Methodology and Templates for Data Interviews with Federation University Australia Researchers

Developed by FedUni Library Staff for the ANDS Seeding the Commons Project

This package consolidates documents used in canvassing and undertaking the research data management interviews with researchers at Federation University Australia. The purpose of the interviews was twofold:

- To form an understanding of current awareness and practices regarding research data management at UB, and from this identify local needs for services and infrastructure; and
- To identify potential data sets for description and inclusion in Research Data Australia.

Documents included here are:

- Research data interview methodology
- Email invitation to participate in a research data interview
- ANDS project fact sheet
- Research data interview template: Part A
- Research data interview template: Part B - Metadata template

Scope
This document outlines the research methodology that will be undertaken by the FedUni Library project team for the research data interviews to be undertaken with UB researchers.

Objectives of the research data interviews
The research data interviews will have two objectives:

• To form an understanding of current awareness and practices regarding research data management at UB, and from this identify local needs for services and infrastructure; and

• To identify potential data sets for description and inclusion in Research Data Australia.

Identification and recruitment of interviewees

The ANDS Project Management Plan for Seeding the Commons indicates several areas linked to the Collaborative Research Network for Self-sustaining Regions Research that will benefit from project activities so it was decided that researchers engaged in these areas would be the initial focus for identification and recruitment. These areas include:

• Regional Science and Technological Innovation (through information analysis and optimisation of systems and technology); o FOR 0101 and 0102 Pure and applied maths
  o FOR 0801 Artificial intelligence
  o FOR 0803 Computer software
  o FOR 0806 Information systems

• Regional Social and Educational Connectedness and Health Innovation; and o FOR 1302/02/03

• Regional Landscape Change o FOR 0502 Environmental science and management

To ensure a balanced representation of researchers with different research data types, data formats and data management practices and experiences, it has also been decided to identify and recruit researchers for interviews from within the Visual and performing arts, Psychology and Business disciplines.

Researchers have been identified through research records contained in FedUni’s institutional repository, ResearchOnline and ResearchMaster, the research and innovation system for tracking, processing and administering research management at FedUni.

Once identified, researchers will be sent an email invitation which outlines the Project and invites them to participate in a research data interview (refer to Associated Documents for the email text).

Attached to the email for the further information of the researcher is a Project Fact Sheet (refer to Associated Documents).
Within a week of sending the email, the researcher will be contacted by telephone to determine an interview.

Interview questions
The interviews will contain two components. The first part of the interview (‘Part A’) will focus on developing an understanding of the researcher’s research data management practices and will use a semi-structured interview approach (refer to Associated Documents).

The second part of the interview (‘Part B’) will focus on gathering the information required for research data collection record creation and will use a structured interview approach (refer to Associated Documents). It is envisaged that the second part of the interview will not be completed within the interview time frame and that a follow up interview or correspondence via email will need to occur to complete the process and review accuracy of the information recorded. This process will be negotiated with the individual researcher.

Conducting interviews
Where possible, the interviews will be held in the office of the interviewee.

Two FedUni Library staff will attend. One person will be the main interviewer whose role it will be to focus on engaging and prompting the researcher with questions. The other person will be responsible for recording notes.

A laptop will be used for the purpose of recording notes during the interview using the Part A template. For Part B of the interview, if a suitable research data collection has been identified prior to the interview, as much information as possible will be pre-populated in the recording sheet.

Post interview
As indicated previously, a second interview and/or correspondence via email may be required to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the information gathered.

Information gathered in Part A, and to some extent Part B, will be analysed across the interviews as a whole to determine a snapshot of current practices and anticipated future needs across UB.

Information gathered in Part B will be used to create manual RIF-CS records for Research Data Australia.

A tailored thank you email will be sent to each interviewee and they will also receive notification when a record of one of their research data collections is available in Research Data Australia.
Associated Documents

The following documents support the research data interview process/workflow:

StC Project: Email invitation to participate in research data interview
Australian National Data Project: Seeding the Commons Project fact sheet
StC Project: Research data interview template: Part A
StC Project: Research data interview template: Part B - Metadata template

Scope

The text below is sent to researchers as an email invitation seeking their participation in a research data interview. Each email is tailored to include a link to a collection record in Research Data Australia; where possible the record selected will be of similar subject to that of the researcher. For the further information of the researcher, a separate Project Fact Sheet is also attached to the email.

