

Catalogue and Index

Editorial

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Those of us who don't work in academic institutions might find repositories a bit of an unknown entity. In this issue we hope to solve your dilemma – we give you everything you always wanted to know about repositories but were afraid to ask. We start with articles by Gareth Johnson and Jackie Wickham that provide some background information, and follow up with more personal articles from a variety of practitioners that give a flavour of what it's like managing a repository, dealing with classification problems, and moving from cataloguing into repository management. We hope these will answer most of your questions. Finally, we include a review of a seminar and a book review.

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Managing a Creative Arts Institutional Repository

Anne Spalding, Repository and Digitisation Officer, LLS , University for the Creative Arts

Background

About ten years ago there were very few institutional repositories for the creative and applied arts. UCA Research Online <http://www.research.ucreative.ac.uk> was a direct outcome of a JISC funded project called Kultur which developed 'a transferable model for an institutional repository for the creative arts.' (Kultur, 2012)¹ The project partners were the University of Southampton, University of the Arts London, University for the Creative Arts and the Visual Arts Data Service, with Leiden University as an associate partner.

Two of the outputs of the Kultur project concerned metadata, quoted in full below.

'2. A transferable model of an uber repository based on providing flexibility in matching metadata and indexing to discipline needs.

4. A metadata, preservation and access framework as an exemplar for managing material in the visual and creative arts compatible with evolving international standards and the work of a national data centre (Visual Arts Data Service).' (Kultur, 2012)² A full metadata report is available at <http://kultur.eprints.org/Metadata%20report%20Final.pdf>

Traditionally, repositories have been text-based and the Kultur project 'addressed the need for IRs to expand their capacity to manage non-text outputs effectively. At the same time, it has also responded to a disciplinary need for a more robust information infrastructure for practice-led research, which is particularly important for art and design as a relatively new but expanding research discipline.' (Kultur)³

Some of the drivers for creating IRs are: Open Access (OA) which in broadest terms means free and instant access to scholarly research and learning outputs; the Research Excellence Framework which is driving the need for institutions to record and manage their research outputs; and funder mandates requiring that research outputs are more readily available. The quotes below illustrate the context of these drivers.

David Willets in The Guardian on Tuesday 1st May said that 'we will make publicly funded research accessible free of charge to readers.' (Willets, 2012)⁴

'Overall availability of scholarly information will be of utmost importance in the future. The information should be available with a single mouse click, at any time and anywhere.'

'OA, Open Content and open data are becoming part of an overall framework within universities, and the information provided by those institutions is becoming a fundamental component of public research information.' (Mossink and Estelle, 2010:p189)⁵

UCA Research Online began with 50 items in 2009/10 and has grown to 426 in the last two to three years. The table below compares the increase in traffic to UCA Research Online during May 2011 and May 2012. The statistics are from Google Analytics. The aim of UCA Research Online 'is to store, share and preserve the research material produced by the University's researchers and ensure that it reaches the widest possible audience, benefiting staff and students at UCA, and the public.' (research.ucreative, 2012)⁶

Month	No. of visits	No. of unique visits	% of New visitors	% of Re-turning visitors	No. of countries
May 2011	256	157	50.78	49.22	20
May 2012	1140	834	63.42	36.58	57

The Team

In January 2010 I was seconded, from my previous role as Data Quality Manager and Cataloguer, to the role of Repository and Digitisation Officer for eight months. In September 2010 the role was made permanent and I remained in post. UCA is a specialist art and design institution with campuses in Canterbury, Epsom, Farnham, Maidstone and Rochester. There are more than 7000 students from over 70 countries study courses in art, design, architecture, media and communications.

I am the only full-time member of staff running the IR with on-site technical support from the Planning and Development Manager who is part of VADS (Visual Arts Data Service). As UCA Research Online is run on EPrints software further support is bought in from EPrints services. I report to the Library and Learning Services Central Services and Head of Collections but work closely with the Research Office.

