development and user-drivenness are over-arching principles that are visible on both national and international level, and Finland based its work on these principles. Early stage engagement of communities is important in develop sustainable services for data management. Finland is advanced in many areas related to research and education, and this could be used as an asset for a greater impact also in RDA.