Jisc ORCID implementation group
Use cases and views on the future use of ORCID in UK Higher Education
August 2013

Summary of use cases and other findings from interviews:

Variety of plans for take up and implementation of ORCID.

Variety of views on secondary services but consensus that the priority is for ORCID to do the core task right – provide a reliable, accurate, unique and widely-used identifier for researchers potential researchers and research contributors and supporters.

Agreement that it is crucial to put researchers in control and at the centre of the process. It must be possible for institutions and individuals to verify or dispute claims of accreditation and identity.

Consensus that a priority for ORCID must be avoiding unintended duplication of ORCIDs, allowing merging where duplication does occur but not prejudicing the ability of one person to maintain separate ORCIDs which do not leak into each other in any way. Institutions must be easily able to handle new and existing members of staff bringing ORCIDs with them, knowingly or not.

ORCID will always be just one of many important identifiers – we will need agreed IDs for organisations, fictional characters, dead or anonymous authors, known people without known names (e.g. mediaeval authors) and others. The University of Oxford’s approach, to use UUIDs as an underlying layer, is one possible solution.

Concern whether UK funders have the in-house capacity and resources to respond to the opportunities which ORCID presents for improving data exchange with HEIs.

Consensus that any postgraduate or undergraduate student who is likely to publish or produce outputs should be encouraged to register.

HEFCE and HESA have an important role to play in raising the profile of ORCID.

By facilitating more, and more accurate, activity tracking, ORCID has the potential to broaden the scope of CVs and “outputs and achievements” for junior researchers.

Among other benefits identified:

- managing access to research facilities;
- reduction in form filling;
- improved CVs, performance reviews and records of achievements;
- career progress tracking, historical analysis and description of research “constellations”;
- reducing duplication of effort between publishers, funders, Gateway to Research and institutions;
- better visibility for researchers.

Many thanks are due to those who contributed their time and expertise to this report. Over a short period of time I conducted 9 interviews with 12 busy academics and received helpful support and feedback from Verena Weigert of Jisc and the members of Jisc ORCID implementation group. Thanks also to Seb Schmoller who made valuable comments on an early draft.

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Introduction and background to this report

In 2011, Jisc convened a researcher identifier task and finish group to develop a set of recommendations for the UK on the adoption of an identifier solution and infrastructure to meet the needs of the HE sector. A two year consensus-building exercise, including a sector validation exercise on the group’s recommendations, has resulted in the agreement on a solution based on ORCID. The task and finish group has now been transformed into an ‘ORCID implementation’ group.

The core mission of ORCID is to provide an open registry of persistent unique identifiers for researchers and to automate linkages to research objects such as publications, datasets, other IDs, grants, and patents. ORCID is free for individual researchers to register and use.

If widely used, ORCID could provide a number of benefits to UK HEIs such as a reduction in the administration associated when reporting to funders or to HESA. It could also help with evaluation of research and ease research grant application processes. For these benefits to be realised, research management processes and systems in HEIs will need to adopt ORCID as a person identifier, embed ORCID IDs in their systems and use the ORCID registry.

So far, several UK HE institutions and organisations have expressed an interest in adopting ORCID. This list is by no means exhaustive.

**University of Glasgow** was the first UK university to join as an institutional member of ORCID.

**UCL** (also now a member) and **University of Oxford** are considering integrating ORCID into their processes and systems.

**The Wellcome Trust**, a launch partner of ORCID, is integrating ORCID with its grants submission system.

**RCUK** will soon review the uptake of ORCID in the UK, with a view to possible use of ORCID as an additional personal identifier in JeS, and to making a link between the Gateway to Research system and ORCID pages of researchers.

HESA will be consulting with the sector on including ORCIDs in the student and staff records for 2014/2015.

**CRIS system vendors** are also actively engaging with ORCID (e.g. Avedas and Symplectic).

**CERIF** (the data standard for exchanging research information) now includes a field for ORCID IDs.

Many organisations in the US are already involved in ORCID, including **Harvard** and **Boston University** (BU). BU is an early adopter of ORCID and is creating ORCID IDs for academic staff and post docs. In the second half of 2013, BU is planning to integrate the university’s D-Space system via an ORCID look-up and registration process when an item is deposited in the repository. Slideshow from Boston.

**Harvard** has created an interface with its PeopleSoft human resources system where faculty may add their ORCID identifiers. More outreach to faculty is planned for autumn 2013, and the Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard (DASH) repository supports the use of ORCID IDs, and will automatically ingest them from other systems (including the PeopleSoft directory), when available.

http://library.harvard.edu/harvard-adopt-service-uniquely-identify-academic-authors

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1. A number of reports have informed the group’s recommendations. For example:
   - Ferguson, Nicky (2011) Stakeholder use cases and identifier needs Report Two – What technical systems would need to interoperate with any identifier infrastructure? When does an individual become a ‘researcher’? Technical Report. Available at:http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/570/1/report2-final.pdf


3. ORCID website: https://orcid.org/
**National Institutes of Health** (NIH) is creating the SciENcv platform for use by the NIH and other U.S. federal research funding agencies. The Science Experts Network Curriculum Vitae aims to create a researcher profile system ([http://rbm.nih.gov/profile_project.htm](http://rbm.nih.gov/profile_project.htm)) for all individuals who apply for, receive or are associated with research investments from federal agencies, in order to:

- Eliminate the need to repeatedly enter biosketch information and therefore reduce the administrative burden associated with federal grant submission and reporting requirements;
- Provide access to a researcher-claimed data repository with information on expertise, employment, education, and professional accomplishments;
- Allow researchers to describe their scientific contributions in their own language.

The initial release will allow users to associate their ORCID iD with SciENCV and is scheduled for September 2013.

**Approach**

The work to conduct the interviews and write the individual use cases took place between 20 May and 1 August 2013. I gave the interviewees background information similar to that above and asked them to consider these issues “as a manager and provider of information systems but also as someone from an institution which interacts with other systems (e.g. Research Councils and HESA). Similarly, as a manager and provider of your own research facilities but also as an institution which interacts with other facilities (e.g. Research Council facilities and CERN)”.

Agreed summaries of the interviews begin on the next page.

The Topic Guide which we followed for all the interviews appears in the Appendix.

The list of interviewees appears in the contents page.
Interviews

Simon Coles, Christopher Gutteridge, Wendy White

Wendy White  http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4509-5600
Head of Scholarly Communication in the University of Southampton Library.

She leads on the co-ordination of research data management and open access services, working closely with colleagues across services and the academic community. She was Principal Investigator on the recent Jisc funded DataPool project, which facilitated the implementation of policy, training and data sharing services and supported multi-disciplinary case studies including raster/3D data and data visualisation.

Christopher Gutteridge  http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9201-5987
University of Southampton Open Data Architect

Christopher Gutteridge has spent 16 years at the University of Southampton as a web developer and systems programmer. For many years he was lead developer of the EPrints open access repository software and has more recently been the University of Southampton Open Data Architect, creating the service which won the THE award for Outstanding ICT Initiative of the year. More recently he has founded http://www.data.ac.uk/ as a hub for ac.uk linked open data.

Simon Coles  http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8414-9272
Senior Lecturer, University of Southampton & National Crystallography Service Director

As a practising researcher operating an EPSRC Mid-range Facility open to all UK HE institutions, I have experience not only of generating research outputs with many collaborators across several disciplines but also of developing systems to track and manage outputs. I serve on the Jisc Researcher Identifier task and finish group (now ORCID implementation group) and have spent the last 10 years building software to capture and manage ‘grey’ research outputs such as data and primary observations.

Background

The University of Southampton is committed to fostering a culture where creating and sharing data appropriately is integral to high quality research, support for student learning and evidence-based decision making. It is seeking to maximise the impact of world-class research expertise in open data issues, working collaboratively on initiatives and exploring the important issues of ethics, privacy and confidentiality.
Managing identities within the university

It is important to the institution both to support our researchers’ careers and to follow their progress.

We already have an identity management system which holds several different identities for our staff and students, these range from login names for information systems to Unix IDs and in some cases allow people to, for example, express a preferred email address. So we plan to use ORCID as another very important ID, but it would be naïve to think of it as the super ID to conquer all – it will be particularly important for active researchers and those students who aspire to be active researchers. People must have the confidence to know that there are systems in place to avoid and then to solve or merge (and de-merge when mistakes have been made) duplications, while also having the right to have multiple ORCIDs in a small number of unusual but important circumstances.

The individual and the institution

Policies and structures should be in place to ensure that there is a very significant overlap between the benefits and interests of the individual researcher and those of the institution. The institution wants to have access to as much detail as possible about the researcher’s work and academic life – currently some of this data is collected manually and often stored as word-processed documents whereas we aim to store it as data elements so that it can be used flexibly and be pulled into a number of different applications and scenarios, some not predicted at the time of data collection.

For the individual, the key question is “What benefits does an ORCID bring to my career profile?” The academic wants to be able to say “This is all my stuff” and to include key obvious achievements, publications and qualifications together with many things which are often not generally considered or collected - as a teacher some of my “outputs” are the postgraduate students I have “processed”. Some examples of the variety of achievements:

- Formal qualifications
- Job titles and descriptions, job splits where applicable
- Publications, media involvement
- Honours and distinctions from elsewhere
- Authoring documentation or materials which are not publicly accessible
- Roles which are not formal appointments within the university
- Nature of teaching responsibilities
- Courses and numbers of students per course
- Research students supervised
- Postgraduate students successfully qualifying
- Support activities for staff and students
- Personal achievements in teaching and research
- Editorships
- Members of boards (editorial and/or learned society)
- Blog posts
- Experiments conducted
- Lab notebooks
- Physical presence during key large scale experiments
- Peer reviews
- Datasets created
- Conference papers
- Internal staff seminars, show and tell sessions
• Conferences organised
• Conferences attended\(^4\)
• Educational activities outside my discipline

Obviously there are more – the point is that when a student begins a research career, there might currently be little formal to show, other than qualifications and dissertations. Yet there is potentially a wide variety of data which could support that student on the journey to the first research post. Already we require lab notebooks to be brought to vivas, but if all the activities above had an ORCID attached then the would-be researcher would already have a mass of research “outputs” even before a first publication had been submitted. And external examiners could make more informed decisions based on a portfolio of recorded achievements. An early career researcher may have conducted 1500 chemical reactions, only fifteen of which are referenced in the dissertation and only three of which find their way into the first publication.

