

## RDA P8 IG on Libraries for Research Data Discussion Topic

Introduction to the discussion topic:

This discussion was held to explore possible tasks that the Libraries for Research Data IG might propose to the RDA Secretariat for working group status. RDA Interest Groups are expected to identify specific tasks for which working groups are organized to produce a product within a twelve to eighteen month timeframe.

In recent RDA Plenaries, this Interest Group has focused on establishing and documenting the case for libraries as a valued stakeholder in research data management (RDM). Now seems an appropriate time to take stock of this topic and to see if this IG should move to another topic. During a panel discussion about “Open Data as a Public Good and the Responsibilities of Scientists” held on Wednesday, September 14, 2016, Victoria Stodden was asked about any evidence showing progress being made on the reproducibility of research. In other words, are stakeholders engaging with the issue of reproducibility? In her response, Victoria noted that her presentations on this subject are noticeably different from three or more years ago. Previously, she found that she had to make the case for reproducibility with her audiences. But a couple of years ago, people began saying, “Yeah, we get the point. What are the practical things that we can do about reproducibility?” At that point, she changed her presentations to address implementation issues around research reproducibility.

The story that Victoria shared is a helpful reminder for this IG. It can be argued that the Libraries for Research Data IG is at a juncture where it no longer has to assume that a case has to be made for the library’s role in RDM. Other stakeholders in RDA are now making this case on behalf of libraries. There is evidence of this at RDA P8.

1. Mark Parsons, RDA Secretary General, in his opening remarks mentioned library engagement in RDA and specifically mentioned this IG’s 23 Things product.
2. Kay Raseroka, a distinguished librarian and former President of IFLA, is on the RDA Council.
3. Donald York, an eminent researcher in astrophysics and a principal with the Sloan Digital Sky Survey, stated in a presentation about “Archiving Large Astronomical Datasets for Their Useful Life” on September 13, 2016 that he believes libraries are the ultimate, best repositories for research data. He based this on the following points:
  - a. Libraries have centuries of curation experience;
  - b. Libraries exist at the centre of academia;
  - c. Libraries already are experienced with research collections;
  - d. Libraries are moving to modern digital collections; and
  - e. Libraries have working models of shared, expansive networks.

Rather than asserting that libraries have a place in RDM, the focus may now be better directed toward building relationships with other RDM stakeholders. An empirical question for this point

is, “How **do** libraries engage with other RDM stakeholders?” A theoretical question is, “How **should** libraries engage with other RDM stakeholders?” In a more global context, are the approaches identified for engagement applicable across countries?

RDM stakeholder engagement is something that happens at multiple levels. For example, in Canada the Portage Network is collaborating with RDM stakeholders at multiple organizational levels. At the local, institutional level, conversations are happening between libraries, research service offices, Vice-Presidents of Research, research ethics offices, CIO’s, and IT service providers. Staff in these offices have national organizations that represent their professional interests. Therefore, Portage is also engaged nationally with the Canadian Association of Research Libraries, the four national academic regional library consortia, the Canadian Association of Research Administrators, the Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards, the Canadian University Council of Chief Information Officers, Research Data Canada, and the major infrastructure providers for the high-speed research network and advanced research computing. Internationally, Portage is participating in RDA and is open to partnerships with other RDM international initiatives.

To start this discussion, a straw poll was taken of those present about the organizational level with which they identify. Did each person see her or himself representing an institution, a national organization, or an international body? Depending on their work environment, some could have voted multiple times. The outcome of this straw poll was almost unanimous for the institutional level; a few raised their hand for the national level but no one responded to the international level.

Based on these results, the focus of the discussion was aimed at the institutional level and the following topics were identified that related to the building of relationships among local RDM stakeholders.

1. One approach is to focus on the three T’s: talent, timing, and tenacity.
2. Look at the entrepreneurial library approach and identify best practices for funding large scale RDM.
3. Look at the variety of roles and responsibilities around RDM at the campus level; establish common role definitions for various stakeholders and suggest proper ways of engagement among them.
4. Look at the mixture of people providing RDM support on a campus. How do they do it? What do they share? And how are quality interactions established?
5. Map the people providing RDM support to the research lifecycle. This can be used to bring people up to speed.

6. Identify the distinctive value-added that RDM supporters contribute on campus. Use a case studies approach.

Time allotted for this discussion expired.

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