

Research Data Strategy Working Group

Minutes of the Working Group Meeting, June 8, 2009, 1:30-4:30 PM

Present: Diego Argàez (CARL), Greg Bak (LAC), Pam Bjornson (NRC-CISTI), François Dubé (NRC-CISTI), Sue Franklin (LAC), Philippe-Olivier Giroux (CFI), Margaret Haines (Carleton University), Chuck Humphrey, teleconf. (University of Alberta), Karmela Krleza-Jeric (CIHR), Denis Leclerc (NSERC), Glen Newton (NRC-CISTI), Michel Sabourin (CNC-CODATA), Kathleen Shearer (CARL), Walter Stewart (CANARIE Inc.), Scott Tomlinson (IPY), Bronwen Woods (NRC-CISTI)

Regrets: Susan Baldwin (Compute Canada), Ralph Michaelis (Carleton University), David Moorman (SSHRC), Hal Weinberg (Simon Fraser University)



| Agenda Item | Discussion | Actions |
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| Welcome and Introductions | Pam Bjornson welcomed everyone in attendance, and there was a roundtable of introductions. Pam then provided background information for new attendees, an overview of the RDSWG, its collaborative approach to data stewardship in Canada, its three Task Groups and their roles. Pam emphasized that the RDSWG strives to be an action-oriented group that moves things forward between meetings. Mention was made of the "Gateway to Scientific Data" which was launched at CISTI the previous week. | |
| Adoption of Agenda | The agenda was adopted with slight modifications. Two new items of business were added: IPY and ODESI. | |
| Review and Adoption of Minutes of October 29, 2008 | The minutes were adopted. Actions arising from minutes: decided that Team Leads would be "first picks" for attendance at international meetings. | |
| TG2, Infrastructure and Services | <p>Chuck Humphrey provided a summary of planned actions for TG2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidelines for preparing life-cycle data management plan. Chuck referred to "opportunistic planning" , and remarked on the good opportunity RDSWG now has to work with IPY • Develop clear and detailed description of systematic data stewardship • Develop guidelines for research data storage repositories <p>Chuck reported that he had spoken at ARL (May 2009) where there had been good representation of Canadian research libraries. He stressed the need for existing institutes to support RDSWG's efforts, and that researchers need a context in which to share their data,</p> | <p>Chuck Humphrey : Work in partnership with Scott Tomlinson of IPY to coordinate development of guidelines for preparing life-cycle data management plans.</p> |

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| | <p>explaining that data stewardship provides that context, and that researchers “get” why they are being asked to share their data. In response to a question from Karmela Krleza-Jeric, Chuck explained how “preservation” occurs throughout the data life cycle, and we must move away from the image of an archival “vault” to the idea of preservation, an active state, which can lead to the repurposing and re-using of data.</p> <p>Chuck’s presentation at ARL on “Canada’s emerging research data framework” examined the issue using local, national and international categories. It was suggested by Glen Newton that the category “domain specific” also be included.</p> | |
| <p>TG1, Policies, Funding and Research</p> | <p>Walter Stewart provided a summary of TG1’s activities to date. The two policy documents have been worked on -- “Research Data in Canada” and “Principles of Data Stewardship” -- and now the group’s attention is turning to the issue of funding. Walter stated that funding should not be about adding incremental cost but avoiding benefit loss, adding that little has been done in Canada to safeguard public investment in data.</p> <p>The question of where resources are required at various stages of the data stewardship life-cycle must be examined. There is the general category of funding a climate that will build data stewardship into the formation of researchers, as well as funding of infrastructure, funding of policies and procedures, and funding of access and reuse.</p> <p>Scott Tomlinson explained that for each IPY project, submission of a data management plan was a condition of funding. Denis Leclerc commented on the idea of a dedicated line of funding for data management in any given research proposal’s budget. He also noted the need to allay researchers’ concerns about funding being taken away from their research and given to data management, remarking that funding to research is finite, while funding for preservation is on-going.</p> <p>Chuck Humphrey noted that CFI is funding a project for the preservation of re-purposed data in conjunction with Stats Can and 24 universities, with contributions from SSHRC and CIHR.</p> <p>The two policy documents were approved by the RDSWG and will be posted on the website, upon addition of a minor edit acknowledging the UK leadership which inspired them.</p> | <p>Walter Stewart: Include acknowledgement to UK in policy documents, then submit to Bronwen Woods for posting on RDSWG website</p> |