At the other end of the scale, a senior researcher, with perhaps several hundred publications, a knighthood, many media appearances and positions on government advisory panels would be more confident that all those achievements would be correctly and rapidly assigned and attributed.

A key member of a research support team might be writing weekly blogs collecting together and linking experimental data or enabling new research to take place. It may also be important information for those reproducing experiments, or for historians, that a particular person was present in the facility at the time the first experiment was conducted. With clear links between students and their supervisors, it would also be possible to construct constellations of research, to see who was who when a research field was in its infancy to see who were the formative influences on a researcher who went on to make significant discoveries.

Within the institution, with all the formal and informal achievements identified and attributed, it will then be possible to automatically create pre-filled templates for academic CVs, which can then be adapted by the individual. Performance reviews and promotion systems will also be able to consider more fully documented personal portraits.

It would make sense for an ORCID to be assigned (or checked that it already exists) as part of the induction process for any postgraduate intending or likely to conduct research. The institution might assign an ORCID (with opt-out possibility) to anyone expecting to publish; and for anyone else leave it up to the individual to obtain an ORCID and inform the institution. Inter-institutional projects would benefit – for example it is quite common for a researcher or even a PI (principal investigator) to move from one collaborating institution to another during the course of a project. For any new incoming member of staff, particularly one with many outputs and impacts, an ORCID would help slotting that person into the internal systems and collecting and collating the measures of outputs, impact and esteem which are important for external submissions such as the REF.

\(^4\) See [http://data.dev8d.org/2012/programme/?list=attendees](http://data.dev8d.org/2012/programme/?list=attendees) for an example of a data driven approach to this
Assigning and applying for ORCIDs

We would like to apply for ORCIDs en masse for our research staff and research students, while giving them the opportunity to opt out (or “not take up the offer”).

We are confident that doing this with an opt-out facility in place will be acceptable and achievable. There are issues and provisos which we need to see addressed:

1. There must be a strong central facility at ORCID for preventing duplication. When the university goes ahead with an en masse registration then ORCID must identify early adopters who have already registered an ORCID, perhaps with a non-institutional email address and perhaps have now forgotten that they did so. Similarly a new member of staff arriving at the university may have been assigned an ORCID at a previous institution but be unaware of this.

2. However strong these procedures are, there will always be unintentional duplications so there must also be robust procedures in place for merging or linking ORCIDs. It is particularly important (for reasons noted above) for early career researchers to have a single ORCID.

3. Notwithstanding these procedures, it must be possible for individuals intentionally to have multiple ORCIDs. There must be robust ways of making sure that such identities cannot “leak” into each other – information which the researcher intends to be public should clearly be made public and private information should be kept private.

The cathedral and the bazaar

The key task for ORCID is to build something which is reliable and gets the core tasks of identity management done properly. The potential value of ORCID clearly outweighs the costs, at the moment. Central services around that core task can be minimal, so that the value proposition continues to be strong. Around that central core (the cathedral), services built by others, springing up and enduring or not, can be encouraged and supported (the bazaar⁵). But the core functions should not be endangered by commitments to related developments. Clearly functions like importing publication lists from SCOPUS or Google Scholar are important because they build awareness and enthusiasm amongst individuals and in institutions; but once the critical mass has been built, then the development of clever products and services on top of ORCID, using open data or data not stored at ORCID, should be left to the bazaar. Pictures and analyses can all be built from large bodies of data and the reliability or otherwise of those pictures, services and analyses will not be the responsibility of ORCID. Decisions such as to “what exactly constitutes a research output?” or “who qualifies as a bona-fide researcher for the purpose of grant awards?” can similarly be left to others. We also support ORCID’s policy that any individual can obtain an ID and that the central service should not make judgements about qualifications or appropriateness. Some institutions may decide to assign or require ORCIDs for all masters students or undergraduates or all collaborators – e.g. Simon Coles has published a journal article co-authored by ten local primary schoolchildren. Others can build services which accredit or evaluate suitability of individuals for different purposes – expert registers, referees etc. In some cases, ORCID may feel it is appropriate to host data without processing it (in the same way as a repository can store a digital file and in twenty years just return that file as a stream of ones and zeroes without having processed or exposed that file at all in the interim). In fact it should be possible for an individual to store at ORCID a digital fingerprint for an output or a profile – the output or the profile might be too sensitive or confidential to allow a copy to be stored anywhere, but in 20 years’ time that fingerprint will still be associated with the object and, providing the security concerns are no longer there, the object may then be retrieved, examined or indexed.

⁵ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Cathedral_and_the_Bazaar for original reference
The need for other IDs

In order to exchange information with multiple international partners and really use data to drive new applications then we need IDs for more than just people. Institutions, research groups, conferences, seminars, research facilities, equipment could and should all have machine readable IDs. It is important that ORCID puts the researcher at the centre of its effort and that is one reason why ORCIDs cannot be applied to buildings or organisations; but ORCID should also bear in mind that other IDs, for humans and other entities, will be important for the efficient use and management of the increasingly large amount of data generated in academia and elsewhere.

Trust, affiliation and accreditation

The model underlying ORCID is a claim based one. That is to say there is nothing integral to stop an individual wrongly claiming publications, affiliations, accreditations and qualifications. There is nothing unusual with this – many CV services and indeed personal web pages are similarly unverified. The process is based upon trust and subsequent checking and one presumes that someone persistently or consciously making false claims would be dealt with by ORCID. However, ORCID does also include processes for challenging and denying such claims. There are two models that spring to mind for an institution wishing to verify such claims of accreditation.

The first is that on submission, or perhaps on a regular basis, monthly or annually, an automated communication takes place in which the central service queries the accreditation body – “the person with this ORCID claims to work for the your university, true or false?” or “the person with this ORCID claims to be the PI for this grant awarded by your funding organisation, true or false?” or “the person with this ORCID claims to be collaborating with Professor Y on X project hosted at your institution, true or false?”. Hopefully the interface will make it clear for anyone examining claimed information whether any assertion is:

- claimed but as yet unverified
- verified
- disputed.

Initially at least, there would be a question as to whether the university or research council would have the capacity to accurately handle such validation processes, but as ORCID use becomes widespread it would clearly be in their interest to develop such capacity.

The other model is that the question “is this assertion correct?” could be handled by the central ORCID service, perhaps in return for payment from an institution. This model would require a periodic upload to ORCID of all ORCIDs of members of staff or grant awardees in a particular year or years, but the resolution service would happen centrally not remotely. This would ameliorate questions of capacity of remote organisations but would have drawbacks in terms of currency, synchronisation and data privacy.

Queries and concerns

We have a concern which has also been expressed by colleagues about the physical location of ORCID servers. It is not clear where the ORCID servers are located (the organisation is based in Bethesda, Maryland, just north of Washington D.C in the USA) but we assume they are in the USA. The ORCID Privacy Policy is “governed by the laws of the State of New York (United States)” and states that “As a not-for-profit organization ... ORCID is not allowed to register its practices on the US Department of Commerce Safe Harbor

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6 ORCID plans to launch an affiliation module using ISNI and Ringgold Organisation Identifiers are mentioned on p 27
However, we agree to adhere to the Safe Harbor Principles in recognition of their importance in ensuring the protection of user information.” The software developed by ORCID is publicly released under an open source software licence. For security and longevity of the service we would expect copies of both the software and the data to be archived in geographically distinct locations and politically distinct locations (i.e. not only close allies of the USA) so that in the case of natural or man-made disasters such as war, parallel services can be separated and then re-merged at a later date when political or physical problems have been overcome. The principle here should be that information is stored and services are run by consent and not liable to political force.

We are also concerned that any queries submitted to the ORCID database or services relying on it should be submitted via HTTPS. While the data in ORCID may be open, the pattern of queries from a person or organisation may be very sensitive and revealing. If HTTPS was used, an eavesdropper could still tell that ORCID was being queried, but not what data was requested or returned.

**National use cases and benefits**

Although we have mainly discussed institutional and individual benefits, we recognise that the more interesting use cases and the major benefits will flow from national and international use. In the UK, the use of ORCID by HEFCE and HESA would give quick wins to the community compared to the relative complexity of adopting and spreading something like CERIF. If HEFCE were to state publicly that they were seriously considering using ORCIDs for the 2020 REF then that would be a very important driver for take up by institutions.
Raymond Dalgleish

Raymond has research interests that are laboratory based and others that lie in the area of bioinformatics. The bioinformatics research is his major focus, and Raymond was a partner in the recently completed European Commission 7th Framework-funded GEN2PHEN project which has built database components, tools and technologies to help integrate information pertaining to genome variation and human disease phenotype. One of Raymond’s major contributions to this project has been the development of a new DNA reference sequence format, known as Locus Reference Genomic (LRG), which will aid in the curation of variant data in locus-specific databases (LSDBs).

**Background**

I gained an interest in human molecular genetics while working as a summer student immediately before the final year of my degree. After completing my PhD and then a post-doc in the USA, I entered academia nearly thirty years ago. I have retained my interest in the genetics of human disease and have latterly developed an interest in use of bioinformatics tools for the storage and analysis of data.

