STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Leigh Garrett
Director
Centre for Digital Scholarship
University for the Creative Arts
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Why manage research data?

- funder requirements
- demystify artistic methods
- enhance discoverability
- minimise data loss
- new applications
- reliability and validity
- new interpretations
- track impact more accurately
- semantic web tools can discover links
- promote research opportunities
- maximise value of public funding
- showcase and maximise impact
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Work in progress…

KAPTUR (2011-2013)
• explore the nature of research data
• recommendations for its management
• develop a model of best practice
• apply, test and refine the model
• disseminate the outcomes

VADS4R (2013-2014)
develop a series of workshops and toolkits to engage early careers researchers and students with research data management practice
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Challenges

• defining research data
• managing research data
• institutional engagement
• infrastructure requirement
• curation
• capacity building
• service development
What is research data? Oh you mean stuff...
What is research data? Oh you mean stuff...
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

What is research data? Oh you mean stuff…

‘...I’m just like anyone else I’ve got boxes of stuff, I’ve got a garden shed and then I’ve got files, I’ve got electronic files and I’ve got physical files, I’ve got ring binders full of clippings, full of photographs, and I’ve got documents of exhibitions that I’ve been in, I’ve got catalogues of exhibitions I’ve been to…’.

Visual Researcher, KAPTUR Environmental Analysis (2012)
What is research data?

Researchers agree

- research data is important
- they want to share research data
- they want to document their research process but do not use any particular standard or methodology

Research data is

- tangible and intangible
- heterogeneous and infinite
- complex and complicated
- physical and digital
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Institutional engagement

Understanding
• purpose
• definitions
• funder requirements
• costs

Organisation
• institutional regulations
• contractual obligations
• policies, procedures and responsibilities

Practical
• staff and organisational change
• workload and priorities
Institutional engagement

Each partner institution
- adopted a project sponsor
- objective of high level policy
- stakeholders identified
- established working group
- recommendations to committee
- policy approved
Infrastructure requirement

Which technical system is most suitable for managing visual arts research data?

- selection criteria agreed
  - solution
  - storage
  - interface
  - system
  - institutional
  - additional requirements

- seventeen potential solutions identified
Infrastructure requirement
Which technical system is most suitable for managing visual arts research data?

- scoring revealed five potential solutions
  - ePrints
  - DataFlow
  - figshare
  - fedora
  - ckan

- no solution met the requirements

- work is ongoing with partners, technology providers and funders
What do you need to consider when managing research data in the visual arts?
Curation

What do you need to consider when managing research data in the visual arts?

- ethics, legal compliance, copyright and licensing
- naming conventions, metadata and documentation
- risks, data storage and backup
- standards and formats
- what to preserve, how and costs
- where to publish, to whom for how long and costs
- responsibilities
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Capacity building

Changing research practice
• purpose
• terminology
• institutional perspective
• technology
• curation

Changing institutional culture
• engagement
• infrastructure
• interdependencies
• costs
Capacity building

Internal dissemination
- creation of toolkits and training materials for researchers and professional support colleagues
- internal and national workshops

External dissemination
- partner case studies
- technical case study
- national and international conferences and papers

Project conference and workshops
STUFF AND DATA

challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Service development

• leadership
• responsibilities
• engagement
• technology
• resources and costs
Conclusions

Service development

• directing, developing and embedding good practice will be ongoing
• our understanding of research data and research practice is evolving
• identify an effective technical solution
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Lessons
• interdepartmental dependencies
• external collaboration
• researcher engagement
• project sponsors
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Leigh Garrett
Director
Centre for Digital Scholarship
University for the Creative Arts
STUFF AND DATA
challenges for research data management in the visual arts

Image Credits


End of Year Degree Shows, University for the Creative Arts, UCA Rochester (2013).


Dr Simon Ofield-Kerr, Vice Chancellor, University for the Creative Arts.

Denise Wren (1960s) 21 small tiles used to demonstrate different saltglaze tests. Online at: http://www.vads.ac.uk/large.php?uid=74581.

BA (Hons) Three Dimensional Design (2009) University for the Creative Arts.