Engagement and outreach for data management

Case studies explaining what worked and an exercise in determining the future of data management outreach

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Online Drop-in Sessions

We ran a series of online drop-in sessions for any new figshare user at the institution. Users can bring their own data and be guided through the upload process by the engagement manager or we can do a general demo with questions throughout.

Key takeaways:

- Know where researchers are likely to see the message (flyers, newsletters, posters, postcards in mailboxes, etc.)
- Let them play around with the system themselves (either in the sandbox version or supervised in production for the first instance)
- Show lots of examples of other people uploading similar data.

"It was a great success from our side. Everyone was awed and inspired."

Niklas Zimmer
Head: Digital Library Services

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Cranfield’s RDM, Georgina Parsons, has arranged to have one data management champion in each research theme to be able to help her speak at library events, be a colleague for other researchers to speak to, and be an ear-to-the-ground for Georgina.

Key takeaways:

- Having champions in a variety of subject areas is key - data is different in different fields
- Most people were willing to help without compensation. They were already advocates for open data
- Look for people with influence and who are known in the department.

“One [champion] attended my staff training and was invaluable in providing real life examples of good RDM and why it helped him.”

Georgina Parsons
Open Access and Research Data Manager

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Carnegie Mellon University
Repository Naming Competition

Just before they were ready to go live with figshare, CMU ran a naming competition across their global campuses. They had 51 submissions, including 27 submissions from faculty and staff and 24 submissions from students.

Having a naming competition helped accomplish several goals:

- Building awareness about the new repository
- Educating the community about the purpose of a repository
- Encouraging their participants to engage meaningfully with the mission of the repository

"The naming competition promoted creativity and critical thinking, themes we hope will extend to the use of the repository itself."

Dave Scherer
Scholarly Communications and Research Curation Consultant

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Sheffield ran a lunchtime launch event about 18 months after going live with their repository. They opened it up to a small number of people to deposit and used them as case studies to speak at the launch event.

Key takeaways:

- Make sure you have a few good examples of data in your repository before going live with a wider audience
- Get endorsement from the Head of the Library or Head of Research to speak at the launch event
- Allow people to mingle after and ask questions while they’re still fresh in their minds.

“An early soft launch works really well: when we came to our full launch we already had loads of real data to show off.”

Jez Cope
Research Data Manager
Activity

- There are four posters around the room with one question on each one
- We’re going to split into groups and spend 3 minutes on each question before rotating to the next question
- Use the post-it notes at each poster to write out your responses to the question
- Once your groups has had its turn at all four posters, you’ll each be given three stickers. Place a sticker on the post-it you feel most strongly about. You may not put more than one of your stickers on a post-it
- The results will be shared with conference organisers to share after the conference

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