**The researcher’s view**

I am giving my view as a senior researcher and PI (principal investigator). I don’t speak on behalf of the University of Leicester, although I’m a lecturer at the University of Leicester. The things I’ll talk about are my personal opinions.

For a researcher, one of the major irritations of working life is being asked for the same information in slightly different forms or formats, over and over again. At Leicester we have a research administration system provided by Symplectic, I know that Symplectic are one of the partners in ORCID, and I feel that there would be an opportunity for the university to build support for ORCID IDs into the IRIS system, which could not only be used for managing all the information that they have about researchers in the university but also for providing information to outside bodies. So I can see it would be very useful to have a unique ID which could be used across a variety of internal systems and also recognised by external systems such as those at the research councils and for the REF.

Although I don’t have the time to get involved as an advocate for ORCID, to chase people around, saying “you really have to do this”, somewhat selfishly, I would like to see any benefits that might accrue from having better integration of information systems. I certainly don’t mind having another ID if there were clear advantages. One very simple example: I remember some time ago writing a paper where I was lead author. There were about twenty authors on the paper (not a huge number these days). The amount of time taken to actually fill in the co-author information was ridiculous. We didn’t get it published in the first journal to which we submitted it, so I found myself doing it, I think, three times in the end before we, we found a journal prepared to publish it. If I could simply put the ORCID IDs in for each of the authors and have the journal then look up the information and populate all the fields, that would reduce the amount of work tremendously.
The next stage would be for ORCID to follow or flow with the data about the publication to indexing services like Web of Knowledge, PubMed. There wouldn’t need to be the disambiguation with common names – it would give us a way of matching up publications without there being any misidentification. That would also save a lot of time – you need to know who you’re collaborating with, which John Smith are you proposing a European grant with and what are his publications and qualifications etc.

**Junior researchers, research students and undergraduates**

I think for junior researchers a persistent identifier could be particularly useful. In the first few years of your career, you are likely to move around a lot – you’re going to have various addresses, various email addresses, if you are a female student, there’s the possibility that you marry partway through and you might decide to take your husband’s surname, so will have more than one professional name. But you want all your publications and other outputs still tracked and kept together as being from the output of one individual. So, with a PhD student, I would say “get an ORCID ID and include that in your thesis”.

For us, tracking graduate researchers is not as difficult as tracking undergraduates. We need to track them for academic league tables – those who prepare the league tables, and sometimes the funders who use them to make decisions on funding, want to know where our graduates have gone and what did they do after they graduated. In many instances, certainly for those who graduate from School of Biological Sciences in which I teach, a lot of them go on into academic research. So they do higher degrees; MScs, PhDs. But a lot of them go into employment – of course they may well be involved in research or contributors to research (the C in ORCID) but we would not necessarily know and it’s notoriously difficult to track them. But we need to be able to return that information to HESA amongst others. So I have thought about ORCID IDs for undergraduate students. At first, I know the feeling was to restrict it to proven researchers, but increasingly some undergraduates will end up with publications as a consequence of the research that they’ve undertaken, maybe in their final year project. MSc students will have to undertake a project as well and it would be appropriate for them to have ORCID IDs. You may well get people who don’t do any research for ten years because of the particular job that they have and then move into a job where they are producing research outputs and even if there’s no organised assigning of ORCID IDs to undergraduates, some will acquire them anyway. So why not get your undergraduates to sign up for ORCIDs? Or at least assign them on graduation.

**Real life use**

I’m thinking more and more that, when I’m writing papers, that I should include my ORCID ID. I’ve done this recently on one where I’m the lead author. But there’s another paper being written primarily by colleagues in Portugal, I realise I should have said “we should all put our ORCID IDs into the paper”. The journal is Human Mutation and I think that I remember seeing something on the web page, so while we are talking let me just log in to ... ah yes ... there’s a statement. Once you log in to the journal, the manuscript system for Human Mutation, which is published by Wiley, they have an announcement which says, “new: ORCID researcher ID. ORCID is the new service for authors, researchers in the scholarly community, that uniquely identifies your contributions to the scholarly literature. Obtaining an ORCID identifier is now an option in your ScholarOne user account.” ScholarOne is the system they use for handling manuscripts. “We encourage you to register by editing account at the top-right of your screen, adding your ORCID identifier to step three.” So that’s something I ought to do, I’m a communicating editor for that journal. Obviously that’s just one of Wiley’s journals but it’s a good sign.

Another example: there is a database system which can be set up for holding information about human gene sequence variants. I’ve installed a copy of that recently on a server here in Leicester. And one of the things it
supports is ORCID IDs. So I just put my ORCID ID in, and it discovered who I was correctly, and filled in some other basic information about me into the database system. So that works nicely.

Small things, as I say, but indications that things are moving in that direction.

Questions and suggestions

- One thing is that an ORCID ID is long and very difficult to remember. I guess that in time it will be used more by systems talking to each other than by people, but for now I have put it in my email signature – so it is always easy to find.

- How easy is it to claim to be a person you are not? And how easy to challenge that claim? You could set yourself up as Francis.Crick@outlook.com, go into ORCID, say that you’re Francis Crick, give that email address, get an ORCID ID, and you are now Francis Crick. I just hope it will not be too onerous for the real Francis Crick to come along and challenge and correct it.

- I think it would be worth making sure that where an institution batch uploads their students two consecutive students with identical names are not given consecutive ORCID IDs. There must be many institutions with multiple research students called Jin Li, for example. If their ORCIDs were only one digit different then that multiplies the chances of unintended confusion and problems arising from incorrect data entry.

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7 See [http://orcid.org/orcid-dispute-procedures](http://orcid.org/orcid-dispute-procedures)
**Wolfram Horstmann**

**Wolfram Horstmann**  [http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8673-6104](http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8673-6104)

Associate Director, Digital Library Programmes and Information Technologies Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford

Being in charge of the digital services of the Bodleian Libraries, I am responsible for the Oxford Research Archive, ORA. I have formerly been involved in research publication management systems and digital scholarly repositories in Germany (Cologne, Goettingen and Bielefeld) and for the European Commission.

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**Background**

We want to use ORCIDs to simplify the life of Oxford’s researchers for working with institutional systems and publishers’ systems by re-using already available information for publication data management and reporting. The motto is: “Input once – re-use often.”

**The researcher and the institution**

Our perspective is that the researchers’ interests are at the centre of what we do – life should be made easier for the researcher by the central services that we are providing.

So for example, we want to support the generation of personal publication lists and to support researchers in meeting their reporting requirements.

We already get an overview of Oxford research outputs through looking at all the possible information out there, be it CrossRef, Web of Science, subject repositories like arXiv INSPIRE or PubMed. We aggregate these, involving Symplectic Elements and, of course, have a problem with deduplication, disambiguation and identification of authors. We currently do this manually. So the more ORCID is used, the better the quality of the author identification, institutionally and in the institutional bibliography. The reporting for researchers into systems like ResearchFish, the Research Outcomes System (ROS) or REF would be much easier.

Additionally, many researchers at Oxford have multiple work roles inside and outside the institution so identifying people in several working contexts, nationally and internationally, will be a benefit.

ORCID is not an identity management system. There is an already-established internal world in institutions working on person identification and using or developing identity management systems. We are not planning to use ORCID to link together internal systems. It can provide a link between an institutional user directory and the external world. This is what I expect ORCID to do. So when you have an interaction between the institutional user directory and the external world, then, if you have an alignment of your institutional user identifier and the ORCID identifier, you can say “Okay, I know that I’m talking about this person and not another person.”

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future use of ORCID in UK Higher Education
I think that the local support for ORCID will be closely aligned between the Oxford Research Archive, ORA, in the Libraries, and the Core User Directory in IT services. Once that has happened, the main benefit for users will be that they are able to use and re-use information which they already have in ORA for their interactions in the outside world – for different publishers, for example. Just to make their lives easier.

In our experience, researchers are unwilling to give anybody any control over their information. So our approach here is to make the interaction with ORCID as researcher-centric as possible, to put the researchers in the driver’s seat. One possibility is to facilitate that interaction with ORCID through an institutional membership. But we will not get involved in the exchange of data. So the only link that we want to have is the link between the ORCID and the institutional ID.

For this reason we don’t plan to do any batch uploads. Rather we would send out a message saying “you can register here” and then they can do it through the University. In this way, we have established a handshake with ORCID that makes sure that we have the ORCID for the correct user. Then we can approve that it is correct and that the user has an Oxford affiliation.

An alternative is for ORCID to ensure the correctness of the affiliation for all its institutional members. To have audit procedures for institutional affiliation, to ensure the correctness of the institutional affiliation – that would be an easy to understand benefit of membership – people could understand that this is what they are paying for.

**What ORCID should do**

I think less is more. I think that ORCID should focus on the actual identification and not so much on the added value services. It is confusing for me and also for other people – the researchers – if they try to do too much at once. People ask “So is this now the place where all my bibliographic information now is? Is Web of Knowledge disappearing?”

So I think that they should focus first on what their remit is, namely identifying researchers. Make sure that this is aligned with institutional repositories and identity management solutions and with the publishers’ databases. When this is done, it will be easier to go to the next step. I think that the wider scope of building publication lists is less important for the time being. The reason why this focus would be good is because then I could confidently go to researchers and say “Look, this is what they invest all their effort in – this is what they do well.”

