

Portage Status Report

2016/04/15

At its Spring 2015 meeting, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries received a report, *Portage: Organizational Framework* (April 7, 2015), outlining the aims, principles, assumptions, operations, and a service model for the Portage research data management network. This followed upon a one-year pilot project, initially known as Project ARC. The document also provided ideas on staffing, budget, funding model, and governance. Furthermore, it suggested a transition period during which services would continue to develop while establishing the governance structure and funding streams. To support these activities, CARL agreed to fund a full-time Portage Director for a two-year period, drawing on strategic reserves. Chuck Humphrey was seconded to this role from the University of Alberta, effective September 8, 2015.

The following report summarizes what has been accomplished through Portage since its endorsement last spring. A separate document outlines scenarios for paths forward that will be presented for discussion to the Portage Steering Committee and CARL Directors in April 2016. The Portage Network Framework diagram (Appendix 2) provides a view of Network's mandates using a research data lifecycle model.

Portage Aims and Accomplishments

1. Network of expertise on research data management

Aim

Capitalize on expertise and services within Canadian academic libraries and build capacity in specific areas of research data management.

Accomplishments

Four expert groups¹ displayed in the Portage Network Framework have been established, each with its own terms of reference. Plans exist to start three additional expert groups. These expert groups are developing a suite of network services, tools, and information resources.

- **Data Management Planning Expert Group (DMPEG)**
 - Institutional participation
 - The 13 members in DMPEG are from eleven institutions and one organization.

¹ See Appendix A for a list of members in Expert Groups and their institutional affiliation.

- **Activities**
 - Developed a general data stewardship DMP template in French and English.
 - Developed a bilingual user interface to the DCC DMPOnline webservice.
 - Launched the DMP Assistant webservice during Open Access Week, October 2015.
 - Developed a localization kit for institutions to administer individual library spaces on DMP Assistant.
- **Data Preservation Expert Group (PEG)**
 - Institutional participation
 - A core group of four members from three institutions and one organization.
 - **Activities**
 - Serving as an oversight group for preservation platforms, this group will collaborate with partnerships in developing different preservation components and platforms. Currently working with the Compute Canada - CARL MOU to develop a production-level preservation pipeline.
 - Taking initial steps to work with middleware projects bridging repositories and the preservation pipeline project, for example, the OCUL/SP Dataverse bridge.
- **Data Discovery Expert Group (Discovery)**
 - Institutional participation
 - A core group of four members from three institutions and one organization. This core group will identify projects for which calls will be made within the library community to work on specific tasks.
 - **Activities**
 - Have begun preparing a white paper on current best practices for discovery metadata standards and on discovery systems for research data across multiple data repositories.
 - Exploring the application of UBC's federated digital collections discovery system to research data.
- **RDM Training Expert Group (Training)**
 - Institutional participation
 - A core group of five members from four institutions and one organization. This core group will identify projects for which calls will be made within the library community to work on specific tasks.

- **Activities**
 - Have begun preparing a white paper on current research data management training activities internationally and nationally.
 - Planning the development of online training materials for the Portage website.
- **Future Expert Groups**
 - **Data Curation**
 - This expert group will focus on the tool kit, services, and skills for managing data during research projects, with the intent to facilitate the subsequent deposit of data for preservation and sharing, and for performing longer term data stewardship.
 - **Topical expert groups**
 - Ethics and Research Data: this expert group will work with the research ethics community to develop best practices for the ethical treatment of data within research projects and its subsequent stewardship at the end of projects life.
 - Peer Certification of Data Repositories: this group will work with Library and Archives Canada and the data repository community to develop cost-effective ways of certifying repositories through a peer review process.

2. National platforms for planning, preserving, and discovering research data

Aim

Connect the various infrastructure and service components needed for planning, preserving, and discovering research data by coordinating infrastructure across the country, filling gaps where tools are missing, and bridging systems where interoperability is needed.