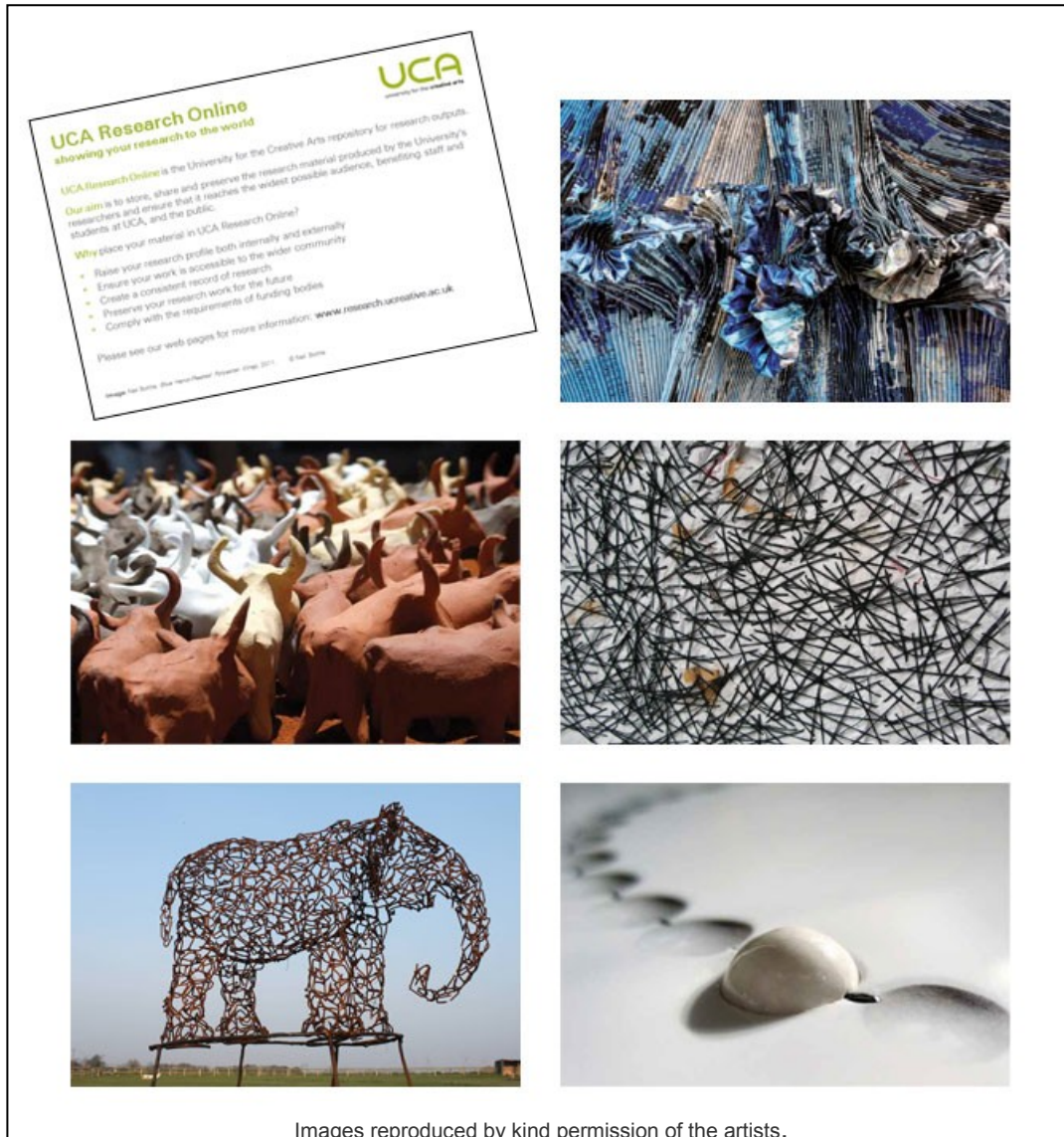
Managing a repository

This job is varied, interesting, demanding and rewarding in equal measure and no two days are ever the same. The job can be divided into two main areas, service provision and liaison and networking. The first is to provide overall day-to-day management of the service and to undertake development of UCA Research Online as appropriate. Liaison and networking involves working with others to promote and develop the IR.

Managing UCA Research Online has many aspects and these include but are not limited to:

- the management and development of the IR
- familiarity with metadata standards and the ability to maintain these within the IR
- an understanding of the digital preservation and curation of data
- the ability to provide advice and guidance on intellectual property rights (IPR)
- advocacy to various stakeholder groups within the institution
- communication skills including the use of statistics
- the ability to promote UCA Research Online.

The five postcards (below) showcase some of the creative research outputs from staff and postgraduate students across our campuses. On the reverse of each postcard is information highlighting the benefits of using UCA Research Online.



Images reproduced by kind permission of the artists.

I use the traditional librarian skills in the following ways: the editing of metadata, cataloguing the artistic research outputs of our researchers, and the classification of those same items. In the course of the last two years I have also learnt more about digital curation and preservation, marketing skills, IPR and copyright. The ability to communicate effectively is very important in order to convey the appropriate tailored message to different stakeholders.

Research projects

I have been fortunate enough to participate in several JISC funded projects which have increased my understanding both of the context of IRs and the importance of their role within an institution and externally.

The first project I worked on was Kultivate which shared and supported *'the application of best practice in the development of institutional repositories that are appropriate to the specific needs and behaviours of creative and visual arts researchers.'* (VADS, 2012)⁷

I contributed to the advocacy and decision making toolkit available on the following link <http://www.vads.ac.uk/kultur2group/toolkits/index.html>

'Building upon the highly successful JISC funded KULTUR project (2007-2009) the eNova project seeks to extend the functionality of the EPrints open source MePrint profile tool to ensure it meets the highly specialised requirements of researchers and others in the visual and creative arts. This will include enhancements to its visual impact and ability to handle complex multimedia objects.' (JISC, 2012)⁸

I am now currently working on Kaptur which *'will discover, create and pilot a sectoral model of best practice in the management of research data in the visual arts.'* (VADS, 2012)⁹

Challenges

There are several challenges that are encountered when managing an IR. These include technical, preservation and migration of formats, interoperability, IPR and terminology. One of the recurring issues is the way UCA Research Online displays on PCs and Macs and, as yet, has not been completely resolved. Another issue is image resolution and re-sizing work appropriately to look visually good on a website but at the same time be small enough to protect work in terms of IPR.

