Institutional Strategies: Assessing Institutional Readiness Discussion Prompts

The purpose of these discussion prompts is to help direct/inform conversations among those working on creating institutional strategies at your institution. These questions are by no means exhaustive, but are meant to provide a starting point for things to consider when working on an institutional strategy. It's also possible that not all these questions will apply to every institution, so don't feel obliged to tackle each one. Rather, use these questions to guide your process and to also think of additional questions that may be valuable at your institution.

Assessment Models

- What work has been done to assess the state of RDM at your institution?
- What assessment models mesh with your institution?
- Who will be responsible for conducting an assessment?
- What relevant stakeholders should be included in the assessment

Scanning Your Institution's Existing Assets and Practices

- How will you scan your institution's RDM assets and practices?
  - Consultations, surveys, department meetings?
  - A collaborative effort?
- Do you have an ideal state already defined or is there work to be done?
- What are the unique capacities of your institution?
- What are the unique needs of your institution?
- What departments across your institution are currently involved in RDM services?
- What resources do you already have in place in terms of human, organizational, infrastructure or financial resources?

Identifying Best Practices

- What are your institution's research communities?
  - How might you assess what the specific needs are of these research communities? Are some of these research communities already involved in RDM practices?
- What are the common needs across these research communities?

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Service Infrastructure

- What kind of repositories are used by departments and researchers (e.g. general or specific)?
- Is there currently an institutional repository for data deposits?
- What are the current RDM supports, both internal and external, which are being used at your institution? These might include:
  - Informational website(s) on RDM
  - Advisory services
  - Technical support with data encryption, anonymization, etc.
  - Research computing services, including training and access to high performance computing (HPC)
  - General RDM best practices or DMP training
  - Targeted hands on RDM workshops
  - Curation support
  - Specific financial support to researchers
- Will you need additional software or hardware to provide these services?

Staffing and Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP)

- Are you able to support your existing and planned RDM services at your current staff level? Will you require additional staffing or training?
- Who is responsible for active data storage? Is this institutionally, departmentally supported?
- Who is responsible for compute resources? Is this departmentally, institutionally, or nationally supported?
- Does your institution currently have access to the technical expertise required?
- What are the current skill levels available at your institution? These might include:
  - Legal (copyright and IP)
  - Technical skills
  - Data security and risk management
  - Data analysis and visualization
  - Metadata creation
  - Data curation
  - Data preservation

- ○ Technical skills - e-infrastructures
- ○ Research software development
- ○ Researchers' operational data management
- ○ Knowledge of national policies
- ○ Coding skills
- ○ Advanced research computing (ARC) skills
- ○ Advisory

Costing and Funding

- What potential internal and external sources of funding are available to implement your strategy?
  - ○ Are these sources one-time or long-term?
- Have you considered the data storage costs and whether or not you will charge researchers?
- What other departments at your institution might have additional costs due to an RDM strategy?
- In the following areas of cost considerations, what do you already have, what do you need, and what can you afford?
  - Staffing
  - Software
  - Hardware
  - Licensing
  - Workshops

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Other Considerations

- What are your institution's current barriers or challenges to supporting RDM? These barriers may include but are not limited to the following:
  - Lack of time
  - Limited awareness and expertise in RDM
  - Absence of incentives to promote RDM
  - Lack of funding
- What are the different disciplinary practices to consider when developing overall policy?