

---

# Digital repositories: dealing with the digital deluge

JISC Conference  
University of Manchester,  
5-6 June 2007

Conference reviewed by: Neil Jacobs  
*Programme Manager,*  
*Information Environment, JISC*  
Tel: 0117 33 10772  
E-mail: [n.jacobs@jisc.ac.uk](mailto:n.jacobs@jisc.ac.uk)

---

Libraries are increasingly being faced with working in the complex and demanding world of electronic research and scholarship. A key response to these demands has been the development of interoperable digital repositories.

This recent JISC conference in Manchester saw delegates discussing some of the issues faced and offered an opportunity to share practical solutions. JISC presented its vision for a UK repository network, whereby managing and sharing resources is straightforward and effective. A number of JISC project leaders that have been instrumental in assisting this at both the national and local level took part in the event.

Nationally, projects such as Sherpa, Sherpa Plus and, most recently the Repositories Support Project have provided advice, support and guidance to institutions setting up and running repositories. On the technical side, the UK Intute Repository Search and the IRIScotland project have shown that, at least in managing the provider side and exploring value-added services, federations of this scale are valuable. Novel value-added services are emerging: the RIOJA project is exploring the interfaces that a repository would need to support the functions of an overlay journal, a much discussed and perhaps overdue development. Peter Murray Rust, a Cambridge chemist, offered a glimpse of the services that become possible once the technical and legal barriers to open access are overcome, so that the power of the Web and Web 2.0 can be deployed to enable real-time collaboration, join-up of hitherto disparate content, text and data mining and so on.

Of course, such services rely on high quality, well-described and lawful content being available, and the conference delegates heard from projects that ensure that this is possible. The Versions and, more recently, Version Identification Framework projects are developing a widely-agreed vocabulary to describe the versions of a research paper that might be in a repository. As well as being Shakespearean partners, RoMEO and Juliet are also services that indicate whether a particular paper can be, or must be, deposited into a repository. All this is very well, but not all universities have repositories, although more and more do, and some researchers therefore have until now been unable to gain from the benefits that accrue by making their papers open access. The conference saw the launch of The Depot, which offers a place for researchers to make their peer-reviewed papers open access should those papers have no other home.

There is a range of contexts for all this work. Internationally, the Netherlands has created a repository network (DAREnet), including specific services highlighting the elite scientists and those just starting out ('Cream' and 'Promise' of Science respectively). The EU DRIVER project has built an international network, which includes the Sherpa consortium in the UK. However, at a national level, delegates agreed that there are particular advantages from coordinated national initiatives, including a unified approach to metadata, marketing and communication, the involvement of scholars, a unified approach to copyright, and of course the building of the institutional repository infrastructure.

The JISC digital deluge conference also addressed the increasingly hot topic of how repositories can manage research data, images and multimedia, and (topically, given the launch next year of the UK EThOS service) doctoral theses.

## USEFUL WEB SITES

Presentations and reports from the event can be found at:

[http://www.jisc.ac.uk/events/2007/06/repositories\\_conference.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/events/2007/06/repositories_conference.aspx)

An introduction to the JISC Repositories Network can be found at:

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/publications/repositorynet.aspx>

(includes links to the Repositories Support Project, Intute Repository Search and the Depot)

Sherpa:  
<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/>  
(includes links to Repositories Support Project,  
RoMEO, Juliet and Ethos)

IRIScotland:  
<http://www.iriscotland.lib.ed.ac.uk/>

Rioja:  
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ls/rioja/>

The Versions and Version Identification Frame-  
work Projects:  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/library/versions/>

DAREnet:  
[http://www.darenet.nl/en/page/language.  
view/home](http://www.darenet.nl/en/page/language.view/home)

EU Driver project:  
<http://www.driver-repository.eu/>

All sites accessed July 2007.