**How it might work at Oxford**

The Bodleian Digital Libraries have adopted the approach that there will be a number of identifiers in use at any one time and the libraries should be able to handle this range. To this end, the Libraries are developing a ‘sameAs’ service where a person can have any number of identifiers associated with them. It is important to the digital libraries that identifiers are not exclusively applied to living authors, but to deceased authors, to persons such as authors of letters (for example those mentioned in EMLO: Early Modern Letters Online), that different personas and pseudonyms can be managed and, if necessary, to authors without names (such as a medieval author who obviously existed but whose actual identity is unclear). The Libraries have therefore elected to assign UUIDs to persons. Use of UUIDs is supported in the 2012 Jisc report\(^8\) which recommended that Jisc encourage the experimental use of UUIDs as an underlying layer as suggested by CASRAI. ORCIDs will

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\(^8\) [http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/4920/1/Clax-for-JISC-rlD-validation-report-final.pdf](http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/4920/1/Clax-for-JISC-rlD-validation-report-final.pdf)
therefore form one of many IDs stored within the Bodleian digital libraries and will be linked to a person, their internal UUID and other IDs using ‘sameAs.’

We want a solution for allocating ORCIDs to staff which is a light touch solution, with minimal intervention. It should make ORCID participation easy for Oxford researchers and facilitate an account for Oxford researchers which they then manage themselves, providing those researchers with a service to help them interact with publishers and other bibliographic services. The solution should work for new starters and multiple identities. The University should not become legally involved in the user account.

With all this in mind, we are looking at two possible ways to deal with the allocation of ORCIDs. Both of these options satisfy key demands:

1. Researchers have the choice of whether to register or not.
2. The allocation interaction is between the person and the Oxford store – i.e. it remains internal.
3. The University is then removed from ORCID registration.
4. The University does not inform ORCID of the link between person and ORCID. That interaction takes place between the person and ORCID. The University only stores the relationship between name and ORCID.
5. The end result is that the researcher has an ORCID account which they can manage themselves and the University has the relation between the ORCID and the institutional identity.

For each allocation, we envisage that the process will start and end at Oxford but allow ORCID to handle the creation and affiliation process. In Oxford: the researcher goes to the Oxford ORCID page, signs in using their usual Oxford sign-in process, clicks on request new ORCID or validate existing ORCID and then gets directed to an ORCID web page. At ORCID: the researcher either signs in with an existing ORCID and has that associated with the Oxford name and affiliation OR creates a new ORCID (if one has not yet been claimed) and that new ORCID is associated with the Oxford name and affiliation; ORCID then returns the researcher to the Oxford page where the authenticated user then finishes the process by registering the ORCID with the Oxford Core User Directory and that ORCID is then associated with the researcher using sameAs.

**There are several advantages to this approach:**

- If ORCID ceases or Oxford ceases to be a member then the IDs can remain and continue to operate within Oxford
- If researchers do not wish to participate in the ORCID initiative, the decision is left to the individual and other IDs are available including Bodleian UUIDs
- Even if a decision is taken not to proceed with membership, then many researchers will decide to participate individually in ORCID: Bodleian can then encourage them to include their ORCIDs in their person records and will be able to apply ‘sameAs’.

We hope that by becoming involved at this early stage Oxford will benefit by being able to influence the development of the ORCID service. We will be encouraging the use of an identifier that is likely to be accepted and used by many Oxford authors, assisting Oxford services with author identification. Finally, we believe that the use case that has been identified ensures that processes remain within the University and the University has no interaction with the user’s personal account thereby eliminating complexity of data sharing.
Graham Hunt

**Head of Research IT Applications (Service Owner)**

At UCL Graham is the Service Owner for the Research Publications and Profiles services within Information Services Division (ISD). He is responsible in collaboration with academic leaders for setting the strategy for these services.

**Background**

UCL is among the world's top universities, 4th overall in 2012 QS World University Rankings and, according to the Thomson Scientific Citation Index, UCL is also one of the most highly cited European universities. UCL has decided to join ORCID in the expectation that it will become the de facto standard for researcher identification internationally, allowing for unambiguous association for researchers with publication authorship, collaboration, funding success, facility utilisation etc. as well as helping the university to ease the reporting burden and improve research information management and analysis.

**UCL - benefits and plans**

For us, the fundamental use for ORCID will be to disambiguate authors of publications. The principal driver is to be able to make it easy for our researchers both to claim publications and to put them into their publication lists wherever they have those lists – on their web pages, in CVs, in grant applications etc. If ORCID does that well then it will be worth the membership on its own – so that is the core task.

Looking further into the future, we see real value in taking ambiguity and duplication out of our communications with funders and publishers, helping link things together for reporting. To take full advantage of the potential there will be a real requirement on those parties to have ORCID integrated into their systems. That will be a challenge for them.

We will also be challenged in terms of getting all our different internal systems to use ORCID and to communicate about ORCID with each other, because, while it may be easy to just add another field, it's not easy to retrofit an ID like that into the way existing systems are used.

Currently our research profiling system gives us the chance to say who we consider to be a researcher at UCL and allows us to create portals or gateways which act as entry points to the institution for people wanting to find out about UCL research. Because each researcher has their own page in that system, this gives us a consolidated list of researchers. We plan to then generate ORCID IDs for everybody who hasn’t yet claimed one. The initial work will be based on researchers’ UCL email addresses; so of course that will not catch people who have registered an ORCID using another email address – that (preventing the issue of duplicate ORCID IDs) is something we would need ORCID to reassure us about. Then we would also need to be confident that, where a duplicate has been issued in error, there is a process for merging those IDs.
Of course, we would not make public the results of that initial upload process. What we’re intending is to say to researchers, probably by email, “we’ve done the initial work to create this for you and we think it’s a good idea, please log in to complete the process and make your ORCID ID live”. So they have an “accept or reject” option. We still need to work out the details with ORCID, but this is our intention.

As an institution, we already have a unique personal identifier which, in theory at least, will stay with people throughout their career, whether they come as a student, leave and then much later return as a member of staff; though their personnel number will change as their role changes from student to researcher to staff, their personal identifier will remain the same. Adding an ORCID ID to this system could reduce the anomalies and duplications that do occur, if only because other people, including the academics themselves, would be spotting them on ORCID. Similarly, we would hope to reduce anomalies caused by people coming to the institution with multiple HESA numbers. Of course you can never completely eliminate mistakes but ORCID could make things a lot better.

Another benefit for the institution is that, in the context of inter-institutional collaborations, it would allow the research managers to make links and answer questions about the use of external equipment, e.g. “How much equipment time have people from my department used in Imperial as part of our consortium usage?”. That would be useful for both institutions but also for reporting to funders. At the moment, this would be relevant for using the big facilities but with the current climate and the drive for reporting that we can see from the funders, we may in the future need to do this for more and more discrete pieces of equipment. It may not be quite so easy – but if there is a system matching your ORCID with your log-in then it may be possible.

In the longer term, we have a vision of integrating ORCID which we recognise will not be quick to achieve. Like many institutions, we have a complex interaction of different systems dealing with research and researchers. Looking at research information management more broadly than just a CRIS, we are developing a strategy that does not yet have any products identified, purchased or procured. We've identified a lot of our requirements and needs, and looked at the market and made some decisions about what sort of areas we think we need to focus on over the next eighteen months and beyond. Many institutions have some level of integration up until the grant award – and then almost a disconnect when the management of the grant moves onto the finance and HR systems and links to previously entered data on publications, outputs etc are lost. We want to have a flow through the entire process, right from pre-award costing, post-award, right the way through to the outputs and finally to long term impact measurement, if possible. We need to ask “what do we need to fix at the moment?” with a long term view of progress towards this joined up system. ORCID is a significant factor in this – and because we are early adopters we may be looking at software that’s not got ORCID integrated into it at the moment but having that conversation with vendors now, before considering purchase.

The individual researcher

A simple example, for a more junior researcher: we use Symplectic Elements as part of a suite of applications to gather a publications list for people. This goes out and it looks at all the feeds from Web of Science, arXiv, PubMed etc. – all the ones that we've got licensed access to. It automatically presents to you with publications of which you may be an author. Obviously you still get a lot of false positives with that. Symplectic Elements has signed up to ORCID, which was a powerful encouragement for us. As the publishers’ and other feeds are also adapted to use ORCID IDs then the process of identification should become quicker and much more accurate. So there could possibly be just one point where the researcher has to go and check whether the right publications are attached to the right name – whether this will be at ORCID or locally is still
unclear, if the information flows properly then perhaps a number of different solutions would work – whatever suits the researcher.

For the more senior researcher – the Principal Investigator (PI) say – in the longer term (and this would require quite a lot of data mapping and other work to make it happen) I can imagine a scenario where a PI looks at a funding call and decides to make a grant application. By using an ORCID the PI can call up, not just a solid list of all publications but publications relevant to that call or that topic – and perhaps have a check box to select the ten most relevant publications to include in the application. Then the PI could look at the facilities and equipment which have been funded by that funder in the past – for this PI but also for the department, faculty or institution. Since most projects and grant applications these days are collaborative you could extend that to the collaborating or potentially collaborating institutions. So those institutions, when they are looking at you or discussing a collaboration, would be clear exactly who you are talking about – which person, which past collaboration, whose use of a facility or piece of equipment – because they have a unique and independently verified identifier supporting those assertions not just something that comes from another institution’s records.

Of course, if ORCID (or services based on ORCID) become a hub where people will go to find information about experts or people that they want to collaborate and work with, then obviously it would be of great value to have all our researchers there, but particularly our senior researchers.

**Getting it used**

The decision to join ORCID was taken by the UCL Publications Board, which means it’s got the highest university sponsorship. That carries considerable weight within the institution. In terms of communicating with individuals, I think we have to be clear that many benefits will only come with time and widespread adoption – we have to say “we’re at the beginning of the journey and we thought we’d be better off being in at the beginning of the journey, rather than trying to join in halfway through”.