Accomplishments

Two partnerships have been established through MOUs to provide a national data management plan web service and to develop a preservation pipeline. Discussions have been started around partnerships with four other organizations to support data discovery services, preservation storage, enhancements to Archivematica, and middleware between Dataverse and the preservation pipeline.

- **DMP Assistant: an online data management planning application.**
 - Activities
 - UAL - CARL MOU to provide a data management planning webservice as a national platform.
 - Developing a help desk ticketing service to accompany this web service.

- Working with the UK Digital Curation Centre and the California Digital Library to create a unified codebase for DMPOnline and DMP Tool.
 - **Preservation pipeline: a microservice system to prepare dissemination and archival packages for research data.**
 - Activities
 - Compute Canada - CARL MOU defining their partnership to develop a production version of a preservation pipeline and a Globus Publication repository service.
 - Completed the first six-month milestone plan and work has begun on software specifications.
 - **PREFER: a format policy register**
 - Activities
 - Working with Artefactual Inc., CARL submitted an EOI to CANARIE's research software services competition to develop a format policy registry as a webservice. While the partnership was not invited to submit a full proposal, interest remains in development this important component of the Canada RDM ecosystem. Funders are being sought
 - **Other partnerships**
 - Activities
 - Discussions are underway with UBC around developing and supporting a national data discovery engine, with COPPUL over preservation storage for research data, with OCUL/SP and UTL about enhancing Archivematica's microservices throughput for research data, and with OCUL/SP in developing middleware to connect Dataverse with the preservation pipeline.

3. Stakeholder engagement

Aim

The magnitude of managing data from research across Canada requires community-wide involvement. A primary objective of Portage is to build a community of practice for research data management. Developing the two major components of the Network indicated above is based on a strong understanding of researchers' needs and solid relationships with funding agencies, data stewards, infrastructure providers, regional academic library consortia and international collaborators.

Accomplishments

- **Regional academic library consortia**
 - The Portage Director has met with Canada's four regional academic library consortia directors: BCI in October 2015, OCUL in November 2015, CAUL in February 2016, and COPPUL in March 2016. Strong working relations with these consortia is critical to the success of the federated model upon which Portage is based. The Portage Director was also invited to make a keynote address at Scholars Portal Day on December 11, 2015.

- **Individual academic libraries**
 - Portage is looking to support the many academic libraries that have begun research data management services on their campuses. One of the goals of Portage is to coordinate aspects of such services to achieve efficiencies and to build a layer of common services across the country. The Portage Director made presentations at and spoke with staff on the following campuses (in alphabetical order): SFU, University of Alberta, UBC, University of Calgary, University of Saskatchewan, and University of Toronto. Visitations are scheduled for McMaster, Queen's, and Concordia University in May 2016.

- **Research data management stakeholders**
 - Academic research data management stakeholders
 - The Portage Director made presentations at several events involving academic stakeholders. These included:
 - the Board meeting of the Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards in October 2015;
 - the membership meetings of CARL and CRKN in October 2015;
 - a workshop for Vice-presidents of Research organized by Research Data Canada and the University of Alberta in November 2015;
 - the COPPUL/DLI workshop in December 2015;
 - the SSHRC Leaders conference in December 2015;
 - and meetings with CIHR and SSHRC officials about data management planning.
 - **Other research data management stakeholders**
 - The Portage Director made presentations at the meetings or conferences of other stakeholders with interest in research data management. These included:
 - the Cybera Summit in September 2015;
 - the Research Data Canada Steering Committee in October and December 2015;

- the Universities Canada sponsored EU-Canada Priority Setting Workshop on Big Data in Lisbon in October 2015;
 - the CASRAI Reconnect conference in October 2015;
 - the Ocean Data Management Expert Forum in November 2015;
 - a visitation with the Directors of the Digital Curation Centre and Edina in Edinburgh in November 2015;
 - the senior management team of Library and Archives Canada in December 2015;
 - the International Digital Curation Conference in Amsterdam in February 2016;
 - an invitation to Portage to participate in the discussions of unifying a codebase for DMPOnline and the DMP Tool to facilitate future collaborative development;
 - and the International Development and Research Council pilot project on research data management in March 2016.
- **Frequent contacts for the Portage Director**
 - The Portage Director has regularly scheduled conference calls with Mark Leggott, Executive Director of Research Data Canada, and with Alan Darnell and Steve Marks from OCUL/SP and UTL, respectively, to discuss weekly happenings in research data management and to coordinate work they do together. He also frequently communicates with the four Expert Group Chairs: Jeff Moon (DMPEG), Steve Marks (PEG), Jane Fry (Training), and Eugene Barsky (Discovery). A Director's Council of Chairs was recently established to bring the Director together with the Expert Group Chairs to keep one another informed.

