



Portage Progress Report

For the period of October 2017 - December 2017

The following report summarizes Portage activities and accomplishments in the last quarter 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 met for a one-hour teleconference on November 20th, where they had the opportunity to discuss updates presented by members of the Portage Secretariat on new working groups, stakeholder engagement, upcoming event, processes, the Portage Formative Assessment, and the LCDRI submissions. Each of the Expert Group Chairs also provided a brief update on the progress of their respective groups. The Council agreed that they needed more time to discuss topics requiring coordination among the groups, and plan to hold a two-hour teleconference in late February.

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.
- In November 2017, CEG produced a modified work plan with the following deliverables:
 - Developing a briefing document that communicates basic information about data curation, its requirements and benefits
 - Collaborating with FRDR to provide and scope future data curation services
 - Developing a data curation survival guide, that provides basic guidance and links to resources for persons in curatorial roles
 - Continuing their data curation white paper on requirements for establishing a Canadian curation network

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.
- Both the Collections Development Working Group and Metadata Working Groups completed their terms.

- Terms of reference were developed for a new working group, tentatively titled the FRDR Discovery Service Working Group, which will continue the work of the former Collections Development and the Metadata Working Groups by identifying Canadian repositories for inclusion in the Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR) and developing core lists of metadata standards for mapping to FRDR.

Data Management Planning Expert Group (DMPEG)

- DMPEG continues their work overseeing the development of the Portage national data management planning platform, the DMP Assistant.
- Carol Perry (University of Guelph) was named interim Chair of DMPEG in October 2017.
- In November 2017, DMPEG released a call for participation seeking volunteers from both the library and broader research community (e.g. data managers, researchers) to contribute in-depth expertise in various fields of research to their group.
- DMPEG is exploring opportunities to develop domain-specific DMP templates for the DMP Assistant, as well as other areas of interest, including data licensing, sharing and reuse.

Preservation Expert Group (PEG)

- PEG provides Portage with advice on RDM infrastructure developments supporting the long term stewardship and access of research data and metadata.
- PEG is nearing completion of their forthcoming white paper, examining the current data preservation environment and proposing a model for a national data preservation service in Canada.

Research Intelligence Expert Group (RIEG)

- RIEG provides Portage with intelligence on RDM in Canada and are responsible for managing materials and outputs of the Canadian RDM Survey Consortium.
- RIEG is completing final reviews of their environmental scan that will inform their forthcoming roadmap document assessing the international and Canadian RDM environments, and providing suggestions for future development based on the identified gaps and priorities.

Training Expert Group (TEG)

- The primary objective of TEG is the development and maintenance of a high-level program for supporting RDM training across Canada.
- Two working groups formed by TEG are in the final stages of developing content for forthcoming online training modules providing an introduction to

RDM and guidance on completing DMPs. Their next stage of development will include migrating content to an online platform that supports both English and French language interfaces.

- A new webpage announcing upcoming Portage events was released on the Portage website.
- TEG members participated in two Data Liberation Initiative (DLI) training events. James Doiron and Jeff Moon led a half-day workshop at ACCOLEDS in November 2017, and Laure Perrier and Jeff Moon led a presentation at DLI-Ontario in December 2017.
- Reprising the sessions offered in Montreal earlier this fall, TEG has been organizing another free day of information sessions on Portage and research data management on Tuesday, January 30th, 2018, at Ryerson University in Toronto.

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

- Updates on the unified codebase for DMP Online and DMP Tool continue to be monitored by Weiwei Shi (University of Alberta), on behalf of DMPEG. The official code release is currently scheduled for February 2018, to align with the IDCC conference in Barcelona.
- During the 2017 calendar year, 12 out a total 34 institutional accounts were created and 972 out of a total 2,662 user accounts were registered for the DMP Assistant.

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. Work is being advanced by three sub-groups investigating gaps and opportunities that could be addressed by nationally coordinated strategies and services for Dataverse.
- All sub-groups worked towards the completion of their draft briefing paper and recommendations due by end of January 2018.
 - **The Dataverse Business Models Group** distributed two surveys to gather benchmarking data from libraries that have adopted or are thinking about adopting Dataverse as a data management tool for their institutional RDM services, and from institutions that are running a local Dataverse instance for their own use or for use by a consortium of libraries.
 - **The Dataverse Training Group** distributed a survey to gather information on the experiences of librarians, researchers, research staff, students, and Dataverse administrators in using Dataverse, as well as to better understand what training subjects, materials and methods would be most helpful for knowledge and skills development.
 - **The Dataverse Metadata Group** continued their work to develop a default metadata template describing which fields should be required, recommended, and optional in order to best describe a dataset added to Dataverse.

Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR)

- FRDR is a joint project between CARL/Portage and Compute Canada to create a single point of discovery for Canadian research data and a scalable repository capable of handling large volumes of data.
- As of September 2017, the FRDR service is available in Limited Production. Anyone may use FRDR to search across Canadian repositories to find and download research data and we are working with a select group of researchers to curate, store, and disseminate their data.
- In the first quarter of 2018 we will be looking to expand our Limited Production service offerings to include more Canadian researchers.
- FRDR is working closely with several Portage EGs and WGs, most notably the PEG, CEG, DDEG, and FRDR-SM WG as one part of a suite of national data services.
- FRDR development is also occurring in consultation with members of DVN to ensure that the two repository services are interoperable and development is complementary.
- Future developments for FRDR will be focused on addressing a gap in the management of raw or “active” research data, particularly those held in Compute Canada systems.

