

# Critical Success Factors for populating repositories and services identified by six European good practices

This report is a result of the European DRIVER research project *Stimulating the Population of Repositories* conducted in 2006 and 2007.<sup>1</sup> It is a descendant of the 2008 publication:

Proudman, V. (2007) The population of repositories In Eds. K. Weenink, L. Waaijers and K. van Godtsenhoven, *A DRIVER's Guide to European Repositories* (pp.49 - 101) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.  
For the more details and full text open access to this chapter, [see http://dare.uva.nl/aup/nl/record/260224](http://dare.uva.nl/aup/nl/record/260224).

The six good practices interviewed as part of the DRIVER research project *Stimulating the Population of Repositories* were:

Minho University Institutional Repository (Minho), Southampton's University of Research Repository (Soton) and School of Electronics and Computer Science (ECS EPrints Repository), CERN Document Server (CERN), HAL - Hyper Article on Line (HAL), Cream of Science (Cream), and Connecting Africa (CA)

These repositories and services listed critical success factors for populating repositories and their services at interview. Issues are divided into repositories, services as well as those generic to both.

## 1. Critical success factors generic to both repositories and their services

### 1.1 Management and organisation

- Obtain the support of heads of schools, university vice-chancellors and university management teams. (Soton)
- Obtain the commitment of top-level management to better guarantee future content deposit. (HAL)
- Receive full backing from the director of the institution for the initial idea, its development and maintenance. (CA)

### 1.2 Content issues and services

#### 1.2.1 Added value services

- Ensure that your IR delivers added value services. (Soton & HAL)
- Conceive a strong idea which brings you top quality content: e.g. showcase your excellent research and its researchers. (Cream)

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<sup>1</sup> DRIVER - Digital Repository Infrastructure Vision for European Research: <http://www.driver-community.eu/>

- Listen to your researchers, know what their problems are and tell them how you will address them by providing meaningful benefits. (Soton)
- Establish a central platform which researchers identify with and can buy into. It is essential to highlight the value of the archive as a scientific tool for *them*. (HAL)
- Acquire institutional buy-in by utilising opportunities such as the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). (Soton)

### 1.2.2 Content dissemination / acquisition – push and pull

Pull;

- In order to reach critical mass, although a mandate can boost the acquisition of content, in a community with a self-archiving tradition, it is necessary to negotiate and collaborate with the services which researchers deposit with to reach content acquisition goals. (CERN)
- Identify important information aggregators and establish agreements to ingest material into your IR (metadata *and* full text where possible) for the efficient acquisition of both new and missing content. (CERN)
- Harvest IRs from the international community to aggregate more global content thereby attracting more community interest and extending your network. (CA)

Push:

- Push content from your repository to other information services which are of importance to your researchers such as arXiv.org. (HAL)

## 1.3 Infrastructure and technical issues

### 1.3.1 Personnel resources

- Establish a team with good know-how to answer the demands of the researchers to maintain and develop the IR and its services. (Minho & Cream)

### 1.3.2 Technical

- Utilise web services (SOAP) for efficient information retrieval between web applications. (CA)
- A post-harvest analyser can serve to aggregate content more cost-effectively. (CA)

### 1.3.3 Other

- Take an opportunistic approach – “Just do it, don’t spend too long thinking about it.” (Jens Vigen, CERN).
- Be willing to risk a new and innovative idea. (Cream)

## **2. Critical success factors specific to Institutional Repositories**

### **2.1 Policy issues**

- Establish an institutional policy which mandates the deposit of academic output. This is the main factor for the successful population of an IR. Accompanying financial incentives can help obtain significant content within a relatively short space of time for critical mass, causing a snowball effect. (Minho)
- Establish a policy which allows some autonomy to the researchers. Permit those involved in deciding on the content to be aggregated and profiled. There is no size that fits all. (Minho & Soton)

### **2.2 Advocacy**

- Active advocacy is important to demonstrate the benefits of the IR. (Minho)
- Engage all stakeholders:
  - Engage all levels of faculty for support from management to researcher to administrator. (Soton)
  - Ally with stakeholders of the system, i.e. departmental administrators, members of the internal peer review process, to enable the efficient deposit of institutional content. (CERN)
- Ensure that a demonstrator is available as rapidly as possible. (Soton)

### **2.3 Content issues and services**

- Aggregate and publish statistics on the access and use of your authors' work. (Minho)
- Showcase population successes and research impact through statistics. (Soton)
- Ensure international visibility of both your IR and its content as this can have multiplying effects. When colleagues hear of the IR abroad, this can encourage further take-up, and more significantly the university can increase its opportunities in obtaining research funding. (Minho)

### **2.4 Infrastructure and technical issues**

#### *2.4.1 Deposit mechanism*

- Establish a developed and simple workflow from research to publication. (CERN)
- Ensure that the deposit system is straightforward. (Soton)

#### *2.4.2 Support structure*

- Be able to respond to positive take-up with the infrastructure and resources for support in place. (Soton & HAL)

### **3. Critical success factors specific to repository services**

#### **3.1 Organisation / networks**

- Define a common milestone where all partners club together for one common good and sense of achievement. (Cream)
- Share expertise on IPR, technology and advocacy on a national level. (Cream)
- Establish a national institutional network and user communities for knowledge exchange to strive to achieve a common goal and product together. (Cream)
- Make things easy for participating libraries by supporting them in realising aims on an operational level. (Cream)
- As project funder, share the costs with project partners by assisting them in time-consuming and complex activities such as digitisation, metadata entry, etc. (Cream)
- An organisation serving a specific-subject community with a key networking function is in a sound position to lead a portal. (CA)