4. Portage operations and communications

Aim

Portage is a CARL initiative and is currently supported through its membership. The goal is to develop a sustainable network built upon the support of the wider research data management ecosystem.

Accomplishments

- **A Director for Portage**
 - Chuck Humphrey was hired on September 8, 2015 on a two-year secondment from the University of Alberta.
- **The Portage Steering Committee**
 - The CARL Board approved a governance model for Portage in December 2015 and recruitment of the members for the Portage

Steering Committee was completed in April 2016. The first meeting of this body is April 25, 2016.

- **The Portage website and Twitter account**

- Under Lise Brin's leadership, a Portage website was developed from January to March 2016 and was launched on April 15, 2016.
 - Kathleen Shearer and Chuck Humphrey provided initial content for the website but have also began working with the DMP and Training Expert Groups to plan and prepare future content.
- A Twitter account was registered in April 2016.

Prepared by Charles Humphrey
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Appendix A

Portage Network Expert Groups

2016/04/25

Expert group members to date are individuals who have expressed interest or been approached by the Portage Director to meet a particular need at this early stage of the Network's development. It is anticipated that the Portage Steering Committee will advise on a governance framework for the ongoing operation of Expert Groups.

Data Management Plan Expert Group (DMPEG)

Membership: Eugene Barsky (UBC); John Borsz (UCalgary); Jay Brodeur (McMaster); Jane Burpee (McGill); Talia Chung (UOttawa); James Doiron (UAlberta); Carla Graebner (SFU); Alex Guindon (Concordia); Chuck Humphrey (Portage Director); Amber Leahey (Scholars Portal); Jeff Moon (Queen's), Chair; Carol Perry (UGuelph); Kathleen Shearer (CARL)

Technical support membership: Chuck Humphrey (Portage Director); Jeff Moon (Queen's); Diane Sauvé (UdMontreal); Weiwei Shi (UAlberta); Marie-Hélène Vézina (UdMontreal)

Data Preservation Expert Group (PEG)

Membership: Corey Davis (COPPUL); Chuck Humphrey (Portage Director); Steve Marks (UTL), Chair; Umar Qasim (UAL);

Data Discovery Expert Group (Discovery)

Membership: Eugene Barsky (UBC), Chair; John Brosz (U Calgary); Chuck Humphrey (Portage Director); Amber Leahey (OCUL/SP)

Data Training Expert Group (Training)

Membership: James Dorion (UAlberta); Jane Fry (Carleton), Chair; Chuck Humphrey (Portage Director); Laure Perrier (UToronto); Carol Perry (UGuelph); Wendy Watkins (Emeritus)

Appendix 2

Portage Network Research Data Management Framework

RDM Framework

Data Planning and Production	Data Deposit	Data Curation	Data Preservation	Data Access	Reuse & Integration
DMPs & Project-level research data management	Staging & institutional repositories	Trustworthy data repositories		Institutional and domain repositories	Virtual research environments

Portage Network of Experts

Data Management Plans	Data Curation	Data Preservation	Data Discovery
Training			

RDM Tools & Platforms

Data Management Plans	File Transfer and Deposit	Curation Toolkit and Preservation Pipeline	Data Discovery and Data Integration Toolkit
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Portage Tools

DMP Assistant	DVN2Arch Islandora2Arch Globus FTP	Open Science Framework FPR-PREFER, Archivematica Globus Publication	Federated Search (UBC)
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