Establishing a Research Data Management Service at Loughborough University

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WHAT RDM MEANT FOR US
Our drivers

• Meet the “open data” mandate of research funders, in particular as it relates to metadata discovery and archiving of research data

• Further promote Loughborough research and attract future collaborators

• Provide a streamlined and intuitive workflow for research staff
What we did

• In late 2012 formed a Steering Committee consisting of active researchers (across various disciplines) and staff from the research office, library and IT services
  – Engage with local stakeholders and funders
  – Survey Loughborough researchers about their data requirements
  – Produce draft policy on research data management
  – Evaluate possible solutions and recommend a way forward
Existing elements

- Loughborough did have a current research information system (CRIS) and institutional repository (IR) but neither was considered suitable for research data
  - Existing deposit process didn’t cater for research data
  - Storage requirements for research data were uncertain but known to be greater than currently available
  - Existing solutions not considered appropriate for promoting research data
Gap in provision
Funding

- Having identified the gap in our provision we asked for funding to develop and operate a new service
  - Create a new platform (interface for our researchers and others)
  - Provide adequate storage
  - Additional staffing to manage service: Research Data Manager (1 FTE) and IT support (0.25 FTE)
- And got it!
IMPLEMENTATION
Choosing a technical solution

- Steering committee had already evaluated the market and recommended an innovative solution asking two suppliers to work together
  - **Arkivum**: provider of large scale, long term, safe digital archiving
  - **figshare**: cloud-based service allowing researchers to upload and share datasets, media, papers, presentations, etc.
Our goal
Implementation project

- Kick off meeting in September 2014
- Used Basecamp for project management/discussions
- Fortnightly catch-up calls using Google Hangouts
- Face-to-face meetings every two months
- Went live with a solution at the end of April 2015
Key decisions (1/2)

• Initially targeted EPSRC funded research
  – But welcomed any other deposits

• Split the project into two halves
  – What we could deliver by the 1st May 2015
  – What else we needed to deliver

• Loughborough branded DOIs
  – Marketing purposes
  – Future proofing (e.g. moving away from figshare)
  – Possibility of minting DOIs for other Loughborough outputs
Key decisions (2/2)

• Metadata requirements
  – Kept to a minimum to aid researcher engagement
  – Need to be DataCite compliant to mint DOIs
  – We recognise that this might cause us issues in the future and may need to do some retrospective cataloguing

• Initially operated as a mediated solution
  – Only imported HR details of researchers upon request
    • No curation workflow at time of soft launch
  – Library to deposit data on behalf of researchers or work with them whilst they did so for the first time
Soft Launch – April 2015-January 2016

• Advocacy campaign to inform researchers and professional services about what’s happening
  – email notifications
  – hands-on workshops
  – departmental presentations
  – meetings with research groups
  – one-to-one sessions

• Continue to gather feedback from users to inform future development of the service (technical and operational)
Recent developments

• Using *figshare for institutions* as a data source for *Symplectic Elements*
  – Harvesting published research data into our CRIS
  – CRIS acting as register for all research outputs (e.g. data and publications)
  – Feeds researcher profile pages
Curation workflow

• Internal discussion about “checks”
• Range of views amongst academics
  – “No check” to “two checks”…!
• Compromise reached
  – Light touch “sanity” check
• All deposits are checked by Library staff before being made public
  – Mitigates risk of improper release of information
Where are we now
Full launch

• Launch event on 26\textsuperscript{th} January
  – PVCR attended + researchers and PS staff (IT, Library, Research Office, Graduate School, School Research Managers)
• Full HR feed to repository (c4,500 staff and PGRs)
• Increase in deposits
• Advocacy continues
• Data Repository named in a number of grant applications
• Research Data Manager named as an advisor in a number of grant applications
Other RDM Service elements

- Training embedded in existing programmes
- DMP advisory service
- New grants
  - Library staff alerted to newly awarded grants
  - Contact Loughborough PIs
CONCLUSIONS
Lessons learnt

• What worked well
  – The work of the Steering Committee allowed us to rapidly adopt a solution and get ahead of the game
  – Collaborative development with commercial partners has been a really positive experience

• What would we do differently
  – Begin the advocacy earlier so that we can demonstrate the solution to researchers without having to keep explaining why
The future

• System development
  – Further integration with our CRIS
  – Engaging with other customers

• Service development
  – Further embedding into the research lifecycle (e.g. data management plans and data reuse)
  – Increased uptake by researchers (all disciplines and funders)
  – Evidence of increased citation counts and collaborations

• Scalability of Service
64 thanks

Arkivum Matthew Addis • Cathy Brode • Andy Conway • Mark Ellis • Chris Pates • Jeremy Smith • Nik Stanbridge • Jo Windel • DataCite Rachel Kotarski Elizabeth Newbold • DCC Alex Ball • Sarah Jones • Liz Lyon • Jonathon Runs Angus Whyte • Digital Science Stephen Crawley • Alan Hyndman • Figshare Florin Apetrei • Livia Ciobanu • Daniel Gavrilla • Christopher George • Mark Hahnel • Daniel Hook • Becky Westbrook • Project Management Board Jeff Brown • Sally Brown • Malcolm Cook • Fidelma Hannah • Bal Sandhu • Danielle Sharp • Richard Taylor • Dave Temple • Peter Townsend • Project Working Group Katie Appleton • Izabelle Bimson • Angela Crawford • Louise Denniff • Naomi Dungworth • Marcus Enoch • Gary Page • Bethan Whitelaw Steering Committee John Feather • Elizabeth Gadd • Martin Hamilton • Julian Highfield • Matthew Inglis • Melanie King • Susan Manuel • Adrienne Muir Myra Nimmo • Zoe Stockdale • Ron Summers • Jamie Timmons • Rob Wilby Clare Wydell • Helen Young • Symplectic Sabih Ali • Nick Anderson • Daniel Enright • Tom Letcher • Others Stephen Ashurst • Hannah Baldwin • Jason Cooper • Jonathan Walters
THE END (ANY QUESTIONS)