The major push back or resistance is likely to be around whether other organisations, particularly publishers and funders, are really committed. There have been many comments recently about discontinuity between different funding councils in the way that they want reporting done differently, particularly around ROS and ResearchFish (formerly eVal). There has been a loss of trust in some quarters, one small example: three institutions including UCL were collaborating with Symplectic on a recent Jisc-funded CERIF-in-Action project to use a CERIF XML load facility that was available from Symplectic Elements. It failed because the ROS system didn’t do what it was expected to do – the project had told staff at the institutions “You just do it this way. Press a button and it’ll work” – and it never did work. After that there are a lot of sceptical raised eyebrows, with people saying “Well they didn’t even get the ROS spec right, how can we expect them to do that [ORCID]?” We need to ask “is there a definite commitment to adopt this single identifier?” Because some people are saying “surely it would be better to wait, because we need to actually see whether these different funders are actually going to deliver?”

On the other hand we have to admit that we are not perfect ourselves and sometimes find it is easier to retrieve from a research council information we previously gave them rather than being able to easily retrieve it from our own internal systems.

We’re looking at Gateway to Research with great interest. It’s early days yet, but the ability for us to be able to have clear linkages, both internal and external for our research information would be of great value to us. Like many colleagues in the sector, we spend a lot of time managing stuff in isolated silos, without being able to then subsequently get maximum benefit from it. Sometimes, for example, when doing large EU type grant
applications, it’s very difficult to say “Well it’s in that space, but that crosses several departmental boundaries and we need to now pull it all together.” Often we just don’t have it in a common system, we don’t have it in a common format with a common level of quality associated to it. Obviously ORCID is not the solution to all that, but it is potentially a vital component.

**Where’s the definitive data and where should the services be?**

There’s an interesting question about where the information on funding, grant awards, patents etc. and so on is going to be stored.

One way to go would be just to use the ORCID IDs in systems like Gateway to Research. The other way would be to store the definitive data at ORCID and for the services to download that data as they need it. This way might be attractive because it has the potential to deal with this issue about dissimilar systems between the different funders. Even if we got the UK funding councils using similar systems and requiring similar data, then we have to deal with the EU and because we’ve got such a large life sciences group we also have a lot of dealings with the NIH, etc. So perhaps if ORCID was to have at least minimal information on funding, grant awards, patents to at least a useful granularity, then it might be much easier for us just to go to one place, or to say to funders “the information’s there, you can use it”.

Perhaps partners of ORCID would be able to have access to tools to drill into that data in some way, we could look at collaborations, perhaps build maps and visualisations. Looking at a person or a grant ID and pulling out with whom we were collaborating, which people at which institutions etc. – all of that would be of great value to us.

If the definitive data is stored in one place that would make the REF process a lot easier. Probably not by 2020, that would be too soon for everything to be in place [to make ORCIDs mandatory], but at least for 2020 HEFCE could talk about ORCIDs and begin now to say that they will be moving towards asking for and accepting them. I said earlier there could be some sort of check box facility to choose, for example, the top three publications or impacts. There would be an advantage to having some sort of independent verification of that too. So perhaps a publication would only be accepted for submission if it appeared in some definitive list of publications or if the principal author or investigator had an ORCID ID. Even if that is too much, it would certainly be possible to check that a claim to be the principal author or a co-author of a paper is verified by the ORCID attribution.

I haven’t talked about publishers much but they too spend a very large amount of money on disambiguation and de-duplication. Perhaps the fact that publishers are so firmly on board with ORCID is a positive indication that the institutions too could save money this way?
Simon Kerridge

Director of Research Services, University of Kent
also Chair, Association of Research Managers and Administrators

Over the years Simon has served on many relevant national initiatives including the RCUK Je-S Management Board, RCUK JGP Steering Group, the HEFCE/Jisc RMAS Steering Group and the Jisc RIM Stakeholder Group. He holds a doctorate in Electronic Research Administration.

Background

The University of Kent has commissioned a new CRIS (Current Research Information System) which will be designed to include ORCID identifiers. In Europe, CERIF (the Common European Research Information Format) has included a field allowing an ORCID to be included^9^.

What we will and won’t use ORCID for …

ORCID will not be our core identifier (of course we will keep our internal system identifiers for finance and HR systems), but it would be very useful as an identifier which we can use for linking to other data sources (internal and, mainly, external) assuming the uptake is as good as we hope. Increasingly, we deal with people who are not employees, they may be visiting professors, other sorts of ad hoc visitors, joint authors, project collaborators and others. ORCID would allow us to rapidly identify them and bring in information about them to our systems which need it. ORCID just provides an identifier for people not organisations – we would be very interested in using some sort of identifier for organisations such as project partners, there are a number of potential IDs that could be used for that. For the scenario where somebody’s moving from one institution and coming to Kent, then you can see how an ORCID would be an immediate boon.

That use case is the sort of thing that the CERIF in Action group have looked at and why it is useful to have data in CERIF.

In the future, we would like to be able to use ORCID to gather extra information which other people hold about our staff, their publications, outputs and activities, information which members of staff, for whatever reason, have neglected to mention to us.

I’m also thinking that, in the future, ORCIDs would be useful for tracking membership of peer-review panels, membership of government committees or programme committees or editorial boards; this would be very valuable extra information about our members of staff. Our research managers would be happy that they don’t have to ask for and manually collect such information and researchers themselves would feel happy that they don’t have to do multiple detailed manual reporting, because they know there is a reasonably definitive version.

Even for REF submissions, obviously what should be happening is that all your staff members have given you a comprehensive account of all their publications over the last many years. My guess is that this isn’t always

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^9^ [http://www.cerifsupport.org/2013/02/23/cerif-xml-person-record/]
case. Perhaps the vast majority have come up fairly easily with their top four or top six publications, but for an impact case study, for example, it would be useful to have a comprehensive publication record going backwards, to show how current research and impact might be underpinned by earlier work.

One interesting scenario is our interaction with publishers. Obviously we have systems trawling the web and picking up information from publishers’ databases and then we have systems for checking, for example, whether this Peter Smith is “our” Peter Smith. If the publisher has done the work to attach a correct ORCID to that data then that will be simple. If the publisher has not attached an ORCID, we should have the internal information needed to tie the two together. Then, potentially that information could be something that could be passed back to that publisher. I imagine some sort of electronic handshake process with trusted publishers where we are saying: *if you know the ORCID for this author, and you can tell us it, then that’s great we’ll trust you, and if not then we, the university, can identify the ORCID for this person and you can trust us to pass it back to you.* There’s great potential for eliminating duplication of effort here.

Another important area is data and research datasets and the linking of those to ORCIDs. So as well as doing this in our own institutional repositories, it would be important for e.g. the UK Data Service to begin to use ORCIDs.

**The individual researchers and principal investigators**

Individual researchers will want ORCIDs to be used by the systems which they already trust and with which they regularly interact. For example, I have recently spoken to several of our researchers who are using ResearchGate. I don’t know if that service plans to use ORCIDs, if it does then the users’ ORCIDs would automatically be linked to their publications as part of their normal day-to-day work patterns – and that information could then be pushed (or pulled) back to institutional systems using the ORCID. From the researchers’ point of view they don’t have to interact with another system, it just happens as part of their workflow - I think quite a lot of them would be keen on that. You can also imagine, and indeed there are such systems, where you get an email every week or every month saying, *‘there are these new publications we have found – are they by you?’* You confirm and it becomes linked to your ID. Of course there are many other possible services, this is just an example. I imagine that universities could have trust relationships with such services, like with publishers, to exchange information to confirm publications are linked to the correct identities. All of these scenarios are enhanced by the use of an ORCID.

There is one obvious benefit for grant applicants to a research council; being able to say: *instead of filling out this particular form with all my publications, you could just say, ‘well, here’s my ORCID.’* But that raises an interesting issue in that what you really want to do is tailor that data to a particular submission, so that the reviewers get to see the most appropriate parts. Our new systems will provide that kind of mini-CV capability, where the system presents, for example, all your seventy publications, but then allows you to select your top four or your top eight for this particular application or applications. So, probably rather than the research councils going to get the data from ORCID, instead you, as a P.I. or your people who are applying for grants, would be using ORCID to gather data from everywhere. Then you would be able to check a box and say, “yes, I want number one, number seventeen and number thirty-three highlighted on this application”.

Another thing to note is that the C in ORCID stands for *contributors*. So all UK research students already have a HESA ID but if these were also ORCIDs, then funders and institutions who are particularly keen on career tracking, will be able to say in ten years’ time *‘this person here, who was on a CASE studentship is now producing research in that area.’* I know the Wellcome Trust, for example, is quite keen on these sorts of longitudinal profiles, *‘here’s somebody we supported fifteen years ago, and now they’re contributing back to*
At the moment it must take quite a lot of time chasing down that information manually whereas it could be done mostly automatically in the future. For publications, it is already relatively easy to identify people – but for tracking involvement in projects or project applications a single ID would be very useful. It’s also worth noting that a research contributor is usually thought of as an individual, but could be an institution, a legal entity and/or a part of a legal entity, none of which are eligible for ORCIDs. So this again points to a need for an equivalent organisational identifier.

**Other institutions**

For learned societies or subject bodies, the problems with identifying people accurately (and therefore the potential advantages of using a widely accepted unique ID) are so much greater. Those groups may well include people who are not at any institution (emeritus, overseas, independent researchers) or are accredited at multiple institutions, so the potential problems with multiple IDs could also be greater.

Systems like Je-S record IDs for departments, but the departments themselves may change quite often and you also have, for example, inter-institutional research groups, which have got names and identities, but their actual legal identity is very vague, indeed, research groups or institutes are often jointly owned or managed by more than one institution. Questions that arise in such cases include: “which institution will arrange ORCIDs for those members of staff?” “What does the individual do if one institution mandates ORCIDs and another deprecates them?”

