



Portage Progress Report

For the period of April 2017 - September 2017

The following report summarizes Portage activities and accomplishments in the second and third quarters of 2017 corresponding to the goals outlined in the Portage Business Plan: 2017 - 2018, and provides an update on Portage operations and communications undertaken in this period.

Reporting areas include work undertaken towards:

1. Fostering a community of practice for research data management (RDM);
2. Facilitating and providing leadership in the development of RDM infrastructure;
3. Engaging and advocating for RDM with stakeholder communities; and
4. Developing Portage operations and communications.

The mission of Portage is to contribute actively to RDM in Canada through a sustainable network of library-based services and collaborative infrastructure. The following report aims to communicate our progress towards the development of this envisioned national community of practice.

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1. Fostering a community of practice for RDM

A primary objective of Portage is to build a network of expertise for RDM. Critical aspects of this objective are to coordinate and expand on expertise and services within Canadian academic libraries and to build capacity in specific areas of RDM.

Activities and Accomplishments

The following update is centered around the work of the Portage Network of Experts.

Portage Council of Chairs:

- The Portage Council of Chairs coordinates the work of the Expert Groups and informs the development of services across the network. This group serves as an organizational mechanism that supports the coordinated operation of the Portage Network of Experts, including goal setting for both the short and longer term.
- On June 13, 2017, the Council of Chairs held their second annual in-person meeting in Ottawa. The full day event gave members of the council a chance to discuss strategic planning for July 2017 - June 2018, and hear updates from each of the Expert Group Chairs and general Portage updates from the Director.
- One action item from this meeting was to schedule quarterly teleconferences in addition to the annual in-person meeting, in order to provide more opportunities for coordination amongst the Expert Groups. Accordingly, the council met again on August 18th for a one-hour teleconference to discuss progress made over the summer.

Curation Expert Group (CEG):

- The objective of CEG is to identify, evaluate, and promote best practices, resources and workflows that support data sharing and reusability for researchers within projects, as well as data within repositories.
- Members of CEG continued their work with the Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR) to test, evaluate, and provide feedback on curation flows during the beta testing stage of its development.
- CEG continued to make progress on the completion of their forthcoming white paper, which will outline requirements to support effective data curation for repositories across Canada. The paper will describe the current Canadian context by identifying expertise and knowledge gaps, as well as outline aspirational targets to achieve an idealized data curation environment.

Data Discovery Expert Group (DDEG):

- DDEG contributes expertise to the Portage network around the discovery of Canadian research data and the development of a national data discovery service.
- Two working groups formed under DDEG fulfilled their short term mandates to advance recommendations from DDEG's [white paper](#).
 - In July 2017, the Collections Development Working Group published their [Phase One Report](#), describing their work to identify a set of ten Canadian research data repositories for a pilot project to facilitate the discovery of their data collections through FRDR, which has received over 900 views to date.

- o In September 2017, the Metadata Working Group published a [Progress Report](#) summarizing their work to define the scope of metadata standards and considerations for developing FRDR, including a the production of a metadata crosswalk covering major disciplinary research standards, which has received over 1,200 views to date.

Data Management Planning Expert Group (DMPEG):

- DMPEG continues their work managing the development of the Portage national data management planning platform, the [DMP Assistant](#).
- A revised statement on [Privacy and Terms of Use](#) for the DMP Assistant were approved and published in June 2017.
- In July 2017, a DMP Exemplars Working Group, consisting of existing DMPEG members, was formed to find and/or develop sharable data management plans (DMP) to serve as exemplars for researchers approaching the task of creating DMPs themselves.
- DMPEG is currently exploring other areas of interest related to DMPs, including data licensing, ethical considerations, and sharing and reuse.

Preservation Expert Group (PEG):

- The primary objective of PEG is to provide Portage with advice on RDM infrastructure developments supporting the long-term stewardship and access of research data and metadata.
- PEG is nearing completion of an initial draft of their forthcoming white paper examining current requirements for research data preservation in Canada, including Identification of gaps in Canadian RDM preservation infrastructure and recommendation of means to provide full-functional infrastructure.

Research Intelligence Expert Group (RIEG):

- REIG provides Portage with intelligence on RDM in Canada and are currently engaged in completing a roadmap document, which will include an assessment of the international and Canadian contexts, and provide suggestions for moving forward based on the identified information gaps and research priorities.
- RIEG is also responsible for managing the clearinghouse of materials developed by the RDM Survey Consortium. RIEG has finalized the design of the clearinghouse for the RDM Survey Consortium, to be located on the Portage website. This web resource will contain copies of the RDM Survey questionnaires and ethics applications in both official languages, as well as link to data deposited by participant institutions. Before content can be posted online, RIEG is developing guidance to support the consistent use and application of these materials across Canadian research institutions.

