



ON THE HUNT FOR WILD RESEARCH DATA

Can staff develop in new areas of librarianship without detracting from their primary role? Curtin University Library is growing its research data skill base by sending staff on a scavenger hunt.

Curtin University Library has been rapidly building its research data management capabilities over the last 12 months. Until recently, only a small number of specialist staff worked with research data. Curtin Library's Great Research Data Scavenger Hunt will provide opportunities for all library staff to be involved.

The project commenced with training from the wonderful staff at the Australian National Data Service (www.ands.org.au). The Scavenger Hunt's quarry is Curtin researchers' datasets that may be 'in the wild' (datasets already openly available without formal curation, description and/or licensing). Participants will negotiate for the datasets

to be openly published using an AusGOAL (www.ausgoal.gov.au) approved licence and make metadata available via Research Data Australia (researchdata.ands.org.au). Each dataset will receive a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) to simplify referencing and tracking of citations.

Library staff interested in the project submitted brief expressions of interest outlining their client liaison, copyright (including open access), digital preservation and metadata creation experience. Nobody is expected to be an expert in all of these areas. In fact, nobody is expected to be an expert in any of these areas!

Teams of participants with complementary skills were created to reduce the impact on individual workloads. Each team has six months to find and describe a single dataset, so work on the project can be scheduled for convenient times.

The Scavenger Hunt will be a fun and rewarding experience. Participants will learn about a new field of information management and collaborate with colleagues from all areas of the library. In turn, the library will bootstrap its collection of Curtin research datasets.

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STOPPING THE ROT

Thanks to funding from the Australian National Data Service (ANDS), Australian Policy Online (APO) is undertaking a data citation project at Swinburne University of Technology. The vision behind this project is to make policy material more discoverable, citable and usable, and to facilitate the long term accessibility of the collection by assigning persistent Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) to applicable resources.

APO is a digital library of research and resources for public policy and practice in many different areas: environment, business, communication, education, health, Indigenous affairs, politics, social research and science and technology.

One of our biggest challenges is managing the ongoing problem of 'link rot', where hyperlinks pointing to content on websites break as a result of the linked website disappearing, changing content, or moving. This is prevalent with a lot of the university and government material to which we provide access – every time a department gets renamed, or there is a change of government and websites are changed, you can say goodbye to any of that content we have linked! Our users have to be prepared to get frustrated by those nasty 404 error messages.

DOI minting is increasingly becoming one of the most popular international standards for data citation, and is considered best practice.

DOIs are permanent identifiers that are able to recognise data throughout its entire lifecycle – greatly enhancing discoverability and retrieval for researchers and institutions. The ability to measure the impact of policy research will be drastically improved through this process, and ANDS maintains that when research is regularly cited, it achieves greater legitimacy and importance.

By making the resources in the APO repository permanently identifiable, APO will ensure that government, non-government organisations, businesses and researchers are able to find the research they need to better advocate for change and influence public policy.

If you are interested in publishing your research/data on APO and receiving DOIs for your publications, you can register on the site (www.apo.org.au/user/register) and upload it yourself (and have some control over how your content is catalogued). Alternatively send it to the editor (editor@apo.org.au) and we'll do it for you.

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