Framing and Implementing Researcher Services at the University of Pennsylvania

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Abstract: The University of Pennsylvania Libraries is building a comprehensive suite of researcher services. This poster will review the framework to be used and the implementation already under way. We will show how these services provide a synergy to be exploited for the benefit of the researchers and the university. At the same time, we argue this integration provides a more efficient way to deliver these specialized services in an institution like ours, and how the lessons learned could guide implementations at other institutions. Our framework for services entails three components: products, support, and benefits. Products are tools used in creating or managing research outputs and workflows throughout the research lifecycle. Examples of these include internally supported products, such as Symplectic Elements, VIVO, DMPTool, or BePress’ Digital Commons; and externally used products, such as ResearchGate, Academia.edu, or MyNCBI. Support is defined as librarian activities aiding researchers directly - with or without a mediating product. Examples of these are copyright guidance, data management advice, grant support (e.g. compliance), and the dissemination of scholarly materials. Benefits are the value these products and services bring to the whole university’s community and the individual researchers. For example, the university benefits from greater compliance by its researchers in terms of continuous funding. Finally, there are other clear benefits for both individual researchers and the university, such as the provision of metrics. These metrics provide a measure of the individual researcher’s impact and, in an aggregate form, give university’s administrators guidance for strategic initiatives. The Libraries’ work on researcher services has reached a critical point of convergence in the last few years. While several products and research support have both been offered for many years now, their delivery has been piecemeal. The integration of tools, the increase in complexity and multidisciplinarity of the research enterprise, and the movement of research creation and dissemination toward mainly digital environments, have made holistic support for researchers by the Libraries a necessity. We will review what the process has been to implement these services in several different avenues. For example, VIVO was implemented two years ago to satisfy a requirement of a CTSA award to our institution. This requirement of making available a profile system for the researchers at the Perelman School of Medicine (PSOM) established a strong relationship between a cross-functional library team and PSOM. The school already had a homegrown database of faculty profiles invisible to outsiders, but the VIVO platform made their research outputs and expertise public and easily discoverable. Now we are in the process of implementing Symplectic Elements as the new internal profile system for PSOM. Its rollout will bring several benefits hitherto unavailable: data quality assurance through the use of canonical sources, updated bibliometrics and altmetrics for scholarly outputs, simplified workflow for depositing materials into our institutional repository, and the generation of reports of great value for institutional research and for compliance of large grant awards, among others. We envision great opportunities and challenges ahead in implementing these services. We have identified the need for cross-functional teams to be reformed into a more cohesive and independent library unit with more focused efforts by its librarians. We have also developed onboarding processes for rolling out new internal products to different schools within our distributed institution. Our ultimate goal is to provide researchers with a “one-stop shop” for all of their needs throughout the research lifecycle.
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Case Studies

Copyright Guidance
The Penn Libraries provides workshops, training sessions, individual assistance, and other guidance on copyright matters [1]. Faculty members can additionally choose to have their publications included in Penn’s institutional repository, ScholarlyCommons [2], which offers a full permissions service. For each publication, the ScholarlyCommons staff assesses copyright, publisher policies, and seeks permission from the publisher as needed on the faculty member’s behalf.

Data Management Advice
The current deployment of DMPTool at Penn by the Library initiated a major outreach effort across all of its 12 schools. This outreach helped the Library position itself as a player on advising researchers on how to manage data in order to prepare it for its eventual publication. Online guides take researchers over the research lifecycle and points out resources along the way [3]. In addition, ScholarlyCommons has boilerplate text connected to Penn’s instance of DMPTool for researchers who choose to use ScholarlyCommons as part of their data management plan.

Grant Support
The Library has deployed several systems to facilitate grants application, and compliance after being funded. Besides those already mentioned, training sessions on using NIH’s MyNCI and NHMII for faculty and administration assistants have been high-ly successful. This training supports the federal government’s open access initiatives and helps the university to comply with NIH’s policies to access continuous funding. Throughout delivering these services, the Library is now considered a go to resource for troubleshooting compliance issues.

Dissemination of Scholarly Materials
The Libraries offers services and advice for internally and externally supported products which researchers can use to disseminate their scholarly materials. To make their works openly accessible, faculty members can choose to have their works includ- ed in Penn’s institutional repository. Because all of publications undergo a permissions check before being included in the IR, the researchers can use these results to further disseminate their materials through externally supported products, such as Research- Gate, Academia.etc, and other personal websites. The Libraries also provides guidance to researchers in finding a repository for datasets associated with a publication, as re- quired by certain journals.

Profile Management System
The Libraries is currently deploying a comprehensive management system of scholar- ly products for researchers. This service is branded Expertise@Penn and will consist of the deployment of Symplectic Elements [4] and VIVO [5] instances. The former is an internal system while the latter is a front-end platform making research outputs and expertise public and easily discoverable. Together, these tools will enable the efficient management of researchers’ portfolios, the generation of reports of great value for insti-tutional research and for compliance of large grant awards, and enhanced collaboration opportunities across the university. In addition, the ScholarlyCommons department has been developing a workflow to use Elements to ingest materials to the IR and also improve the existing records in Expertise@Penn.

Background

Scholarship Workflow

Complexity & Interdisciplinarity
Shift to Digital Environments
Tool Integration

Penn Libraries Strategic Plan 2013-2017 [6]: “The Library will be known for a well-articulated portfolio of researcher services.”

Lessons Learned
Establishing clear governance:
• Roles and responsibilities
• Clear expectations for the service
Assessing needs and communication:
• Determine what is essential in roll out vs. important but implementable later
• Identify key decision makers involved
• Internal discussions on systems updates and functionality
Optimizing workflows:
• Implement project management
• Determine key personnel in making the system useful and comprehensive
• Through understanding of the systems out of the box
• Support easy propagation of information and integration of related systems
Training:
• Group training for scalability
• Diverse users according to their roles

Challenges
• Decentralized institution with varying needs
• Navigating through legacy systems capabilities
• Implementing system changes affecting the whole institution vs. school/departmental needs
• Creating a central support that routes issues to the appropriate parties
• Shift in culture from supporting products of scholarship to supporting processes of scholarship
• Getting buy-in from both users and administrators
• Engage more the Digital Humanities librarians as the majority of these ini-tiatives are in STEM disciplines.

Acknowledgements
We would like to thank Lauren Gala, John Mark Ockerbloom, and all of the Expertise@Penn team members for their contributions to this poster and for stimulating discussions.

Bibliography & Resources
[1] Copyright Guide: http://guides.library.upenn.edu/copyright
[2] ScholarlyCommons: http://repository.upenn.edu
[4] Expertise@Penn Guide: http://guides.library.upenn.edu/expertise