Training Expert Group (TEG):

- The objective of TEG is to develop and maintain a high-level program for supporting RDM training across Canada.
- In May 2017, TEG produced an RDM primer document available for reuse and modification to all Canadian institutions.
- In September 2017, a Training Resources tab was added to the Portage website, which will grow to feature educational and training materials produced by the Portage

network of experts and currently links to external training resources through an [online search tool](#) developed using training materials identified in TEG's environmental scan.

- In September 2017, TEG released an [online request form](#) for RDM training. The bilingual form is available to those who are organizing RDM training on Canadian academic campuses and would like assistance developing training and guidance materials in all areas of RDM.
- Two working groups formed by TEG to produce open online training modules providing an introduction to RDM and a guide to completing DMPs, are making progress. Content development is nearly complete for both modules. Their next stage of development will include migrating the content to an online platform.
- TEG is planning future training events in alignment with the November 2017 ACCOLEDS and December 2017 Ontario Data Liberation Initiative meetings. A full-day Portage training event is also planned in co-location with the 2018 Ontario Library Association Super Conference.

2. Facilitating and providing leadership in the development of RDM infrastructure

Portage seeks to advance the development of national platforms for planning, curating, preserving, and discovering research data. This will require working with infrastructure providers - both in the library community and elsewhere - to develop new tools where gaps exist and to bridge systems where interoperability is needed.

Activities and Accomplishments

DMP Assistant:

- A revised statement on [Privacy and Terms of Use](#) was published for the DMP Assistant in June 2017.
- Weiwei Shi made several improvements to the current production version of DMP Assistant between the months of June and September 2017.
- The addition of DMP publishing and sharing capabilities to the DMP Assistant are being investigated for inclusion in an updated version of the DMP Assistant based on a unified codebase for DMP Online and DMP Tool. Weiwei Shi at the University of Alberta Libraries is monitoring these on behalf of the DMP Expert Group.

Dataverse North Working Group (DVN):

- DVN was formed to contribute to a community of practice for libraries using or interested in using the Dataverse repository platform for research data in Canada. The group was formed in April 2017 and has convened full membership meetings in May 2017 and August 2017.
- In the intervening periods, work has been advanced through three sub-groups investigating gaps and opportunities that could be addressed by nationally coordinated strategies and services for Dataverse. These groups include:
 - The **Dataverse Business Models Group**, whose work includes gathering information about major Canadian Dataverse providers and exploring a common business model to level access to universities across Canada.
 - The **Dataverse Training Group**, whose work includes surveying the training needs of various stakeholders, gathering existing training materials and proposing models for their dissemination.
 - The **Dataverse Metadata Group**, whose work includes providing recommendations for default and discipline-specific metadata templates.

Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR):

- FRDR entered into "Limited Production" on September 18, 2017. As a result:
 - FRDR is now on "production" hardware and many of the features expected for launch are in place;
 - The curation and development teams are working with a select number of research groups to curate and ingest data ranging from the natural and physical sciences, to the social sciences and digital humanities, providing a variety of data types, volumes, and client use cases. FRDR commits to making their data discoverable and accessible into the full service launch, pending funding;

- The FRDR service model and operational work flows are being refined with these groups.
- Limited Production will last until full service launch, expected for the spring of 2018

FRDR Service Model Working Group (FRDR-SM):

- FRDR-SM is a new working group that will engage the existing Portage Network of Experts and other members of the broader RDM community in the development of FRDR services. They will:
 - provide recommendations of best practices for a distributed service model;
 - review the current technology project;
 - help to identify priorities for the launch of this service and future features;
 - and will review the draft Terms of Use, Privacy Policy, and user documentation for the service.

3. Engaging and advocating for RDM with stakeholder communities

Portage seeks to advance the development of national platforms for planning, curating, preserving, and discovering research data. This will require working with infrastructure providers - both in the library community and elsewhere - to develop new tools where gaps exist and to bridge systems where interoperability is needed.

Activities and Accomplishments

Leadership Council for Digital Research Infrastructure (LCDRI):

- The LCDRI Data Management (DM) Working Group is lead by Robbin Tourangeau with representatives from CARL, the Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information (CASRAI), the Portage Network, and Research Data Canada. The LCDRI Secretariat was funded by the federal government to develop position papers on RDM and advanced research computing in the context of the Canadian research infrastructure landscape.
- The LCDRI Data Management (DM) Working Group participated in day-long working sessions on April 11, 2017, June 1, 2017, and July 6, 2017.
- The progress of the LCDRI DM Working Group was presented at the LCDRI Summit on June 27, 2017 in Toronto. Chuck Humphrey and Mark Leggott (Executive Director, Research Data Canada (RDC)) represented the DM group in a breakout session that involved a presentation on the work of the group and that collected feedback from those participating in the session. A variety of RDM matters of mutual interest among a range of RDM stakeholders were covered.
- Chuck Humphrey, with the assistance of Portage staff, made significant contributions to the writing of the LCDRI DM report over the summer months; a final draft was submitted to ISED on August 31, 2017. The report describes the concept of RDM within the existing Canadian research landscape, and includes an analysis of current challenges for success. It then outlines a desired future state for RDM in Canada and proposes mechanisms for its achievement at a national scale, including a detailed budgetary analysis and proposal based on the business line developed by the LCDRI DM Working Group.

