

## Training and skills discussion group

Discussion group participants included Joy Davidson, DCC (facilitator), Linda Naughton, Jisc (notes), and research data management support staff from a number of universities.

How is RDM training and capacity building currently being provided by your institution? (e.g., department/group level, central services, other)

### On posts

- The majority of the group reported less than two people in data management posts. There were a minority with over five. These posts were spread across the institution (Library, IT, Research Office).
- One institution reported the need for coverage at the RDM expert level to deal with triage, metadata, knowledge of the complex policy landscape and its interpretation.

### Training

- Most of the academics don't want training sessions, they want a ready reckoner with bullet points on what they have to do. The group would like to share guides, triage methods, short-cuts, ready-reckoners and to create FAQs.
- There is an Issue with repeaters, they forget what they need to do and then come back for more training.
- One institution is going out to do information sessions, supported by on-line guides to stop the ad-hoc enquiries as this is too difficult to staff if demand outgrows capacity.
- One institution is delivering training through the graduate programme. Attendance is voluntary. This is a good way to gather intelligence on what researchers need. They now have four different training courses – these are freely available for re-use.
- A possible gap was identified where academic supervisors could be trained. If this was made an appraisal objective within faculties then it would incentivise the supervisors e.g. checking publications for data deposit at the performance review. Using the University CV is another option (using PURE) – traditional CVs don't include data, this needs to be put in the CV and it's also useful for the REF exercise.
- For new staff inductions it would be useful to have contact time with the library but there is a need to formalise that. This needs buy-in from deans to set the expectation that all new staff have contact time even if it is only an hour.

Does your institution currently have the required skills, capabilities and teaching materials available in-house? If not, where do you turn?

- Are there enough skills? All the group responded 'no'.
- Non-digital data was identified as a particular gap. This would have to be dealt with at the departmental or school level. The library couldn't be expert in discipline specific requirements.
- Archive experts and records management people can be useful assets.
- Ethics – the group discussed about getting them tied in for RD sharing. There is a disjoin between the DMP and methods used for consent forms. However, some ethics panels don't have the expertise on data sharing. There is a similar dialogue around, 'all data will be destroyed at the end of the project' this needs to be changed and covered by ethics policy.

- Research Office – most are involving them but need to work out how to do this. They are finding out where their skills are and where they need training. They are often the first point of contact for grants/DMPs but generally they don't know about preservation, data security etc. They could have a role in monitoring compliance.
- Another approach is to have discipline specific data managers. Within research centres there are people who co-ordinate RDM activities but they do not hold responsibility for RDM in their job title. For some institutions say this has worked better than doing it centrally.
- Training on costing RDM is not well covered. There is a question on whether the research office, finance or IT cover this. It depends if the cost involves investment in storage. If there is a large outlay first then that is an investment decision. Researchers don't generally go to the finance office as they don't know curation costs.
- Curation costs also vary from council to council: research finance, pre-awards, post-awards are specific to each council.
- One institution is hoping to do a cost catalogue for RDM and to give that to the research office. The group would like to use this as a shared resource.

How might external bodies such as Jisc, the DCC, learned societies, or other sector organisations best contribute towards building capability at your institution?

- Promote a cost catalogue approach
- To interface with Research Councils on technical peer review as institutions would like to build skills in this area. This could be done nationally i.e. a how-to guide for peer reviewing DMPs.
- A review of shared materials targeted to a specific audiences. Contact Laura Molloy if you have materials.
- Learned societies should endorse guidelines and encourage sharing. We need them to validate these skills with academics. The British Sociological Society has put out a pamphlet - we could try to harmonise these.
- EPSRC specific – helpful to have a pre-defined list of job responsibilities so institutions can work through the list and assign them to people or form new posts. The sector could share job descriptions and job specs - some of this is available through DCC
- Institutions want training on culture change as that is what senior researchers are having issues with. There is good buy-in from faculty heads but RDM is not becoming business as usual.
- To build confidence in this area especially for roles taking on advocacy and training there was a lot of interest in a lightweight peer network. N8 has already established a support network.
- There was interest in a Mantra Light, that would take an hour rather than half day. N8 are working on something and would like to extend it to DCC provision.
- Costing of support – to build a picture of how much is being spent in different places so then institutions can lobby for support. The group would like to share that information.