

# Institutional data management tools

## Maximizing the benefits for all

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**JISC**

Virtual Infrastructure with  
Database as a Service (VIDaaS)



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# What are institutional data management tools?

- Software applications or services which are centrally provided by an institution to aid data management at any point in the research process
  - Includes planning, storage, analysis, documentation, curation, and sharing
  - Often Web based (or on an institutional network or intranet)
  - Often involve some form of data hosting

# What are institutional data management tools?

- Examples include:
  - Applications (e.g. DaaS)
  - Storage and sharing systems for working copies of files (e.g. SharePoint and DataStage)
  - Institutional repositories (e.g. ORA and DataBank)
- May be unique to a particular institution, or may be a local instance of a widely-available product

# Why use institutional data management tools?

- Benefits for researchers and research groups
  - Eases adoption of good data management practice
    - Improves quality and efficiency of research
  - Data can be accessed from anywhere
  - Data is secure and automatically backed up
  - Collaboration is more straightforward
  - Easier to discover and make use of existing data sources  
(and to re-use own data later on)
  - Reduced costs make funding bids more competitive

# Why use institutional data management tools?

- Benefits for institutions
  - Improved collaboration leads to sharing of knowledge and skills across institution
  - Improved impact (and enhanced institutional reputation)
    - Through value of data being by maximized by re-use
    - Through sharing and citing of data
  - Easier to keep track of and manage data assets
  - Potential to help respond to FOI requests
  - Better compliance with research council funding requirements
  - Economies of scale mean funding is used more efficiently

# Why use institutional data management tools?

- Benefits for the research community as a whole
  - Adoption of data standards makes it easier to link related datasets
  - Re-use means data is used more efficiently, increasing quantity and quality of research
    - Reduced duplication of effort
  - Economies of scale mean more research can be done for the same money
    - Improved accountability to taxpayers

## However...

- Institutional data management tools are still in their infancy – we don't yet really know how they will play out in practice
- The potential benefits are huge – but these will only be realized if the tools meet the *actual* needs of the research community
- Different groups within the research community are likely to have different needs, different priorities, and different concerns

# Topics for discussion

- Priorities and desiderata
- Control over research data
- Data sharing
- Promoting institutional data management tools

# Priorities and desiderata

- What does an institutional data management tool need to provide to make it attractive...
  - To researchers?
  - To data management professionals?
- What does it need to provide to be valuable...
  - To institutions?
  - To the research community as a whole?
- What would make people favour it over existing ways of doing things? What potential pitfalls are there?

# Control over research data

- What are the implications of using institutional data management tools...
  - For researchers or research groups?
  - For institutions?
  - For the research community as a whole?
- Is control a zero sum game – does one party gaining more control entail another one losing it?
  - Can we create a situation that works for everyone?

# Data sharing

- What needs to happen to make data sharing an attractive (and practical) option for researchers?
- How can institutions maximize the benefits of data sharing (to themselves and to the research community as a whole) without alienating their researchers?

# Promoting institutional data management tools

- Assuming a particular tool will benefit the members of an institution, what's the most effective way to get the word out...
  - To the people who decide whether the institution will adopt it?
  - To the researchers within the institution?
- What potential barriers to uptake might there be?
  - How might these be overcome?

# Contacts

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