One challenge which I am trying to resolve is the issue of classification within the UCA Research Online records. Currently researchers are asked to select a subject heading from the Library of Congress Classification (LCC), a mandatory field for text items. They are also asked to use keywords in both text and art/design items; the keywords are natural language terms which assist users in locating the item they are uploading. Examples of just some of the keywords used include: academics, animation, creative industry, digital craft, digital textiles, entrepreneurship, students and video art. The dilemma is that LCC is an internationally recognised standard yet for describing visual and creative arts it is limiting, e.g. there is no classification for animation.

The terminology used is an area which generates a great deal of debate within the community of repository managers. *'Terminology has an impact on both the deposit process as researchers upload their content*

and on users finding arts research online.’

(VADS, 2012)¹⁰ To give just a couple of examples, when uploading onto UCA Research Online there is a field for keywords which means the same as tags; also for the description of an item this could equally be labelled abstract or context.

David Baker, executive Director of The Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information (CASRAI) sums this up beautifully in the following way:

‘The research community in every country captures largely the same types of data. But three obstacles divide us: meaning, structure and format. These include the classic ‘lift vs. elevator’ problem – same concept with different labels – and the persistent problems of clashing data elements and software systems that can’t speak to each other. A standard dictionary implemented in our systems and exchanges removes these obstacles while keeping freedom of choice in implementation.’ (JISC, 2012)¹¹

Opportunities

With the challenges there are opportunities all of which raise both the profile of researchers and UCA. Currently there is a project nearing completion, to extract data from UCA Research Online so it can be searched from the library catalogue, thus creating seamlessness and greater visibility both internally and externally. In consultation with the E-Services Manager and the Data Quality Manager and Cataloguer we agreed which fields would be extracted for display on the library catalogue.

Over the last two years there have been opportunities to work more closely with the Research Office; an example of this is that staff research profiles are visible on UCA Research Online.

Recently a Digitisation Unit <http://community.ucreative.ac.uk/article/36707/UCA-Digitisation-Unit> was launched which will enable, with permission from researchers who have created artists’ books, the digitisation of their books. Once digitised and in a pdf format their books can be uploaded onto UCA Research Online.

In collaboration with a colleague I hope to be able to showcase research outputs from UCA Research Online on the library’s Facebook page. Recently I read an article, in the Times Higher Education Supplement, where a reader in electronic communication conducted an experiment looking at how many downloads their work in the repository received before (one or two downloads) and after they blogged and tweeted about their work. The results were startling, *‘Upon blogging and tweeting, within 24 hours, there were on average, 70 downloads.’* (Elmes, 2012)¹² This illustrates just how powerful social media can be in promoting research.

These opportunities show just some of the areas for future development especially with regard to social media. There is much to be done in improving the information given in the uploading process and clearer indication is needed on where to find help on the home page of UCA Research Online.

Conclusions and Personal reflections

Although I manage UCA Research Online alone I rely on others to assist me. The increasing use of the IR is not possible without the support of my colleagues at UCA and the researchers who have uploaded material which has increased traffic to UCA Research Online.

There is a community of repository managers who have willingly shared their expertise with me and this has helped in developing UCA Research Online. I am also indebted to the Repository Support Project and to my fellow project officers on the JISC funded Projects.

The most successful aspect of managing UCA Research Online is the advocacy, promotion and meeting researchers at different campuses. Technology is phenomenal when it works but are we (the users) too reliant on it? What has been surprising is the amount of writing that is involved in running a repository. There are reports, articles and presentations to produce which gives time to reflect on progress and achievement.

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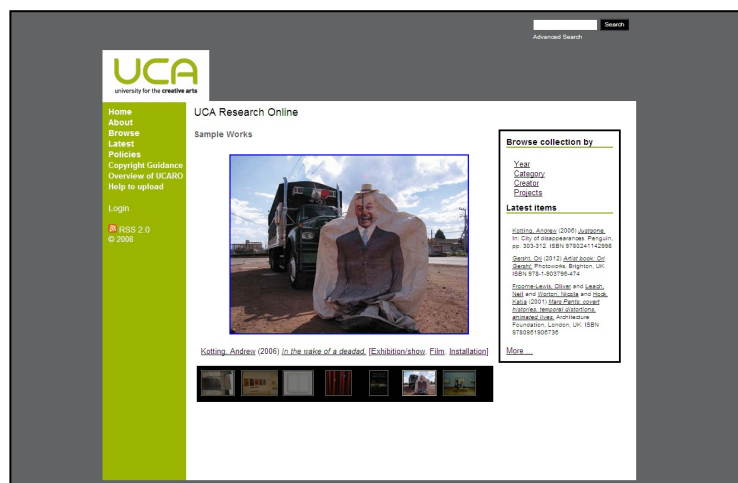
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Screenshot of the homepage of UCA Research Online

The image and the thumbnails underneath are generated randomly from all the images within UCA Research Online and change regularly.