RDM Repository Evaluation Checklist

Dimension	Sub-Criteria	Description / Measurement
Usability	User documentation	Evaluate quality, completeness, and clarity of manuals, online guides, tutorials.
	SUS score (optional)	Conduct or review usability surveys with representative users (admin, researchers, data curators).
	User role support	Check support for key roles (data steward, depositor, reviewer, admin).
	Basic tasks support	Assess ease of performing typical repository tasks: deposit, publish, edit metadata, manage access.
Metadata Management	Metadata enrichment support	Ability to define, extend, or enrich metadata schemas (e.g., custom templates).
	Custom metadata	Support for domain-specific or project-level metadata fields.
	Standardised vocabulary support	Integration with domain ontologies, controlled vocabularies, or taxonomies.
	Findability & metadata	Support for standards, DOI minting, metadata exposure via OAI-PMH.
Data Handling	Data upload	Methods and limits for file upload; drag-and-drop, API upload, large file support.
	Searchability	Availability of full-text search, faceted search, advanced filters, indexing performance.
	Browsing	Ease of navigating collections, communities, or datasets.
	Versioning	Dataset and file version tracking and comparison capabilities.
	Linking	Support for linking related datasets, publications, grants, projects.
	Deletion	Soft delete, retention policies, and compliance with institutional policies.
	Publishing	Support for embargoes, DOI assignment, review workflow before publication.
	Access control	Granularity of access control (dataset-level, file-level, role-based).
Interoperability	API support	Availability of REST, GraphQL, or SDKs for programmatic access and automation.
	Integration capabilities	Ease of integrating with systems e.g. , identity providers (ORCID, LDAP), or other specific tools.
	Standards compliance	Compliance with standards (metadata, data exchange, FAIR)
	Data import/export	Supported formats, batch import/export options, preservation formats.
Extensibility & Maintenance	Installation complexity	Evaluate steps, documentation quality, and technical expertise required.
	Configuration	Flexibility and difficulty of configuring appearance, workflows, and metadata.
	Monitoring	Built-in or external monitoring/logging support for performance and errors.
	Documentation	Availability and completeness of system and API documentation.
	Design Flexibility	Modular architecture, ability to add or remove custom modules and components
	Developer friendly	Ease of customization and code extensibility (framework, documentation, APIs).
	Extension / adaptation	Support for plugins, themes, modules, or custom workflows.
Governance & Compliance	Version and provenance control	Provenance tracking for data and metadata changes.
	Auditing	Logging of user actions, administrative changes, and compliance events.
	Policy enforcement	Mechanisms to enforce retention, embargo, or sharing policies.
	FAIR reporting	Built-in tools or reports showing FAIR compliance metrics, or possibility to add own
Adoption & Integration	Institutional adoption	Evidence of adoption across research institutions or universities.
	Domain adoption	Number and diversity of scientific domains actively using the platform.
	Ease of domain adaption	Ease of customization for specific disciplines or data types.
	Community trust and maturity	Longevity, governance transparency, reputation within the RDM community.
Community & Sustainability	Deployment model	Supported deployment types (cloud, on-premises, hybrid, containerized).
	Open source	License type, openness of development, IP restrictions.
	Active development	Release cycle, commit frequency, responsiveness to issues.
	Community support	Forum, mailing list, issue tracker activity, response, developer community
	Sustainability / Roadmap	Clarity of roadmap, long-term governance.