Email text:

Dear [title, name]

As you may be aware, the Federation University Australia has recently commenced an Australian National Data Service (ANDS) project which focuses on local research data management practices and showcasing FedUni data collections via Research Data Australia.

Research Data Australia is an Internet-based discovery service designed to provide rich connections between data, projects, researchers and institutions, and promote visibility of Australian research data collections in search engines.

As part of the project, a select group of researchers are being invited to participate in an interview with Library staff for the purposes of gathering an understanding of your research and research data management practices and determining whether you have data collections that could be described and included in Research Data Australia.
The following link provides an example of a Research Data Australia record for a data collection relating to [description/title]: [link]

While many data collections through Research Data Australia are publically accessible, please be assured that this is not a requirement.

Most interviews run for approximately 45 minutes. Attached for your further information is an ANDS Seeding the Commons Project Fact Sheet that outlines what the project is aiming to achieve, reasons why you should become involved and some indication of the type of information we hope to gather at the interview.

We are hoping that you are agreeable to an interview and can suggest a convenient date and time for two of us to come and talk to you. We will touch base again via telephone within a week.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks,

Carolyn Bray, Donna Byrne and Roger Clark
UB Library Project Team for ANDS Seeding the Commons Project

Project Fact Sheet

The Library recently commenced participation in the UB Seeding the Commons Project (StC) that is funded by the Australian National Data Service (ANDS). Universities across Australia have either completed or are undertaking projects of this nature concerned with research data management and research data collections.

The project aims to improve institutional data capture, enabling the management, discovery and re-use of data from FedUni researchers. It will also allow for better support of researchers in meeting requirements for research funding, now and into the future.

The Project Manager is Dr. Helen Thompson, with a working party comprising representatives from the Library, ICT and eResearch. The project has ANDS funding through until the end of February 2013.

Project Outcomes
• A draft Research Data Management Policy for UB which recognises that research data is a valuable product of research activity and supports the FedUni Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and the
Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research in relation to appropriate management of research data

• The creation of a Research Data Management Plan template for use at the start of a research project to ensure efficiency, protection, quality and exposure of the generated or collected research data

• Descriptions of UB research datasets contributed to Research Data Australia for other researchers to discover and potentially re-use or to create collaboration opportunities

• To form an understanding of current research data management practices across UB

• To build researcher awareness of research data management

• To develop a sustainable service to support researchers to promote their data for discoverability and potential future use.

Why you should become involved with research data management

Essentially, research data is an asset that can be shared, improve opportunities for collaboration and potentially lead to further research

• You increase the impact of your research when your data is re-used and/or cited by other researchers

• Data management planning enables validation of your findings which adds to the integrity of your research

• You support future use of data, including by researchers in different fields and for different purposes

• You can fulfil your obligations under the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research

• You can meet the emphasis/requirement for open access to publicly funded research

• You can improve opportunities for collaboration by others discovering your research and vice versa

What we are asking of you

Library staff would like to interview you for the purposes of:

• Developing an understanding about your research and current research data management practices; and

• Identifying data collections that could potentially be described and showcased through Research Data Australia (RDA).

In relation to the second point, descriptions about data collections need to be catalogued to a certain standard for inclusion in RDA, so we would need to gather further information either during the interview (time permitting) or through follow-up correspondence (either in person or through email, whichever is more convenient).
As a researcher, we understand you will have concerns about providing access to your data and that legal, ethical and commercial restrictions apply to many data collections. Please be assured that you do not need to allow open access to your data to have your data collections described in RDA.

In relation to your data collections, the kind of information we are hoping to gather includes:

- A description of the project that generated the data
- A description of the data collected
- The people and organisations associated with the data, e.g. who owns it, who collected it
- Collection period and retention information
- Characteristics of the data – e.g. types, formats, volume, classification
- How the data is stored
- Whether there are publications relating to the data
- Terms and conditions regarding access to the data

Acknowledgement
This University of Ballarat project was supported by the Australian National Data Service (ANDS) under the Seeding the Commons program. ANDS is supported by the Australian Government through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy Program and the Education Investment Fund Super Science Initiative.