Collaboration with Regional Library Associations:

- CARL and the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) announced in May 2017 the signing of an MOU to identify and advance regional and national issues relating to the data discovery, management and digital preservation needs of the Canadian research community, bringing together RDM expertise from CARL's Portage network and digital preservation expertise from OCUL's Scholars Portal.
- CARL and the Council of Atlantic University Libraries (CAUL-CBUA) announced in June 2017 the signing of an MOU, bringing together the collective expertise, resources and influence from CAUL-CBUA member institutions and CARL's Portage network to focus on building connections between RDM and effective digital preservation.
- Colleagues at the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire (BCI) are currently considering the development of a corresponding MOU for Quebec university libraries.
- Chuck met with the Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPPUL) Directors at their September 15, 2017 meeting and provided a summary of Portage

activities since their last face-to-face meeting on March 3, 2016. He also discussed ways in which the MOU between COPPUL and Portage is working and proposed ideas for future collaboration.

Institutional RDM Strategy Working Group (IRDMS):

- IRDMS was established to prepare supporting materials to help institutions develop RDM strategies for their campuses. The draft Terms of Reference for this inter-organizational initiative was completed and shared with the executive directors of the organizations participating in this working group, which includes CARL, the Canadian Association of Research Administrators (CARA), the Canadian University Council of Chief Information Officers (CUCCIO), the Tri-Agency Data Management Working Group, and RDC.

The Ethical Treatment of Sensitive Data Working Group:

- The groundwork for forming an inter-organizational working group on the ethical treatment of sensitive data has been completed and organizations are being approached to provide participants.

RDA Collocated Event - Portage and RDA in Canada:

- Portage held a successful event on September 18, 2017, entitled “Portage and Research Data Management in Canada”, that was co-located with the 10th RDA Plenary in Montreal, Quebec, and which drew more than 100 participants representing over 40 research organizations from across Canada.
- The day included keynote presentations discussing data policy in Canada from the [funding agency](#) and [researcher](#) perspectives, delivered by Matthew Lucas, *Executive Director, Corporate Strategy and Performance, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada*, and Lyne Da Sylva, *Associate Professor, Université de Montréal*, as well as a [panel presentation](#) by the Portage Council of Chairs.
- Concurrent workshops were offered in the afternoon: “[Portage and Data Management Plans in Canada: The Policies, Templates, and Platform](#)” provided an overview of data management plans and their value to researchers and those involved in providing research services on campus; while, “[Portage Supported Research Data Management Platforms](#)” provided an overview of Portage-supported RDM platforms with an examination of the Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR) and Dataverse.

RDC National Data Services Framework Summit:

- Jeff Moon was invited to provide a perspective on RDM from the higher education community in Canada at the RDC National Data Services Framework Summit on September 22, 2017 in Montreal and gave a presentation about the Portage Network.

Presentations by the Portage Director to CARL Institutions:

- Chuck presented the keynote address at the University of Alberta Research Data Management Week on May 1, 2017. He spoke about the Portage network establishing a community of practice in Canada that is supporting local campuses in the delivery of research data services through a federated approach.
- On May 9, 2017, Chuck met with members of the York University RDM Working Group to discuss various data topics. Following this roundtable, he made a public

presentation on Portage and RDM in Canada to York University's researchers, librarians, and administrators.

- Chuck was hosted by Dalhousie Libraries on June 5-6, 2017 where he participated in a roundtable discussion with representatives from the offices of the Vice-President Research, Dalhousie Research Services, and Dalhousie Libraries. He also made a public presentation on the Dalhousie campus about the shared stewardship of research data and met with the Dalhousie Libraries' RDM working group.

Collaboration with the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies in RDM training for graduate students in Canada:

- Discussion have been held between Chuck Humphrey and Sally Rutherford, Executive Director for the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) about conducting joint RDM training for graduate students. This proposal has been presented to the CAGS Board, who recommended holding such training events in regional meetings of CAGS members.
- Chuck has since met with the COPPUL Directors at their Fall meeting on September 15, 2017 and sought their support for a regional graduate student and librarian RDM event. A face-to-face meeting to discuss implementing joint training with CAGS is scheduled with Sally on October 4, 2017.

