

Queen's Digital Scholarly Record Working Group Terms of Reference

October 18, 2016

Background

Strategically managing the digital scholarly record – all forms of research data – is an evolving concern that no single institution can tackle alone, and within any institution it involves multiple stakeholders. Queen's emphasis on research prominence and internationalization require institutional-level attention to these matters.

Queen's has been engaged in the collaborative development of services in this arena for several years and is seen as a national leader. A Library working group, including representation from the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research), has laid the groundwork for research data management services at Queen's, with a recently completed three-year action plan and experience with numerous researchers seeking to ensure that their scholarly output is accessible for further research. As well, the Library has managed scholarly communications services, including a research publications repository, for many years. IT Services and the Centre for Academic Computing also work directly with researchers needing platforms for manipulating and storing their data. We also have strong engagement with related national initiatives, including at the level of the Vice-Principal (Research).

These on-the-ground initiatives, and the researchers they support, would now benefit from university-level coordination and vision. We are finding that researchers are rarely aware of the services available to them, and that service providers each have particular strengths that would be more powerful if jointly articulated. As well, there is a need to better understand the scope of the demand and potential costs for data storage and related services.

The Digital Scholarly Record (DSR) initiative will be one facet of Queen's development of a comprehensive digital strategy. DSR will bring together stakeholders currently engaged in managing research data, and researchers themselves, to surface issues and opportunities of this particular aspect of digital research infrastructure. It will also facilitate the coordination of current service offerings in ways that bring the most benefit to researchers today. Although a full approach to a Queen's digital strategy has not yet been articulated, DSR can help inform those discussions and at the same time address immediate practical concerns.

Purpose

The purpose of this group is to plan and build awareness of services across the university that support the management and dissemination of the digital scholarly record, within the context of the university's upcoming digital strategy and related national and international initiatives.

Objectives

1. **Principles:** Following broad consultation, draft a Queen's statement of principles for the digital scholarly record, drawing upon precedents such as the Research Data Management Statement of Principles for Canadian universities issued by Research Data Canada in March 2016, the Tri-Agency Statement of Principles on Digital Data Management issued in June 2016, the Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications, and national and international initiatives supporting Open Science.
2. **Governance:** Map the connections that need to be made across university units to engage in effective planning, budgeting and communication relating to management of the digital scholarly record (for example, through particular initiatives reporting to the working group, the formation of communities of practice, etc). Ensure that those connections are in place

for the duration of the working group and make recommendations for future consideration in the development of a Queen's digital strategy.

3. **Planning:** Guided by an integrated vision, identify gaps and opportunities for further development of infrastructure and services supporting the management and dissemination of the digital scholarly record at Queen's. Consider which services are best delivered at which levels (within research teams, by particular campus units, at an enterprise level, or as regional, national or international initiatives) and how integration across these levels can occur. Consider policies and incentives required to encourage effective use of services.
4. **Budget:** Develop near-term (3-year) estimates of costs of developing the service offerings identified above.
5. **Communication:** Increase awareness across the university of good practice in management of the digital scholarly record. Encourage and facilitate researcher access to relevant services.

Scope

Although "data management" and "scholarly communications" are often addressed as separate matters, the scope of this group deliberately encompasses both, under the umbrella of the "digital scholarly record." Researchers produce a wide range of outputs that have value for re-use and contribute to new discoveries and research impact. This includes publications in any form, as well as data and the computer code used to generate and manipulate that data. In order to support the sharing and recognition of a broader range of research outputs and reduce our reliance on traditional journal models, we need to develop a framework of infrastructure, services, policies, and incentives.

The scope of this group does not include the elements of digital infrastructure commonly called high performance computing or high speed networks, specific research software applications, or educational technologies.

Reporting/Decision Making

The group reports to the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the Vice-Principal (Research). Recommendations will be made to VPOC (Vice-Principals Operations Committee) and/or the PVP (Principal/Vice-Principals).

Communication

- The group will consult broadly with stakeholders and share information about its work on a group website.
- Members of the group are responsible for providing input from the stakeholders they represent and for keeping them apprised of the group's work.
- It is understood that each service provider unit will continue to work directly with researchers and develop and promote its services.
- The group will monitor and be engaged in the development of a new Queen's Strategic Research Plan.

Group members (reps of each group to be identified)

- Martha Whitehead, Vice-Provost and University Librarian (Chair)
- IT Services
- University Research Services

- Centre for Advanced Computing
- Associate Vice-Principal Research
- Associate Dean Research
- Dean of Graduate Studies
- Society of Graduate and Professional Students

Timeline

The group will be formed in the Fall of 2016 and issue a report with recommendations for next steps in the Summer of 2017.

Logistics

The group will meet monthly. Members cannot delegate their role, however they may also include selected members of their staff in meetings as appropriate. Administrative support will be provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost and University Librarian.

Definitions

Research Data: Data that are used as primary sources to support technical or scientific enquiry, research, scholarship, or artistic activity, and that are used as evidence in the research process and/or are commonly accepted in the research community as necessary to validate research findings and results. All other digital and non-digital content have the potential of becoming research data. Research data may be experimental data, observational data, operational data, third party data, public sector data, monitoring data, processed data, or repurposed data.

Data Management refers to the storage, access and preservation of data produced from a given investigation. Data management practices cover the entire lifecycle of the data, from planning the investigation to conducting it, and from backing up data as it is created and used to long term preservation of data deliverables after the research investigation has concluded. Specific activities and issues that fall within the category of Data Management include: File naming (the proper way to name computer files); data quality control and quality assurance; data access; data documentation (including levels of uncertainty); metadata creation and controlled vocabularies; data storage; data archiving and preservation; data sharing and re-use; data integrity; data security; data privacy; data rights; notebook protocols (lab or field).

- Research Data Canada Glossary, <https://www.rdc-drc.ca/glossary/>