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| <p>TG3, Capacity (Skills, Training and Rewards System)</p> | <p>Margaret Haines gave a summary on the activities of TG3, noting the “big issue” of a change in the “climate” of research culture in Canada, and the importance of raising the level of awareness re the need for data management.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Developing Skills and Training : the group has done a literature survey on the topic of research data management, noting the adhoc work going on in different countries.</p> <p>Plans to develop a workshop on research data management are underway, involving high schools in Ottawa with data management included in their math curriculum.</p> <p>The group is also working with CARL to examine the skills and training required by librarians in order to become data managers.</p> <p>??? Glen Newton is developing a scientific and research data workshop with Larry Spears of AG Canada, with plans to build a ½ day general course and a full-day domain-specific course. Borrowing from the US Marine Metadata Interoperability course, as well as from the UK Data Management course and similar work being done in Australia, this course could be extended to librarians working in the data field. Glen has a science/MLIS summer student currently working on this project. Roxeane Sablonière from U de M has completed a survey about the course, and a draft of the course is due to circulate by the end of July. Pam wondered about the possibility of hosting the survey on the RDSWG website using Survey Monkey.</p> <p>Canadian Council of Information Studies (CCIS) is working to produce an on-line data management course.</p> <p>Rewards and Recognition : Margaret noted that there are only a few isolated examples of data management skills being recognized by promotion/tenure. Discussion ensued regarding who to contact at universities to promote data management, given that data management is interdisciplinary and interest in data management is not faculty- or university-wide.</p> <p>Margaret suggested surveying what courses are being offered in other fed. govt. science/research-based departments, while acknowledging that gaining access to this information is often difficult if one is not part of a given department.</p> | <p>Pam Bjornson: Look into hosting the Scientific and Research Data course survey on the RDSWG website using Survey Monkey. (Update: confirmed that this is possible.)</p> |
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| | Pam requested that summaries of all Task Group activities be posted on RDSWG website. | Team Leads: submit activities summaries and updated membership lists to Bronwen Woods for posting on RDSWG website. |
| CARL Data Working Group | <p>Kathleen Shearer gave an overview of the group's key purpose -- to create data awareness so that CARL directors can communicate with university administrators on the issue of data management (DM) -- and acknowledged the members of RDSWG who also participate on the CARL Data Working Group: Pam Bjornson, Margaret Haines, Diego Argàez.</p> <p>Kathleen then presented the "Data Management Awareness Toolkit", a hi-level broad-stroke document aimed at university administrators. The Toolkit presents the issues of why DM is important, what is happening internationally in DM field, who's involved in Canada, the barriers to better DM organization, the policies/funding agencies for DM, the concerns of researchers and administrators, and what stakeholders can do to move toward a better DM environment in Canada.</p> <p>There is a plan to do a shorter version brochure to handout to govt. agencies and on campus. Pam commented that the Toolkit was an excellent piece of work, written in very accessible language. Walter Stewart remarked on the fact that the Toolkit does not speak to the absence of government stewardship of its data resources. Kathleen answered that the Toolkit is intended for university directors, but wondered if it should present a stronger message re absence of govt. stewardship? Pam suggested that the brochure be made available at the CARL website under a creative commons license so that it could be adapted for the government environment.</p> | |
| Next Steps for 2009 | | |
| Engagement Strategy | Pam Bjornson led the discussion, explaining that, because of the distractions of the Strategic Review and transformation activities at CISTI, the Engagement Strategy is not as far along as hoped. The goal is still to get senior officials from our institutions and granting agencies more engaged in data. We need to push the govt. to make a policy for data stewardship. Efforts are being made to meet with Industry Canada, and it was suggested that we also consider briefing the Opposition. CARL has been meeting with federal ministers and plans to meet with Ignatieff. | Kathleen Shearer: Work on Engagement Strategy document, with assistance of Bronwen Woods |

