

STRATEGIC WORKSHOP ON RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

University of Alberta, November 17, 2015

A REPORT

Walter Stewart, Research Data Canada Co-ordinator and Workshop Facilitator

Research Data Canada (RDC) and the University of Alberta under the leadership of Lorne Babiuk, Vice-President Research, co-organized and presented a workshop for Vice-Presidents Research (VPRs) or their senior designates focused on institutional responses to research data management (RDM). The workshop was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) in its capacity as the lead for the tri-councils on RDM policies.

Purpose: The Policy Committee of RDC determined in early 2015 that a focus on institutional responses to the demands of RDM was appropriate and timely in the light of the growing international trends towards data sharing and greater transparency of research results as well as moves towards RDM requirements on the part of Canada's granting councils. RDC was also interested in discovering how the organization could best support and engage institutions in meeting the challenges of RDM. Accordingly, the policy committee initiated a series of teleconferences with selected VPRs from across the country. Out of those meetings the concept of the workshop emerged. As one of Canada's largest universities and one of the most advanced in addressing RDM at an institutional level, the University of Alberta offered to host the event. The University of Prince Edward Island as a smaller university that also has made major progress in RDM as an institutional priority agreed to share responsibility for focusing the discussion around institutional responses to the challenges of RDM. The complete agenda and list of speakers is available at <http://www.rdc-drc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Strategic-Workshop-for-Research-Data-Management-Final-Program1.pdf> . Presentations made by the speakers are available at <http://www.rdc-drc.ca/strategic-workshop-for-research-data-management/> .

Attendees: The workshop was by invitation and focused on research intensive universities although representation came from beyond the ranks of the U15. A total of 16 universities participated in the workshop either with their VPR or AVPR or similar senior officials. A list of the universities present follows this report. In addition, senior representatives of CANARIE, NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR, Genome Canada, CFI, and Industry Canada were present. The RDC Co-ordinator, Walter Stewart, facilitated the meeting. RDC Policy Committee Chair, Andrew Bjerring was also in attendance.

Outcomes: The universities present committed to co-ordinate and collaborate on meeting the challenges of RDM. A robust commitment to shared tool and service development was articulated. There was also strong support for the vision behind CARL's Portage Initiative. The complexity of RDM was explicitly recognized with a large number of issues identified for discussion and collective action. Those issues are outlined at: <http://www.rdc-drc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Strategic-Workshop-for-Research-Data-Management-Notes.pdf> .

Those universities somewhat advanced in developing RDM capacities indicated full preparedness to share what has been accomplished and welcomed the engagement of other universities in moving the bar forward. The workshop participants expressed strong interest in the eventual creation of a VPR

Steering Committee for RDM responsible for monitoring the state of RDM in the country's universities and directing development of solutions and services. Such a steering committee would also pay particular attention to the issues of scaling solutions and services to meet the needs of all researchers.

As a first step, it was agreed that developing a statement of RDM principles to which all universities can agree would be a sound foundation for building co-ordination and collaboration. A subcommittee was appointed to address the development of a set of RDM principles that could be adopted by Canadian universities. The universities of PEI, Montréal, York, Alberta, and Victoria are represented on the subcommittee. RDC was asked by the workshop attendees to facilitate the work of the subcommittee. The first meetings of the subcommittee will occur during the week of December 7th. RDC has prepared a summary document of RDM policies and practices for the subcommittee's examination in the process of developing a Canadian RDM set of principles. (put in URL).

The November 17th workshop was but the beginning of conversation leading to collaborative, co-ordinated effort in ensuring effective RDM in Canada's universities.

Participating Universities:

Dalhousie University
Université de Montréal
UOIT
University of Manitoba
University of Calgary
University of Victoria

University of PEI
McGill University
University of Toronto
Brandon University
University of Alberta

Université Laval
Queen's University
York University
University of Lethbridge
University of British Columbia