It’s worth mentioning the UK government’s RCUK Gateway to Research which aims to provide a mechanism for businesses and other interested parties to identify potential partners in universities to develop and commercialise knowledge, and maximise the impact of publicly funded research. This and the related Jisc Gateway to Research for HE, G4HE (an initiative to improve the information exchange between Higher Education Institutions and the Research Councils) is exactly the sort of service which would benefit from using an institution-independent unique identifier like ORCID.

**Key performance indicators (KPIs) and benchmarking**

ORCIDs could make it easier to benchmark at a sub-institutional level (which is perhaps something which is going to be more important in the future). For many institutions, KPIs are already in place or being put in place, but it is often difficult to collate items which are not usually in the public domain or explicitly shared, project proposal submission rates for example. This would enable data to be collated on a departmental or unit of assessment level – “the physics department success rate with STFC is 22% but with EPSRC is 27%”. Of course you would need to be very clear to inform individuals in advance if such information was collected and kept at an individual level, particularly if there was a possibility of it being used for making judgements on matters such as promotions or redundancies.

**Spelling out the benefits**

As well as the benefits identified above, ORCIDs could be very useful for identifying people who would be interested in funding opportunities or potential international experts for refereeing, interviews etc. It would be interesting to see some of these benefits spelt out. For example, if you have an institutional repository and a publications reporting system, then this will save you x amount in re-keying, and therefore your likely return on investment will be y.
Dealing with the concerns

There will certainly need to be UK specific guidance taking account of UK and European legislation. I know there is also concern about where the data is held, since it is all on servers in the USA as I understand it. There is an initiative known as Safe Harbor which aims to address these concerns, and in its privacy policy ORCID agrees to adhere to the Safe Harbor Principles.

For individuals, questions will arise such as: ‘who actually controls this ID? What information about me is available and is not available and to whom? Can I control to whom I make it freely available? Do I ultimately control it and have the power to edit and delete it? Do I have to control it, am I creating a legal responsibility? Is it a bit like Facebook: they might change the privacy settings so that data that weren’t available suddenly become available and then …?’

It’s important that UK-tailored materials addressing these concerns are made available at an early stage.

Batch uploads

I know different institutions have different attitudes to this, my personal view is that it would be OK to allocate ORCIDs to people on a batch basis. Obviously we would have to inform staff beforehand and give them the option to opt out, but I think it would work well on that basis. Of course there would also need to be some sort of validation process, so that people who’ve already got an ORCID get picked up. In fact there is an interesting discussion to be had on exactly what data we should upload. There is an argument for saying that since we are spending a lot of time and effort collating and cleansing data for our CRIS then we should upload as much of that data as possible, once it is clean. Of course it is always up to the individual to decide what information to make public or keep private or share with specific people. And a few unusual people may have two different research personas which they need or wish to keep completely separate, ORCID are well aware of that use case.

Authenticity and accreditation

If, for example, an institution approaches ORCID saying that Peter Smith has just joined them then Peter Smith should have the ability to confirm that this is correct and that he is willing to share part or all of his associated data with that institution. On the other hand, if Peter Smith claims in his ORCID to work for the University of Kent, then the institution should have the ability to allow or deny that claim, so some sort of confirmed accreditation would be valuable. And of course that would apply to subject bodies, learned societies, academies and other organisations who might want to confirm or deny accreditation. Exactly how this trust relationship is managed and maintained is interesting – perhaps the system would allow an annual batch check, possibly automatically through an API, “these people are all claiming affiliation or accreditation with your institution please confirm or deny each one.”

The Research Office

When collaborating, or seeking funds to collaborate, with other institutions then the research office can take some of the weight off academics by sharing a lot of information with the institution which is coordinating the proposal. Often, there’s some sort of permission process involved – sometimes, as a research administrator, you might have to go to the academics and say, “you can fill out all these forms manually yourself if you like, or we can, if you give us permission to share it with other possible collaborating institutions.” Or “we’ll be happy to do it on your behalf, as long as we check with you first that you are actually in a proposal with these people and that you know about it.”
One major driver for getting people to use ORCID, could be the combination of future REF requirements with other requirements for open access. One would assume that by then an ORCID link to a publication would show relatively clearly whether that publication had been open access at the time it was made. So it would enable us, hopefully very quickly, to say, 'yes, this person has these four key outputs. They are open access-compliant from 2014.' By that time, hopefully the SHERPA/RoMEO FACT service will be out of beta\(^\text{10}\) and will be a trustworthy way to confirm that compliance. It would certainly be interesting to see, for ORCIDs at your own institution, which publications have been made open access, by when, and to see which departments are doing better or not so well at compliance.

\(^10\) The service is now out of beta: http://romeo.iiscinvolve.org/wp/2013/09/02/improved-version-of-sherpafact-now-available/
Background

The RCUK Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) team (now run by UK-SBS) maintains a Central Data Repository (CDR) with information on People and Organisations. There are around 160k organisations – with around 47k at the top level. The RCUK outcome collection systems (ROS and Research Fish) and Je-S have an urgent need to disambiguate organisations, to correctly expose organisational hierarchies and to match these to individuals and to collaborators.

Career development and tracking

We jointly work with HESA (The Higher Education Statistics Agency) to understand what happens to leavers from HE. The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Institutions survey (known as DLHE) and particularly the longitudinal study coming from that survey are particularly important for us. Clearly a unique identifier would help this and similar work. HESA have unique identifiers for staff (STAFFID) and students (HUSID). A recent consultation with the sector confirmed that HESA should not collect staff names in the Staff Record, although student names are collected and the student identifier (HUSID) is made available to Statutory Customers like RCUK (with limits on reuse). When staff move between universities they are supposed to take their STAFFID with them – but this seldom happens, and new IDs are minted. This makes career tracking difficult. Similarly there is no process to match STAFFIDs to HUSIDs – to track the career development of students. A persistent unique ID would obviously help. Ideally this should be obtained by doctoral students (perhaps even undergraduates). HESA will be consulting with the sector on including ORCIDs in the student and staff records for 2014/15.

Disambiguation of authors of publications

This is the obvious use case, for RCUK and other funders around the world. Just one example of this is when we are looking for reviewers for evaluation or grant applications. NERC and MRC both use a variety of tools including Collexis, SCOPUS, and subject lexicons (such as Geobase and MESH) to match keywords or semantic strings in proposals with the corpus of published abstracts. We use semantic methods to identify potential reviewers, but there often remains uncertainty over whether we “have got the right John Smith?” The reviewer matcher software can offer information on John Smith’s most recent city, but disambiguation would be much simpler if ORCIDs were also available.

11 http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/2115/128/
Another example for us would be the use of Je-S (the Joint Electronic Submission system) and in the RCUK Research Outcomes System (ROS) and ResearchFish (RF). These systems use the RCUK Gateway to Research (GtR) system to provide a single portal to expose information on RCUK research inputs and outcomes. It has a particular focus on SME, and aims to allow business to find the best people in the UK to provide advice, consultancy or commissioned research. Gateway to Research has to match information on collaborating organisations and individuals, and co-authors, held in 3 systems (JeS, ROS and RF). Disambiguation would greatly facilitate this.

GtR also aims to provide contact email information for people who are listed as Principal Investigators or Co-investigators, but we have all sorts of data protection problems with this. We clearly can’t give away somebody’s email address unless they’ve authorised this, but would prefer not to have to implement a personal permissions page in one of the RCUK Systems. The option to ask PIs/CIs to allow their emails to be provided with “Restricted Access” to RCUK is looking attractive. This could be set on a UK Researcher’s ORCID “edit my details” page. It would be useful to provide a link from GtR to the public page of PI/CIs, and we are in discussion with ORCID on how best to make Grants information available on these pages, in addition to the existing publications. The issue of linking publications to grants in ORCID remains to be resolved. ORCID allows people to input multiple email addresses and to decide which of those might be publicly available.

Another use case which you will have spoken to others about is the use of facilities. This applies to many of the Research Councils. Academics submit competitive proposals and are awarded time on facilities like aircraft, ships or telescopes. The cash equivalent value of this time is allocated to their departments and used in RAE/REF assessments alongside the cash awarded through grants. It is therefore very important a) to award this cash equivalent to the correct departments, and b) to ensure that individuals arriving to use the facilities are bona fide members of the appropriate institution. It is also important to track overseas users of facilities – since these are often funded through reciprocal or bartering arrangements.

Data protection and a minimum recommended UK disclosure

It would be very useful for RCUK and others to be able to see how many researchers registered with ORCID are currently working in, or based in, the UK. This can be estimated from those with email addresses of the form *.uk, but this underestimates the total. Country is not a mandatory field however, and is set by default to ‘private’. It’s hard to see why this should be the case. If it were mandatory a standard UK ‘profile’ could be implemented for all UK registrants, where certain fields would be set by default to “restricted” rather than “private” – e.g. the email field mentioned above could be opened to RCUK unless registrants make a positive move to reset it to “private”.

Affiliation and organisation IDs

ORCID is moving towards providing links to grants and patents and to showing your organisational affiliation. ORCID has announced that Ringgold will be providing its lookup functions for AffiliationID (likely to be provided at both Institutional and Departmental level – although details remain to be finalised). This is a very important feature (as discussed above). RCUK- Je-S maintains a database of 160,000 organisations, around 47,000 of which are Parent organisations. We are very keen to map these against Names Authorities like Ringgold (and others like Companies House), and to devolve some of the hard work of maintaining the Je-S OrgIDs to an organisation explicitly focusing on this task. The Jisc-CASRAI working group has recently commissioned a study in this area and we are looking forward to the initial report (from Curtis+Cartwright and Max Hammond). The RCUK Gateway to Research Project would be willing to work with the UK community to

12 http://infteam.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2013/04/18/how-you-can-help-us-to-make-research-administration-more-efficient/
improve the quality of OrgIDs available in shared systems. It will be important to incorporate the HESA Institutional Profile Record 2012/13 – which for the first time captures information at the Departmental Level. ORCID will be launching its affiliation module in autumn 2013, using ISNI unique organizational identifiers to support the accurate and persistent identification of researcher institutional affiliations. We would want to see both country and top level institutional affiliation exposed (possibly as “restricted access” as part of a strongly recommended UK metadata standard for ORCID as mentioned above). In the UK, I think there’s scope for organisations like RCUK and HESA to use ORCID to check our own information on researcher identities.