Other Stakeholder Engagements

- On May 8, 2017, Jeff Moon and Chuck Humphrey participated on a panel discussion about collaboration between research service offices and libraries at the annual CARA conference in Winnipeg, MB.
- Chuck was invited to speak about RDM at the Systematic Linking of Historical Records Workshop, hosted at the University of Guelph on May 12-13, 2017. He spoke this this group of researchers about the long-term stewardship of Canadian historical census microdata.
- On May 16, 2017, Chuck taught a half-day continuing education course on data management plans at the Canadian Health Libraries Association (CHLA) to participants from academic and hospital libraries.
- Chuck represented Portage on a panel discussion at the CASRAI Reconnect Canada conference in Montreal, QC on May 25, 2017. This session included speakers from the LCDRI, CARA, the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO), the ORCID-CA Consortium, and RDC.
- Chuck participated in a panel chaired by Martha Whitehead at the High Performance Computing Symposium in Kingston, ON on June 8, 2017. The three panelists provided different perspectives on data preservation. Dugan O'Neil (Compute Canada) provided a researcher's viewpoint; Umar Qasim (Chair of PEG) spoke as a digital preservation officer; and Chuck provided a data curator's perspective.

CANARIE:

- Several meetings have been held with Jim Ghadbane, President of CANARIE, and Mark Leggott of RDC about potential collaboration between CANARIE and Portage. Conversations eventually focused on the development of an RDM Software program to be administered through RDC. Susan Haigh has since written a letter to CANARIE in support for the software development program.

4. Developing Portage operations and communications

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.

Activities and Accomplishments

Appointment of Portage Director:

- Jeff Moon was appointed to the role of Portage Director for a 12-month secondment commencing September 15, 2017. Jeff previously held the position of Data Librarian at Queen's University and was the Academic Director of the Queen's Research Data Centre. He succeeds Chuck Humphrey who completed a two-year secondment from the University of Alberta.

Appointment of Interim Portage Service Manager:

- Lee Wilson was seconded to the position of Portage Service Manager, from his position as a Research Consultant at ACENET. In this role, Lee supports Portage in developing the policies, operations, and the business model for the FRDR.

CARL Directors Portage Steering Committee (CDPSC):

- The CDPSC held their second quarterly meeting on August 14th, to discuss the progress made on deliverables from the Business Plan for 2017-2018, such as the Portage Formative Assessment and the announcement of the new Portage Director. The Committee also had an opportunity to discuss Expert Group Activities and other engagement activities, the formalization of Lee Wilson's secondment, Portage communications, and progress on the LCDRI Data Management paper. This was Chuck Humphrey's last CDPSC meeting as Portage Director.
- The CDPSC held an additional meeting on September 28th, to review feedback on the LCDRI paper, hear updates on recent and upcoming engagement activities and the formative assessment, and discuss the two new Portage working groups and FRDR's MOUs with research groups. This was Jeff Moon's first CDPSC meeting, and the group welcomed two new members, Pascal Calarco (University Librarian, University of Windsor) and Colleen Cook (Dean of Libraries, McGill University).

Portage Advisory Committee (PAC):

- The Portage Advisory Committee met for the first time under its new mandate on April 25, 2017, and discussed revisions to their terms of reference, the Portage Business Plan and administrative deliverables, major RDM factors in Canada right now, and the Portage Formative Assessment. They are scheduled to meet for their second bi-annual meeting on November 1st.

CARL Spring Meeting:

- During the CARL annual Spring Meeting in Hamilton, ON on May 17-18, 2017, Chuck facilitated a "hot topics" discussion on the Tri-Council Agencies' proposed research data policy and provided a report to CARL directors on Portage activities since their 2016 Fall Annual General Meeting.

Portage Formative Assessment:

- In April 2017, the CDPSC and the PAC approved the formative assessment plan and evaluation framework developed by CARL, in accordance with the Portage Business Plan for 2017-2018.
- The purpose of the assessment was to assess the impact and community value of Portage to date, determine any course correction, new activities, or program improvements indicated by the evaluation, develop an evaluation framework and indicators, and gather benchmark data to be used in future summative evaluation.
- With the approval of the CDPSC and PAC, Portage secured a contract with external consultant Pam Bjornson (Management by Design), to conduct the assessment with support from Julie Morin, CARL Project Officer.
- Phase 1 of the assessment included an examination of core documentation, surveys to CARL Directors and Expert/Working group participants, one-on-one interviews with governing members, stakeholders and partners, and two focus groups on the subject of platform infrastructure.
- The two online surveys circulated as part of the assessment received a 55% response rate from CARL Directors, and a 48% response rate from Expert/Working group members.
- The initial draft of the assessment was completed and submitted to Susan Hagh on September 20th.