JISC Research data preservation projects meeting

Thursday 22 March 2012 at 11.00

LSE library, room R301

NOTES ON THE MEETING

Attendees: Barbara Bultmann, Cambridge. Anna Collins, Cambridge. Ed Fay, LSE. Debra Hiom, Bristol. Fiona Marshall, Cambridge. Malcolm Raggett, LSE. Patricia Sleeman, ULCC.

1. Update on each project's findings and progress including briefing on past and current training provision

   Each project summarised the findings of their user survey. Although we had approached this in different ways (structured interviews, workshop, on-line questionnaire) our findings were remarkably similar. Even Bristol/DataSafe, which is concentrating on support staff and records data preservation, found resonances.

   Cambridge, LSE and ULCC had all found that the phrase "research data" was not recognised by some researchers especially in the arts and humanities. Although we would continue to use this phrase within the group, an alternative to "data" would need to be found when relating to researchers. LSE has already adopted "research material and data". A similar situation occurred when talking about metadata; again, an alternative wording would be needed for those who are not information specialists.

2. Compare identified needs of trainee community

   The types of issues we had found fell into two categories that could be titled (i) culture/attitude/workflow, and (ii) preservation skills.

   Issues in **culture/attitude/workflow** included: a failure to see why other researchers may want access to their data; a lack of appreciation of how preservation could benefit the individual and scholarship in general; the lack of data planning that was occurring.

   Issues in **preservation skills** included: choosing and using appropriate file formats; incorporating data preservation into the workflow; working with repository criteria for research data deposit.

3. Discuss training provision to be developed

   We agreed that no one method of delivery or approach would suit all our target audiences, but having material that could be re-purposed for several modes (e.g. group training and on-line learning) would be the best tactic. Furthermore, all projects are constrained in what they will produce by their project scopes and institution-specific requirements. We did, though, identify several areas where collaboration would be mutually beneficial, so we agree the following joint action:

   (i)   Cambridge will set up a wiki to enable us to develop firstly a structure and set of questions for a FAQ, then secondly to develop where possible generic answers to these questions, accepting that some (many?) will need to be tailored for each institution;

(ii)   LSE will develop and design a top-level brochure about research data preservation containing the core points and links to further information. This will be adapted from the similar-but-independent 4-point structures proposed by ULCC and Cambridge, namely: Explain it – Store it Safely – Share it – Start Early;

(iii)   LSE will lead development of guidelines on preservation file formats.

4. Possible joint end event

There was not a perceived need for a dissemination event at the end of the projects.

5. AOB

There was no other business.