Apr 6th, 12:30 PM

Serving an Information Potluck at the Research Data Management Roundtable

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Atwood, Thea; Goldman, Julie; Hohenstein, Tom; Mills, Carolyn V.; and Wyman, Sally, "Serving an Information Potluck at the Research Data Management Roundtable" (2016). *University of Massachusetts and New England Area Librarian e-Science Symposium*. 3. https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/escience_symposium/2016/posters/3

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Keywords
roundtable, discussions, research data management, research data services, New England

Comments
This poster was awarded "Most Informative Poster in Communicating eScience Librarianship" at the 2016 e-Science Symposium.

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Objectives
The Research Data Management Roundtables are a collaborative effort to address the shared challenges relating to data services and the role of the library. Outside of listservs, conferences, or other multi-day events, there are few means to discuss issues related to beginning or sustaining data management initiatives among organizations, libraries, and librarians. Targeted Roundtables are one method to address this issue.

Goals
- Increase collaboration across campuses
- Help others gain from shared understanding
- Develop Communities of Interest and Communities of Practice

Format
- Occur three times per year
- One day event: Roundtable + Activity
- Informal setting with guidelines and pre-determined topic
- Capping event at a manageable number
- Committee members facilitate discussions

Attendees
Feedback on the most useful aspects of the roundtables:
- “The questions were very helpful to guide the discussion.”
- “Hearing other librarians’ ideas and successes, and commiserating about weaknesses and challenges.”
- “Learning I’m not the only one: with questions, using certain tactics to get RDM working on my campus, with my concerns and frustrations. And even better—to hear how other people solved problems or addressed issues!”

Shared Experiences Across Campuses
- Perception that the library is not as credible in data management/data services
- Inclusion in pertinent data-based conversations
- Lack of policies on research data; lack of knowledge of policies on research data
- Turf wars with other departments on campus
- Library staffing — stability, layoffs, turnover
- Limited and/or inconsistent funding
- Lack of structure or organization on campus around data management topics
- Limited shared vocabulary among librarians, researchers, administration

Outcomes
Common Discussion Themes

August 2015
- Area activity: Tour of Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center (MGHPC)
- Topic: Organizational Structures & Collaborations on Campus

November 2015
- Area activity: Data Tools Forum
- Topic: Engaging with Researchers

Suggestions for the Future
- Data policies, policy development, and examples
- How to teach data management, instruction sessions
- How to gain traction with administration
- Collaborating across campus (IT, Research Affairs, etc)
- Building staff confidence

Acknowledgements & Sponsorship
The authors would like to thank their respective institutions for committing to their professional development and the professional development of the field.

The Research Data Management Roundtables are sponsored by the Advisory Board for the New England e-Science Program. The e-Science Program is administered by the University of Massachusetts Medical School and funded by the National Network of Libraries of Medicine under a contract (HHS-N-276-2005-00109).