

CoreTrustSeal as a framework underpinning policy and technical development

Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) adopts Repository Audit and Certification Catalogue RDA Recommendation



"The Digital Repository of Ireland was launched as a new national infrastructure in June 2015. We developed our research infrastructure hand in hand with the Data Seal of Approval requirements, receiving the Seal soon after our launch. This has facilitated the CoreTrustSeal certification process in 2018 although completing a thorough assessment of one's work across a range of challenging categories is no small task. It required input from all members of the organisation, efforts to align policies, decisions about what statements/documents should be published, and fixes to technical and organisational processes.

In short, it created a common goal to rally around, it improved what we do, and it provided a way for different aspects of the organisation to exchange information and debate best practices. We reviewed and updated our policies and procedures and were one of the first organisations to be awarded the new CoreTrustSeal early in 2018. The fact that the CTS was built in a bottom-up way through the large and diverse network of the Research Data Alliance builds confidence in its fitness to purpose, which is ultimately to ensure the trustworthiness of a repository's data stewardship over time."

Natalie Harrower, Director Digital Repository of Ireland

The challenge

During the CoreTrustSeal certification process, we were faced with a number of key challenges. It was important to recognise the diversity, commonalities and differences across Humanities and Social Science (HSS) data. We had to include consideration of different digital curation practices, the evaluation and adoption of several metadata standards (including the use of Gaeilge/English language metadata), and the variety and complexity of potential media formats. We had to ensure our development process was in line with national and international best practices, and with Irish law, which meant considering all relevant aspects related to copyright, intellectual property, privacy, ethics, consent, anonymisation, access, re-use rights, sharing rights, and termination.

The benefits of adopting the RDA output

We decided to adopt the CoreTrustSeal, the RDA Recommendation developed by the Repository Audit and Certification / DSA-WDS Partnership Working Group, as the framework underpinning our policy and technical development.

Any technical decisions made during the adoption process will have an impact on the future capabilities and capacities of our infrastructure. The CoreTrustSeal is a coherent, robust and valid policy framework that ensures a holistic approach is taken. This coherent framework highlights important areas of policy or infrastructure development, and encourages decisions to be made with a view to long term developments. Additionally it provides our members with a measure of trust in our own processes.



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The RDA Adoption process

The DRI policy manager oversaw the process. We clustered the requirements into three groups; policy, organisational and technical, and assigned a staff member to lead each requirement. The responses were discussed within the appropriate task-force. Similarly, the responses from the CTS organisation to our application were discussed within

task-forces and across the team. A key 'side-benefit' of the CoreTrustSeal application process is that it facilitated structured discussion across all areas of the organisation, and encouraged staff to learn more about other elements of DRI not directly in their daily purview.

Main takeaways

On submission of our application, we benefited from an iterative process of discussion and questioning between the auditors and the repository. This high level of attention to the repository was invaluable to us. In particular, we were able to read the applications of other organisations so that we could learn from their varying experiences and

approaches at addressing similar problems.

We would absolutely recommend a similar adoption. An audit framework helped us develop our repository, learn from the experience of others and gain the trust of our stakeholders.

About DRI

The Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) is a national trusted digital repository (TDR) for Ireland's social and cultural data. It preserves, curates, and provides sustained access to unique and important collections from a variety of organisations in Ireland, including higher education institutions, cultural institutions, government agencies, and specialist archives. In addition to providing trusted digital repository services, the DRI is also Ireland's research centre for best practices in digital archiving, repository infrastructures, preservation policy, research data management and advocacy at the national and European levels. With particular expertise in Open Science and digital cultural heritage, DRI contributes to policy making nationally (e.g. via the National Open Research Forum and the IRC), and internationally, including European Commission expert groups, the Digital Preservation Coalition, DARIAH, and the OECD.



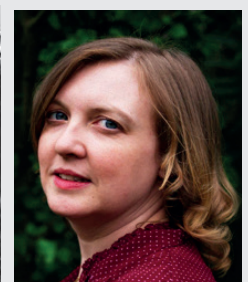
The DRI stakeholder community

DRI's designated community is composed of our members, whose collections DRI stewards, as well as end-users of DRI's open access data that span across research, education, and the general public. Membership is open to Research Performing Organisations and institutions, organisations and digital archives who hold humanities and/or social sciences data. As of 2019 DRI has 15 members, which include universities, archives (including the National Archives of Ireland), the National Museum of Ireland, National Library of Ireland and other organisations holding digital humanities and/or social science data. Core academic institutions continue to manage the repository and implement its policies, guidelines and training. These are the Royal Irish Academy (RIA), Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Maynooth University (MU).

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