Thinking of Creating a Shared Repository?

Potential Advantages

- Shared software installation: shared technical support.
- Pooling financial resources: e.g., the White Rose partnership was able to create a full-time Project Officer position.
- Shared policies and documents: e.g., a one deposit licence (but will it need approval from each partner’s legal department?).
- Shared experience and expertise: a lesson learnt by one partner can be applied immediately to all partners.

Possible drawbacks

- Institutions are from the same geographical region, the repository may be useful for identifying “local” researchers and promoting regional research collaboration.
- Demonstrates cooperation between partners.
- Can capitalise on an established “brand” or collaborative model – as with the “White Rose” grouping, e.g., the Research Pro-Vice Chancellors from the three White Rose partners meet regularly.

Some issues to consider

- Where will the software be installed? Who will provide technical support?
- URL, name, “brand”.
- If it is sufficient to run your repository on the basis of “good will” cooperation between the partners or is a more formal consortium agreement required?
- Who will make key management decisions about the repository?
- How will any differences in opinion between the partners be resolved?
- How will advocacy be co-ordinated across all the partners?
- What sort of validation checks will be needed? How can you ensure that only researchers from the partner institutions upload work?
- Will it cause any political problems if one partner makes much greater use of the repository than the others; or if one partner has much less content in the repository than the others?
- How will researchers feel about a shared repository? Will they feel the same “ownership” of the system as if it were dedicated to their own, local institution?
- Will it be possible to extract and export data for one (or more) partners if they wish to create their own repository?
- Will publishers accept the shared system as an “institutional repository”?
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