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| | <p>Contacting media, including journal articles, was also suggested. It was agreed that in order to be strategic, we should pick a few key organizations in which to imbed our objectives and let those organizations carry our objectives forward.</p> <p>Suggestions for who we should target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADM CST (Committee on Science and Technology) • ADMs/VPs from Tri-Council & CFI • CAGS (Canadian Association of Graduate Students) • Stats Can, Chief Statistician and /or his assistants • Council of Canadian Academics • STIC • Group of VP academics, provincially (more to contact) or nationally (fewer, but meet less frequently) • Federal S&T Strategy Commission • Michael Geist • Parliamentarians with research backgrounds • Breakfast on the Hill, Bacon & Eggheads <p>It was also noted that groups like Council of Canadians, prior to an election, might say “these are the things we think a good policy on “x” (data stewardship) should have,” and put it out there. We could consider a similar approach, perhaps piggy-backing on CARL’s lobby organization.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to pull together a small group of 15-20 hi level officials we’d like to see commit to a data stewardship policy. While this could be a high risk proposition, we could mitigate that risk by having the invitations issued by a single, key, prestigious champion, such as Peter Nicholson.</p> | |
| <p>Response to CFI regarding Platforms Fund</p> | <p>On behalf of RDSWG, Chuck Humphrey has drafted a response to the CFI regarding the Platforms Fund, encouraging the Fund to look at the importance of data when granting funds for projects.</p> | <p>Philippe-Olivier Giroux: Send contact information and timeline for submitting response to Pam Bjornson Chuck Humphrey: Finalize response document and send to</p> |

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| | | <p>Pam Bjornson/Bronwen Woods</p> <p>Pam Bjornson: Send response to CFI by June 19, 2009</p> <p>Pam Bjornson: Re-issue updated list of projects requiring funding</p> |
| International Polar Year (IPY) | <p>Scott Tomlinson gave a presentation about the background and activities of IPY, stressing its commitment to data management -- 4.7%, or 7 million of the total 150 million budget , dedicated specifically to data management. Scott referenced two key documents: "IPY Data Policy" and "Framework for Data Management." Impressed by RDSWG's Gap Analysis document, Scott said that in matters of data management, IPY would like to move forward under RDSWG's wing. IPY still has 6 million available for data management, including the development of a trusted digital repository (TDR). IPY data encompasses climate change science, as well as community and health data -- a truly interdisciplinary project.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  CANADIAN IPY DATA POLICY.DOC </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  IPY -DATA MANAGEMENT FRAMI </div> </div> | |
| ODESI | <p>Margaret Haines gave a brief update of the ODESI project (Ontario Data Documentation, Extraction Service and Infrastructure Initiative). Jointly funded between OCUL (Ontario Council of University Libraries) and Ontario Buys , ODESI provides university researchers with access to datasets using an intuitive web-based data tool hosted on Ontario's Scholars Portal. ODESI is now launching a new 2-year project to provide geospatial and health informatics data access.</p> | |
| Adjournment | <p>The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.</p> | |

Action Summary

| Who | What | When |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Chuck Humphrey | Work in partnership with Scott Tomlinson of IPY to coordinate development of guidelines for preparing life-cycle data management plans | June - October 2009 |
| Walter Stewart | Include acknowledgement to UK in policy documents, then submit to Bronwen Woods for posting on RDSWG website | June 2009 |
| Team Leads | Submit activities summaries and updated membership lists to Bronwen Woods for posting on RDSWG website. | June 2009 |
| Kathleen Shearer | Work on Engagement Strategy document, with assistance of Bronwen Woods | June-September 2009 |
| Philippe-Olivier Giroux | Send contact information and timeline for submitting CFI response to Pam Bjornson | June 12, 2009 |
| Chuck Humphrey | Finalize CFI response document and send to Pam Bjornson/Bronwen Woods | June 12, 2009 |
| Pam Bjornson | Send response to CFI by June 19, 2009 | June 19, 2009 |
| Pam Bjornson | Re-issue updated list of projects requiring funding | July 2009 |