

IASSIST REGIONAL REPORT FOR CANADA 2021-2022

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Membership

As of June 1, 2022, there are 67 active IASSIST members from Canada. This represents a slight increase over last year, a possible reflection of the effects of the pandemic on an increased need for virtual collaborations and connections.

Overview

The second year of the pandemic has continued to affect everything about the way we work and continued to radically alter the research process and research imperatives for many researchers. There continues to be collaborative work in the data field, and the Research Data Management (RDM) field, in a virtual environment. The next year should prove to be interesting as in-person meetings and consultations are starting to occur once more.

This past year, a number of Canadian-specific RDM initiatives were completed (e.g., the MAMIC), others were updated (e.g., the DMP Assistant), and some were begun (e.g., the RDM OER resource). As well, a guide on Data for Racialized Populations was created in response to demand from researchers.

Detailed Information:

Data Liberation Initiative (DLI) <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/microdata/dli>

DLI provides Statistics Canada public use microdata files and aggregate data files to subscribing institutions across Canada. As well as access to these files, national training was provided to the DLI contacts and alternates in 2021. There are many DLI contacts who are also IASSIST members. In 2022, the Statistics Canada Nesstar server was decommissioned; we are thankful for its many years of service. Soon to be launched is its replacement from Metadata Technology North America (MTNA) - the Rich Data Services (RDS) platform, with Colectica also playing a role.

Tri-Agency Research Data Management Policy – Institutional Strategy

https://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_97610.html

“Each postsecondary institution and research hospital eligible to administer CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC funds is required to create an institutional RDM strategy and notify the agencies when it has been completed.”

“The strategy must be made publicly available on the institution’s website, with contact information to which inquiries about the strategy can be directed. Having the strategies publicly available will help the agencies and the broader research community to understand institutions’ current and planned RDM capacity, challenges and needs, and will facilitate ongoing dialogue and collaboration on the advancement of RDM in Canada.”

This strategy has to be completed by March 1, 2023.

Digital Research Alliance of Canada (the Alliance) <https://alliancecan.ca/en>

The Digital Research Alliance of Canada (the Alliance; formerly the New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization, formerly Portage) was established in 2019 as a non-profit membership-based organization mandated to coordinate and fund activities in Advanced Research Computing (ARC), Research Data Management (RDM) and Research Software (RS), and to advance the national Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI) strategy. The Alliance is funded by the Government of Canada through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED). RDM services transitioned from NDRIO on April 1, 2021.

The Alliance's work in RDM includes national and international activities to advance it and to support researchers. [Research data management services](#) include:

- The Federated Research Data Repository ([FRDR](#)) is a bilingual, secure and robust repository for large research datasets. The total volume of published data is 109 TB.
- The FRDR discovery service aggregates Canadian research data from the Repository Service and 90+ other repositories to make it discoverable and reusable. A total of 73,319 records are discoverable.
- The Sensitive Data Pilot Project (through FRDR) aims to simplify administrative and regulatory processes while supporting researchers with sensitive data storage, access and re-use.
- The Data Champions Pilot Project aims to promote a shift in data culture through sound RDM practices.

Introducing Borealis:

- [Scholars Portal Dataverse](#) is becoming [Borealis, the Canadian Dataverse Repository / le dépôt Dataverse canadien](#). The new name draws connections to the Canadian landscape and reflects the growth from a regional to a national service, now supporting 60+ institutions across Canada. This change is planned to go live on June 23, 2022 at borealisdata.ca.
- This service is provided by the Canadian Dataverse Consortium, with representatives from the service provider, the University of Toronto Libraries, and participating regional library consortia: [Bureau de Coopération Interuniversitaire \(BCI\)](#), [Council of Atlantic University Libraries \(CAUL\)](#), [Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries \(COPPUL\)](#), and [Ontario Council of University Libraries \(OCUL\)](#).
- Borealis also receives national funding and support from the Digital Research Alliance of Canada (the Alliance).
- In 2021-2022, ten institutions using the Canadian Dataverse Repository participated in the Alliance's national CoreTrustSeal Certification Cohort.



Other RDM Highlights:

- **Data Management Plans (DMPs)**

The past year saw a number of highlights relating to the Canadian data management plan (DMP) landscape. The Digital Research Alliance of Canada's [DMP Expert Group](#) (DMPEG) continued to develop and make available a range of resources including brief guides, exemplar DMPs, and tutorial videos, all of which are available through the Alliance RDM's [training resources webpage](#). Additional resources that are currently being developed include new discipline and methodology specific exemplar DMPs, a DMP 101+ tutorial video, and an updated in-depth [DMP Assistant](#) Administrative Guide. DMP Assistant, a freely available web-based bilingual platform for supporting the development of DMPs and which is hosted by the University of Alberta Library with support from the Digital Research Alliance of Canada, recently had a 3.0 version release. In early 2021 a national DMP Assistant Steering Committee was formed, consisting of representatives from the Alliance, host institution, DMP Service & Development Team, DMPEG, Tri-Agency (federal funding agencies across the Health, Social, and Natural Sciences), and the First Nations Information Governance Centre.

- **RDM OER (Open Educational Resource)**

<https://www1.rebus.community/#/project/d87dea3d-1c54-47e5-9c7a-dfe71b8463f4>

Currently, there are no RDM teaching resources that reflect Canadian policy and practice. A number of Canadian academics and librarians, including faculty who teach existing RDM courses, formed a group to discuss creating a bilingual Canadian RDM Open textbook. Each section (organized into approximately 20 chapters) will cover fundamentals of RDM that have been identified as necessary by RDM practitioners and instructors. The resource will be peer-reviewed, copy-edited, and published in French and English via Pressbooks. As the textbook will be an Open Educational Resource, instructors, students, and professionals can use the resource as is or customize it to meet needs, and much of the material will be useable as is for international users or can be freely adapted.

- **RDM Maturity Assessment Model in Canada (MAMIC)**

<https://zenodo.org/record/5745493#.YpaKNVTMKUk>

The RDM Maturity Assessment Model in Canada (MAMIC) is based on the RISE and SPARC assessment models and has been adapted to fit the Canadian institutional context. There is currently no other Canadian maturity assessment model so the development of the MAMIC was essential for Canadian research institutions. The MAMIC is designed to help evaluate the current state of institutional RDM services and supports as part of an institutional RDM strategy development process. It focuses on four areas of service and support, and allows users to assess the maturity and scale of these services.

One of many research developments: Data on Racialized Populations

<https://learn.scholarsportal.info/featured/data-on-racialized-populations/>

This new guide consists of a curated list of datasets that include ethnicity and race variables which can be used to facilitate anti-racism research in Canada. Although not comprehensive, the intention is to provide a starting point for researchers investigating topics about anti-racism and the impact of racism. The next step is to create a resource for finding data on racial justice in Canada, the USA and Europe.

IASSIST Membership

Many Canadian IASSIST members are deeply involved in the work of the DLI and the Alliance (DRAC) on a regular basis. The engagement at a national and international level by these members is of benefit to these three organizations, as knowledge and expertise is developed and shared.

Canadian members appreciate having a choice of attending the IASSIST annual conference in person or virtually this year, especially those for whom funding is an issue, as virtual attendance is quite affordable.

IASSIST Officials

Canadian Regional Secretary: Jane Fry

Canadian Members at Large: Dylanne Dearborn, Amber Leahey