RDM@McMaster: Initiating a Research Data Management Conversation

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Research Data Management – What and why?

RDM@McMaster: Ongoing work

Where we can help

The road ahead
The Case For Data Re-use

- $Bs invested in research yearly
- Large volumes of data produced
- Data has value not only in original use, but for re-use
- Reusing & integrating data improves ROI and is a public good
Research Data Management (RDM)

- The **active** organization and maintenance of data throughout its entire lifecycle.

- Application of best practices to ensure data **security, accessibility, usability, and integrity** throughout the project and after its completion.
Why RDM?

Rewards for RDM practices are manifold:

- Granting Agencies
- Researchers
- Universities
- Research Output
- The Public
Capitalizing on Big Data: Toward a Policy Framework for Advancing Digital Scholarship in Canada

Prerequisites:
- Infrastructure (hard & soft)
- Capacity
- Standards
RDM in Canada: Identified Challenges

- Hard & soft infrastructure requirements.
- Centralized vs. decentralized.
- Disciplinary differences in data norms, cultures and requirements.
- Managing sensitive / confidential data.
- How to monitor compliance?

- Stewardship vs. ownership.
- What data to keep? How long? Who decides?
- Canada-wide protocols & standards.
- Training requirements.
- Who provides RDM services? Who pays for it?
ONGOING WORK
RDM @McMaster

1. Understanding Needs
2. Developing Services & Training

Data Solutions
Federated Support Networks
Funding Agency Requirements

Researchers

The University
Office of Research
Campus IT
Understanding RDM Needs

1. RDM needs are variable across disciplines & researchers
   - Data volume, types, requirements
   - No “one-size-fits-all”

2. Preparedness & engagement for RDM ranges widely
   - Dedicated DM operations  “DIY-RDM”
   - Norms and culture are very important
Developing Solutions

The Mid-Career Researcher

Publish & Preserve
Building Capacity & Culture

RDM workshops in development:

• Introduction to research data management
• Research data management planning
• Data management best practices
• Data organization, storage & preservation
• Domain-specific RDM activities
• Data description & publishing
WHERE WE CAN HELP
It All Starts With a Plan...

**Research Data Management Plan**
- Interview- or template-driven
- Details all RDM activities

**A Good RDM Plan:**
- Ensures compliance
- Organizes research activities
- Identifies support requirements
- Begins conversations; Builds a culture
The Squishy Middle

- Variability of researcher needs and capabilities
- Importance of ongoing stewardship
- Need for technical and systematic solutions
Closing the Cycle

**Data Description**
- Metadata standards

**Data Depositories:**
- Institutional
- Federated
- Commercial
- Discipline-specific
The Road Ahead

Next Steps:

• Continue and extend the RDM conversation across campus
• Build partnerships with selected stakeholders to develop services, tools and training
• Coordinate McMaster’s RDM interests/needs internally and externally
Thank You!

Check us out: library.mcmaster.ca/rdm

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