**Working with and using external services**

Research Councils, through ROS and Research Fish, access external webservices like CrossRef and Pubmed to check publication metadata. Some Councils (e.g. NERC and EPSRC) access the Thomson Reuters’ Web of Science Webservice to harvest information on Funder and GrantID (and sometimes additional fields like author address). This is a very valuable service. If this funder information were more consistently included in the acknowledgement section of papers (following the RIN Acknowledgement of Funder Agreement) a great service would be provided to funders and repository managers. Such information is increasingly important to track the expenditure of the RCUK Open Access Block Grant. NERC is exploring with Thompson Reuters how we could feedback information from systems like Gateway to Research (GtR) to complete grant information exposed in Web of Science and InCites. The latter provides a wide range of normalised publication impact statistics. In Autumn for the first time impact factors will be available based on funder, in addition to the normal institutional and departmental comparisons.

RCUK at the moment has reasonable information on which grants are linked to which PI or co-investigator, and which publications and other products or impacts arise from these Grants. However it is very important to track the inputs from other funders’ research projects, particularly in the context of who is contributing to the Open Access charges. Widespread use of ORCID for PersonaliDs and an OrgID for organisations will enable widespread analysis of interactions on both grants and publications and demonstrate crucial linkages and dependencies. So a PI will list a publication as deriving from the grant, and there’ll be eight, nine, ten other names on that publication who may be in different countries and funded by other routes. A network analysis of collaborative working would be very useful for us and for the researchers themselves.

Researchers are used to claiming their publications through local repositories or CRIS systems and very few scientists will object to further exposure of that information since it aids their profiles. Researchers are increasingly using claiming systems such as ResearcherID and AuthorID – and the links that these systems have to ORCID work very well and encourage registrants to use the latter.

Increasing use of CRIS systems – and interoperability with ORCID is very much to be welcomed & RCUK is considering how best to interface its own systems with HEI CRISs and Repositories.

In terms of pushing wider involvement, then we need good intelligence about who’s doing what elsewhere - which universities have taken subscriptions, which publisher is engaging in or actually insisting on ORCIDs. The information about the NIH collaboration is very interesting – it would be good to hear more like that and also to see international use cases not just US and UK ones.

The links between ORCID and Dryad and also ORCID and Datacite are crucial because we’re all very keen not only to get storage and findability of datasets established on the same basis as publications but also to see the links between publications and datasets.
Another service which might be of particular interest and to which ORCID might be very useful is Repository Junction Broker. This is a nascent service, funded by Jisc and due to be launched by EDINA in July 2013. The aim is to take PDFs and metadata from Nature Publishing Group (NPG) and Europe PubMed Central and then distribute that information to all of the author repositories. I think it sends an email saying “We’ve had this paper deposited by one of your members of staff. We could send all the metadata to you in SWORD format, plus the PDF automatically if you wanted. In order to do that you need to register on the system.” If all publishers were using this as a mechanism to cooperate with repositories and to clarify embargo periods applying to individual papers, then this would be useful. It would be good to see a discussion between RJB and ORCID about sharing metadata.
Brian Matthews

Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
Group Leader, Scientific Computing Department

Brian leads a team in data and information management for large-scale facilities. This includes cataloguing and publishing data arising from experiments, publication repositories and linking these together to form a record of science.

Background

The Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC) has a hybrid role. We’re not a HEI as such, but we are an organisation that’s intimately associated with the higher education sector, particularly in its research function. We provide facilities and services to the higher education sector and are keen to interoperate our ways of working as much as possible. Of course we have our own needs and requirements as well. We believe that ORCID may help in all these areas.

Facility user management.

We have to manage and register users. Between our facilities we have various registration databases of several thousand unique (and regularly changing) users. We have to manage those, give them user accounts, user access, manage the time awarding function which we have. Users may be regular but more often they may be irregular – perhaps applying for a time allocation, visiting and then not coming back for three years. When they come back they may well have changed some aspects of their identity: title, status, institution, department, surname, specialism etc. So, as part of the “upstream” picture, we have a major challenge, not only managing all those people but interacting with their institutions about them. Clearly, a widely shared unique identifier would help a lot here. Not only us – on a smaller scale, many institutions have their own facilities to manage and monitor. But it would also help us with the “downstream” picture. We (and others) would like to be able to answer many questions about the facilities use – e.g. What are the impacts and outputs coming from the use of our very expensive equipment? Which experiment gave rise to which publication? Which resource allocation was used for which experiment? Under which grant did this activity occur? Trawling publication databases and asking individual researchers about their relevant outputs are both time-consuming activities which give incomplete results. ORCID could greatly simplify this. Using ORCID might also free time to look at other indicators of impact such as citations.

International communications

Not only do we have to communicate with universities and research institutions in the UK, but also with similar institutions to us around the world. There’s a community of maybe thirty to fifty hosts of these major scientific instruments around the world, and they have a significant overlap in their user base. Again, we would like to be able to both track and also provide better service by being able to identify who’s in common between instruments and institutions. From our point of view, this international communication will be a very
important aspect of ORCID use. The fact that, for example, CERN (a key partner of ours) is already heavily involved with ORCID is very encouraging.

**Grant awards and outputs**

We also have the more conventional research council function – awarding and monitoring grants. Three systems with which many researchers and administrators will be familiar are Je-S, ROS and ResearchFish. Je-S is the joint electronic submission system used by 10 research councils and other similar bodies. Je-S manages proposal submission and evaluation and the award of grants. There are also two systems which gather data on research outcomes, outputs and impact: ROS (used by AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC and NERC) and ResearchFish (used by MRC, STFC and many medical research charities). Obviously all these systems also have a critical need to manage names and identities and the stated aim for ROS and ResearchFish is for researchers to only need to enter any piece of information once and for it to be shared. Again ORCID could be an important element in this.

The research community are keen to avoid having to enter data multiple times in multiple systems and we are keen to avoid asking them to do this. Our in house research community is relatively small, at the most a few hundred, based at our laboratories, whilst our user community is in the thousands. So whilst we can see internal benefits in using ORCID, we could manage our in house research relatively easily ... the real benefit for us and for our user community would be if our user community were all (or mostly) already registered with ORCID I could foresee links on our application and registration pages: *Do you want to register? Do you want to register with an ORCID ID? Do you want to get an ORCID ID?*. Perhaps we could use the ORCID ID to then look up and auto fill-in information.

**Researchers and their universities**

From the researcher’s point of view this would avoid:

- the need for many re-registrations and de-registrations;
- frequent battles with lost accounts;
- correctly getting prior work attributed to the right person;
- correctly getting generated research data and data publications attributed to the right person.

For the researcher, ORCIDs should be more persistent than the email addresses which are often used as identifying tokens.

For universities, arguably the CRIS (current research information system) is the key management information of the organisation and the gold of the organisation, the unique selling point. So getting this information correct and correctly attributed and easily shareable should benefit the institutions enormously.

**Advocacy**

It’s important that the right people get to hear about these possibilities. Not only the individual researchers but crucially the people who support and advise them – research management offices etc. Not only is this an efficient way to disseminate news and raise awareness, but it is important to encourage batch registrations – you might register all members of a research group or collaborative project or all users of a particular facility or all of an institute’s staff. But this should be welcomed by researchers not perceived as imposed on them, it should be seen as something under their control and not an invasion of privacy.
I’d like to find on the web site simple presentations (which could be used internally by advocates) on what ORCID does, what it aims to do and why it’s useful. Briefing packs and how-to guides, for individuals and organisations. I don’t know whether it would need a UK slant or not. That would be something for Jisc to think about. At the same time, it would be necessary for Jisc and the Research Councils to make simple, clear statements on their attitude and involvement – perhaps some FAQs on, for example, how ORCID will fit with previous and current UK projects, the likes of Eduroam or Shibboleth, the Names project and then publishers’ projects such as, ResearcherID, Web of Knowledge, Scopus, the things that people commonly work with.

There may also be a need for UK-specific information on privacy and data protection. How does ORCID fit with data protection laws and the differences between American and UK, and European law?

**Reasons to be optimistic about ORCID**

Even only a year ago, all we knew about ORCID was words, business models and good intentions. Now there is not only a working service with 140,000 registered users, but there is working code and code workshops, demonstrations such as the one from Harvard and links to Scopus which work. That’s encouraging. Other commercial and non-commercial players are taking it seriously – CERIF (the Common European Research Information Format) has included a field allowing an ORCID to be included. Also, problems identified at launch time have been sorted out quickly – that’s reassuring.

**What next?**

There are exciting possibilities for things like ePortfolios, and tracking researchers’ careers. But I think the broader things will be sorted out - people will come up with clever hacks. The important thing for ORCID is to do the narrow thing – to get an ID which is widely used and which works. I’m convinced enough to explore it further – I’d like to see how it works in the context of a European collaboration and then, as the thing grows, I expect we’ll see it used more and then we’ll all take it on more. More and more ...

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William Nixon and Valerie McCutcheon

William Nixon

Digital Library Development Manager, University of Glasgow

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William Nixon has over 12 years’ experience working with institutional repositories and supporting Open Access. A key focus of his work is ensuring the repository is integrated with core systems in particular author identifiers to link staff and research outputs.

