AN OVERVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH DATA COMMONS
PARTY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

Introduction

The Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) Party Infrastructure Project is a National Library of Australia (NLA) project funded by the Australian National Data Service (ANDS). The project is adapting the People Australia infrastructure to enable the distributed management and persistent identification of records about Australian researchers and research organisations. In doing so it will encourage the better management and curation of data generated by Australian research and supports the long-term access, use and re-use of this data. Detailed information about the project is available via the project wiki located at http://wiki.nla.gov.au/display/ardcpip.

Project overview

The project is divided into two stages: a Consultation/specification stage (February – July 2010) and a Development and Implementation stage (August 2010 – June 2011).

In Stage 1 the project team consulted with ANDS, the Project Advisory Group (http://wiki.nla.gov.au/display/ardcpip/Advisory+Group) and organisations in the broader research sector about requirements for the identification and description of researchers and research groups. A party data survey was carried out to determine how data about researchers and organisations are managed in Australian research institutions. The results of this survey are available on the project wiki (http://wiki.nla.gov.au/display/ardcpip/Party+Data+Survey).

The Project Advisory Group was comprised of the following members and organisations:

Australian Research Council

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The Project Advisory Group was disbanded in August 2010. Organisations from the Project Advisory Group are now participating in the Early Implementers Group.

A Names Roundtable event was held at the NLA on Friday, 18 June 2010 (http://wiki.nla.gov.au/display/ardcip/Names+Roundtable). This event briefed key stakeholders in the research sector about the proposed Party Infrastructure, provided presentations from a number of ANDS projects who will be using the infrastructure and enabled the discussion of key issues that will need to be addressed by the project, ANDS and party data contributors more broadly.

A key deliverable for Stage 1 was the development of the ARDC Party Infrastructure Description (http://bit.ly/9CpX7X). This document provides a detailed overview of the party infrastructure and defines how it will work in the research sector. In particular it articulates the expected roles and responsibilities of the various parties in the research sector in interacting with the infrastructure and defines four scenarios for its use.
The information obtained from the Names Roundtable, the consultation process and the survey has been most valuable and has enabled the development of the detailed specifications for development of the NLA Party Infrastructure.

Work in Stage 1 was also carried out to prove that the infrastructure could provide party data to the ANDS collection registry. As a result of this work the preliminary bidirectional exchange of metadata between NLA services and the ANDS collections registry was established.

The first stage of the project was completed in July 2010 and Stage 2 commenced in August 2010. Stage 2 will build the Party Infrastructure as defined in and agreed at the conclusion of Stage 1 and will focus on:

- supporting the new version of the ANDS Registry Interchange Format for Collections and Services (RIF-CS) on ingest and dissemination;
- providing the existing Party Administration Tool to allow contributors to match their records with existing Party Infrastructure records or to create new records;
- implementing usability and reporting improvements to the Party Administration Tool;
- the development of technical documentation and a party data administrator's guide;
- upgrading the Party Infrastructure to support the Encoded Archival Context for Corporate bodies, Persons and Families (EAC-CPF) standard. Currently the base record format is EAC 2004 (beta) and EAC-CPF better aligns with research sector requirements; and
- the development of an improved automatic matching algorithm to cater for contemporary person and organisation data from the research sector.

In September 2010, the project team released the current version of the Party Administration Tool for use by early implementers. This will allow them to manage their data and obtain NLA party identifiers for submission to the ANDS Research Data Australia service. ANDS staff have received training in the use of the Party Administration Tool and will be providing training to staff working on ANDS funded projects in its use. The delivery of this training will ensure the uptake and ongoing use of the Party Infrastructure.

In August and September 2010 the project team ingested data from two early implementers, Griffith University and the Queensland University of Technology, and over the course of the next eight months will work with a number of other organisations, such as those engaged in ANDS metadata store projects and the CSIRO, to increase the number of early implementers of the Party Infrastructure.

At the start of October 2010 work commenced on the migration from EAC 2004 (beta) standard to EAC-CPF and the improvement of automatic matching rules. Work on the design for the new version of the Party Administration Tool has also commenced. It is expected that the new version of this tool will be available in the second quarter of 2011.

**Recommendation**

The Libraries Australia Advisory Committee to note the report.

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8 October 2010