Further information
Email: rdm@federation.edu.au
Phone: 5327 9382

Scope
This document contains introductory comments which set the scene for the research data interview, followed by the set of questions aimed at eliciting information about the researcher’s awareness, thoughts and practices regarding data research management. The Metadata template for describing a research data collection forms the second part of the Research data interview template and is contained in a separate document. To link the two interview parts together, the last question is an example of a bridging question which could be used, tailored to the responses provided by the researcher through the first part of the interview.
Introduction

Prior to today we sent you a Project Fact Sheet which outlines the project, its outcomes and information about the interview, but we’d just like to take the opportunity to recap a couple of these points before we begin the interview.

The University is participating in the project because research data is now being considered as important an output of research as publications. When research data can be discovered, cited and re-used, it has the potential to raise the profile of researchers and identify new opportunities for research collaboration. Research Data Australia is a website that contains descriptions of research data collections and allows you to search and discover those collections and the projects, researchers and institutions associated with them.

What we’d like to do in the interview is find out about your thoughts and experiences with research data management and identify any data collections you might have that you’d be willing to let us describe and showcase on Research Data Australia as well as FedUni ResearchOnline.

We understand that you might have concerns about providing access to your data and that often legal, ethical and commercial restrictions can apply to data collections. We’d like to reassure you that contributing records to Research Data Australia doesn't necessarily mean that they have to be publically accessible. There are different options for data sharing and we can discuss these later on.

We’ll be taking notes during the interview which we anticipate will run for about 45 minutes. Do you have any questions or concerns before we start?

General questions regarding research data management

Q1. What are the main types or formats of data that you generate or collect, either digital or non-digital?
Q2. Can you indicate how much digital and non-digital research data you currently have, and how much you expect to generate or collect over the next 12 months?
Q3. How do you currently store all the research data you have?
Q4. Do you keep a registry or list of your research data collections?
Q5. What is your biggest research data management problem?
Q6. UB has a Responsible Conduct of Research Policy which endorses the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. Section 2.5.2 of the Code states that “Research data should be made available for use by other researchers unless this is prevented by ethical, privacy or confidentiality matters.” How important do you think it is to share your research data and do you think that sharing your data could boost your research profile?
Q7. Is your research data packaged or managed in such a way that it would be readily able to be re-used or shared by others?

Q8. One of our project activities is to formulate a template for a data management plan to outline how data will be collected, managed and stored for new research projects, do you think such a template would be useful?

Q9. Do you think it would be beneficial for to have a research data repository, and how would you use it? Are there any particular functions that you’d like it to have?

Bridging question, for example:

From what you have told us, it sounds like we could potentially describe your research relating to …XYZ … as a data set to showcase through FedUni Research Online and Research Data Australia. As we’ve said previously, doing this does not mean that your data collections are made publically available. If you are willing to do this, could we make a start on gathering some information from you that will help us describe your research data collection?

Scope

This template will be used to create a research data collection record to be added to Research Data Australia, refer http://researchdata.ands.org.au/.

Please complete the shaded boxes as appropriate then email the form to rdm@federation.edu.au. Email or telephone ext. 9382 for assistance.
APPENDIX A

Dataset examples from other records in Research Data Australia

Data reuse statements
a) For permission to re-use this dataset, please contact Mr John Doe. Email: j.doe@federation.edu.au

b) The owner of this data collection reserves the right to provide access to the data by negotiation. You could be required to indicate your intended use of the data and to fulfil other terms and conditions as determined by the data owners. Please contact Mr Miller at @ballarat.edu.au for permission to view/re-use this data set

c) All rights reserved, except by negotiation with Centre for eCommerce and Communications University of Ballarat

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d) Individual end-users are free to access, copy and print materials for their own use in accordance with copyright law

Rights statements
a) Data associated with the various research projects at SERF are the property of the primary contacts for those projects. This data is only available for analysis and/or publication with the permission of the owner. © National University, 2005.

b) Data and statistical code used in this study were collected from publicly available websites. Analysed data are freely accessible from the links provided. Wikipedia article re-use guided by Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike License (CC BY-SA 3.0).
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For further examples you can view records on Research Data Australia