FRDR Service Model Working Group (FRDR-SM)

- The FRDR-SM WG was formed to draw on community expertise in the development of service and business models, policies, and operational workflows for a federated research data repository platform. After several months, a decision was made to create three sub-groups with focuses on policy, user experience, and business models respectively.
 - **The Policy Subgroup** will focus on policy development for the FRDR service, particularly around repository data policies, Terms of Use & Privacy Policy agreements, and Memoranda of Understanding/Service-level Agreements for institutions.
 - **The Workflows, User Experience and Training Subgroup** will focus on the user-experience side of the FRDR service by providing feedback on, and suggestions for, the improvement of the front-end design, user-facing documentation, training materials, and informational/promotional materials for FRDR.
 - **The Budget and Business Planning Subgroup** will explore the business aspects of operating a nationally coordinated service for data publication, with a focus on infrastructure, platform development, and associated human resource costs.

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 Secretariat was funded by the federal government to develop position papers on data management, advanced research computing, and coordination, in the context of the Canadian research infrastructure landscape. The LCDRI Data Management (DM) Working Group was led by Robbin Tourangeau, with representation from CARL, CASRAI-CA, the Portage Network, and Research Data Canada.
- The LCDRI DM Working Group has produced a report responding to feedback received from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) regarding the LCDRI DM report, submitted to them in August 2017. The feedback report aims to clarify aspects of the DM report from a broad RDM perspective, using examples from Portage and others where appropriate.

Collaboration with Regional Library Councils

- The Portage Director provided an update on the work of the Portage network in a webinar organized by COPPUL on December 14th.
- Regularly held group meetings between the Portage Director and representatives from all 4 regional library councils are being planned to begin in January 2018.

Institutional RDM Strategy Working Group

- The purpose of this working group is to provide institutions with a resource for facilitating discussions and processes for preparing and institutional strategy for RDM.
- The working group's membership includes broad representation from CARL, the Canadian Association of Research Administrators (CARA), Canadian University Council of Chief Information Officers (CUCCIO), Tri-Agency Funders, Research Data Canada (RDC), Offices of Vice-Presidents of Research, and CASRAI-CA. Members have committed to serving a six-month mandate.
- The working group held their first two meetings in November and December 2017, and are developing a template to guide institutions in articulating an overarching institutional strategy for RDM. A draft template created by Kathleen Shearer (Research Associate, CARL) will serve as the foundation for this group's work.

Inter-organizational Working Group on Ethical Research Data Management Practices

- This working group will provide practical guidance in managing sensitive data by identifying best practices from both the international community and Canadian experiences, while investigating and addressing ethical issues surrounding research data.
- Draft Terms of Reference were completed for this working group in November 2017, who will hold their first meeting in January 2018. Membership includes broad representation from the following stakeholder groups: Canadian Association for Research Ethics Boards (CAREB), the First Nations Information Governance Centre, Research Data Canada, the Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research, Statistics Canada, Tri-Agency Funders, research service offices, and advanced research computing centers.

Presentations by the Portage Director to CARL Institutions

- The 2017 CARL Fall General Meeting included a session on LCDRI and Research Data / Portage, chaired by CARL President, Donna Bourne-Tyson. During the session, LCDRI Executive Director, Robbin Tourangeau, provided a high-level introduction to the research data management landscape in Canada and the work of LCDRI, including three position papers submitted to ISED. This was followed by an update on Portage, presented by Jeff Moon, and a summary of key findings and recommendations from the Portage evaluation, presented by Pam Bjornson, Consultant, Management by Design.

Other Engagements

- The Portage Secretariate met with various stakeholders in Ottawa in early October 2017 to discuss topics of mutual interest and collaboration in the realm of RDM. Stakeholders included representatives from the Tri-Agency, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, and the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies.
- As mentioned above, the Portage Director participated in two DLI training events with representatives from the Portage Training Expert Group (TEG); including a half-day workshop at ACCOLEDS hosted by Thompson Rivers University, on November 29th, and a presentation at DLI-Ontario hosted by the University of Toronto, on December 4th.
- The Portage Director provided a brief update via the web at the CODATA Annual Meeting, held in Ottawa on December 1st.
- CARL President, Donna Bourne-Tyson, Portage Service Manager, Lee Wilson, and COPPUL Digital Preservation Network Coordinator, Corey Davis, presented on the development of a federated research data repository service in Canada at the Coalition for Networked Information's Fall 2017 Membership Meeting in Washington D.C. on Dec. 11-12th.

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

CARL Directors Portage Steering Committee (CDPSC)

- The CDPSC met 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). The group will meet again on January 23rd.

Portage Advisory Committee (PAC)

- The PAC met on November 1st, and discussed the Portage Spring Summer Progress Report and administrative deliverables, including Portage communications, the Portage Formative Assessment, and project funding opportunities. The committee also decided to start meeting quarterly instead of bi-annually and plans to meet again in early February.

Portage Formative Assessment

- As mentioned above, the penultimate draft of the Portage Formative Assessment Summary Report was presented to CARL Directors as part of the meeting package for the Fall General Meeting, and Pam Bjornson provided a summary of the report during the LCDRI, and Research Data / Portage Session. The draft was formalized and published to the Portage website in French and English on December 6th, 2017. The report concludes that Portage has been delivering on planned outcomes, and provides ten recommendations, some of which encourage Portage to continue or adapt current practices, and others to institute some new practices. A strategic response was drafted by Jeff Moon, and will be reviewed at future staff meetings.