IASSIST REGIONAL REPORT FOR CANADA 2020

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Membership

As of May 1 2020, there were 50 active IASSIST members from Canada. This represents a decrease from last year, reflecting a pattern of decreases in years when the annual conference is held further afield.

Overview

There have been numerous exciting and innovative initiatives underway again this year across Canada. In reporting on activities, there is recognition that global events have found us all adapting to online collaboration to move these initiatives forward. Timelines are often elusive. I will highlight several major initiatives in this report.

The single most important initiative this year was a move by the Canadian government, through Innovation, Science & Economic Development Canada (ISED) to commit $572.5M over five years towards the development of a national Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI) strategy. As part of this initiative, $375M was earmarked for the establishment of a new national not-for-profit organization to bring this strategy into being. This new organization, New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization (NDRIO) has now been formed.

This dedicated funding is a game-changer for the development and sustainability of RDM supports in Canada. Until now, initiatives have consisted of ad hoc supports and services created by stakeholder groups in an effort to provide a level playing field for researchers across the country.

New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization (NDRIO)
https://engagedri.ca/

NDRIO's core mandate is to assist researchers in conducting globally competitive, leading-edge research through the development of a digital research infrastructure strategy focused on the provision of digital tools, services and infrastructure. It will coordinate and fund activities in Advanced Research Computing (ARC), Data Management (DM) and Research Software (RS)

This year NDRIO worked with stakeholders and partners across the country to begin establishing its inaugural board, developing institutional membership and creating a five year plan. This organization will develop a new service delivery model by pulling together a number of current organizations and transitioning their operations into the new organization over the next few years.

Portage (CARL)
https://portagenetwork.ca/

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) Portage Network has been extremely active this year. A number of new expert groups have been established, bringing in a wider range of stakeholders. Several surveys were undertaken to assess the institutional readiness for widely anticipated Tri-Agency funding council policy directives in RDM.

Work continues in the migration of the DMP Assistant platform to the new integrated Roadmap version. The plan is to launch DMP Assistant 2.0 in 2020.

During the fall of 2019, Portage in partnership with McMaster University developed and delivered a national Curation Workshop supported by a SSHRC Connection Grant.

Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR)
https://www.frdr-dfdr.ca/repo/

The Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR) project continues to operate in limited production mode. This joint project of CARL/Portage and Compute Canada provides Canadian researchers with a preservation platform for big data and acts as a Canadian data repository portal for providing access to research data from across the country. Sixty-five collections from Canadian repositories have been indexed within the portal.

OCUL/Scholars Portal
https://dataverse.scholarsportal.info/

Scholars Portal (SP) continues to provide digital data infrastructure in support of research data services at higher institutions across Ontario. The Dataverse platform operated by Scholars Portal has expanded its partnerships to include institutions from across Canada and is now available in both English and French. Additional funding has been provided by CANARIE and Portage.