Valerie McCutcheon

Research Information Manager, University of Glasgow

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Valerie McCutcheon has over 10 years’ experience of developing and managing research support systems within a Higher Education Institute including interfaces to Human Resource and Finance systems. She leads the work on RCUK reporting at the University of Glasgow.

Background

Founded in 1451, the University of Glasgow is the fourth oldest university in the English-speaking world. Today it is a broad-based, research intensive institution with a global reach. It is also a member of the Russell Group of leading UK research universities and was the first UK university to join ORCID as an institutional member. Membership in ORCID will enable us to build on and enhance our local work linking authors to research output and reporting to funders.

Fulfilling our open access agenda – building on our repository work

We’ve worked very hard within our repository Enlighten – to disambiguate our authors locally. We realised very early on that if we get this right, if we can easily and accurately identify our authors and their publications, if we can be as comprehensive as possible, then we can really begin to see the advantages in other areas and leverage a lot of that work into reporting and fulfilling other plans – particularly our open access agenda. Our Jisc funded Enrich project enabled us to establish Enlighten as a comprehensive repository and central publications database as well as link authors to publications. So our repository plays a role as the publications database and increasingly now research outputs in our repository are linked to grant numbers and funder details which are imported from our Research Support System. This gives us the ability to make more useful and detailed reports. We’re quite comfortable that, though nothing’s perfect, we have broken the back of being able to locally identify author x and publications y. We think the ORCID identifiers will provide us with a sort of independent, non-partisan, for want of a better word, way to really scale that up. We had already looked at ResearcherID from Thomson Reuters because we were very interested in identifiers for improving repository ingest population, so we can readily say in SCOPUS or in Web of Science “these are the publications that belong to x”. So, certainly these services are getting better at that identification and so are we, but we can really see that it will improve much more when we have a sixteen digit ORCID identifier which we can throw at SCOPUS or Web of Science and say “Tell us everything that you’ve got from person x.” Those are the obvious practical benefits. We have been encouraged by people like the Wellcome Trust and
the funders starting to think about that too. My sense is that if this takes off and gets a critical mass, then this has great potential for the research funders to answer the various questions that they have too.

In terms of reporting, it can potentially really improve and streamline those processes. Some examples: the Research Outcomes System (ROS) has been a very challenging system to report to; we’re also immersed in the REF at the moment, where we know from experience that the HESA staff identifiers are sometimes not unique and people can have multiple HESA staff IDs. Now we’re not saying that ORCID identifiers will make that all suddenly very easy. But being able to have that kind of commonality of identifier, perhaps a more agnostic international standard, can only give us benefits in terms of ingest, reporting and curation. We can also see benefits for career tracking for graduates and post graduates. In terms of facilities, we manage and monitor our own facilities using our own Glasgow unique identifier with Shibboleth for our authentication for e-resources, but there may be a use case for using ORCIDs for access to and monitoring use of national and international resources and scientific facilities.

**Spreading the word**

Anecdotally, we are increasingly hearing of academics encountering ORCID through publishers or funders. We think it would be helpful if there were some short videos or statements from high-reputation academics saying “this is what it did for me” or “I was in x situation and I realised this is where an ORCID could be really useful” or “this is what we’re using it for here at X University and this is how much time it’s saved”. People tend to ignore generalisations and promotional material, but they pay attention if colleagues, especially respected colleagues, make personal statements. We think a good place to start would be senior people who have already spent a good deal of time curating their profile on ResearcherID, for example, or very carefully managing their citation counts and their publications as reflected on Web of Science or SCOPUS.

In terms of encouraging participation, we are keen to enable registration to happen rather than seeming to force it. So we are looking at making it easy for researchers to obtain an ORCID but not presenting it as a fait accompli – quite apart from other considerations, we don’t want it to be seen as an initiative from the centre, more a researcher-led thing in which we are participating.

We certainly don’t want it to be perceived as another thing to do – or another place to fill in the same data all over again. The underlying principle of our Repository and Research Support System is re-use. We want to move towards a model where researchers need only give publication details once and it goes into the repository. It’s then used in different ways: to report to the research outcomes systems, to report to other funders, it appears in staff profiles (our web staff profile pages pull the data from the repository), potentially it could facilitate transfer of information about researchers and their research outputs when they move organisation, it can be used in the performance and development review documentation and many more applications. We’re also talking to EPrints about using ORCIDs to import data from CrossREF. We think this is one area where some small funding could be made available – leveraging the use of ORCIDs within EPrints.

We know that ORCID has the support of the RCUK in theory, as a possible way forward, but there is little mention of it in communications with institutions. Of course there has been a lot of criticism from HEIs of the difficulties with ROS and ResearchFish and the differences between them and indeed why there is a need for two separate systems in the first place. We know there is some movement on that and that the RCUK is listening, but it would be good for ORCID to be mentioned as a component in future solutions or interfaces.

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14 Typically some organisations’ output systems robustly link to awards won by their organisation but storage of information about awards won elsewhere and associated with outputs is either non-existent or not as robust.
**Working with ORCID**

The sign up process for institutional membership was very responsive and it was a very positive experience. Even before we had actually signed and got the paperwork signed off, they pointed us towards their development sandbox and we had opportunities to experiment with that. And once we had signed up there was good flexible follow up. That’s very important because the sign up is just the start – there are all sorts of things to discuss after that. We need to have a detailed discussion with our colleagues who manage our institutional identity vault and talk about the exact interaction with our Glasgow University IDs. We also need to look ahead beyond the initial implementation to how we handle it when staff leave or new staff arrive.

What are the systems that the ORCID identifier is going into? Where exactly are the various places that the ORCID identifier is going to sit? Where’s it going to originate? What’s going to happen when a new member of staff brings an ORCID identifier with them? Lots of questions! I’m not saying we have all the answers to those, but those are some of the areas that we’ve already been discussing and exploring. We’ve certainly had a very positive experience discussing these issues with ORCID and with colleagues in IT and Human Resources. It will be interesting to see the sort of value-adds in the reporting and the syncing of data and so on, which you get once you have premium membership.

It’s good to see that the ORCID people do actually respond and deliver things too – so that intentions are not just vapourware but they get carried through – and problems get fixed. Just looking at the latest, the 20th June, post which said “A little known fact about the ORCID registry is how often we update functionality. Sometimes as frequently as weekly. And here’s x, y and z changes that have just been added.” That’s good and exciting to see as well.

One of the things we particularly like about the design is the prominent suggestion feature – so new features can be suggested and voted on by the users. We’d like to be able to add alternative locations for publications – so the DOI version might be referenced in ORCID but you may want to give a location for the repository version or the pre-print version too.

We’re particularly interested in the role that ORCID has to play in altmetrics and the changing landscape for the publication, communication and use of research. Amber Thomas has written and spoken about this several times recently including:

> Now comes [ORCID](http://amberatwarwick.wordpress.com/2013/05/12/byoi/), a researcher identifier scheme increasingly being adopted by big publishers and third party web services alike. [...] The signs are good that ORCID will take off. I hope so, particularly so that innovative third party services can come in and offer new approaches. I am a big fan of the idea of [impact story](http://amberatwarwick.wordpress.com/2013/05/12/byoi/), a beta service that uses ORCID to drive a whole digital footprint approach to tracing the web metrics and social shares of academic online outputs, alongside citations. This broadened attention is fundamental to the [altmetrics manifesto](http://amberatwarwick.wordpress.com/2013/05/12/byoi/).

We realise that being an early adopter in the UK comes with its own challenges. But the [slides showing the work Boston University](http://amberatwarwick.wordpress.com/2013/05/12/byoi/) are doing with ORCID illustrate that they are already getting use and value out of it.
Rosa Scoble

Deputy Director Planning (Research) – Brunel University

Rosa Scoble has a PhD on the Research Assessment Exercise and a keen interest in research information management. She is currently involved in two Jisc funded projects and has successfully completed two others in the past couple of years. She was Director of RAE2008 at Brunel. She has extensive knowledge of HESA data requirements gained both by producing the Guardian University Tables (2003-2007) and by leading on internal projects to coordinate HESA data returns. Her main current responsibility, working with the PVC (Research), is the management of research information and planning in preparation for REF2014.

Background

Brunel is a research intensive university with a broad base. While the strongest areas are mainly around engineering, innovation and materials, it has a very strong profile in ageing and ecotoxicology. The pioneering research in ecotoxicology resulted in a Queen’s Anniversary Award in 2012. Brunel introduced a full text repository in 2006, an open access mandate and open access funding in the past four years.

Rosa Scoble leads on research information management within Brunel and liaises very closely with the library and other research support departments. She is at the forefront of developing a strategy for academics to enhance their reputation by building easily accessible open access profiles.

Tying it all together

We are not unusual in that the university has different systems handling different tasks developed at different times in different places. Our research development office will handle and help researchers with grant applications. There’s also a strategy, policy and planning office. Once the contract has been awarded, then all the post award finance is handled by the finance department. So, for example, we have the Symplectic publication database, that handles the publications. We also have our own full text repository, BURA, which uses DSpace. But the grants are not associated with either of these. So Symplectic will automatically update publication information on our researchers’ web pages but not grants, they have to be done manually. Similarly, central systems would not necessarily be accessing information about researchers’ publications. Of course we can use our internal payroll ID or staff ID to link information together but it tends to be done on an “as needed” basis. We may pull together all the information we need for a particular report or a REF submission, for example. We CAN link things together but it does not happen all the time; and the PI will still have to manually fill in a lot of information about publications etc. So there would be major benefits in linking all these systems together and being able to pull in outside information from publishers, research councils, collaborators and potential collaborators.

Of course, there would be many different systems to which we would have to add a new ID field. But some of those systems (e.g. Symplectic) are already doing this and for many other local or bespoke systems, adding another field should not be a very big problem. Then we have to start actually using that field, of course – that will be the challenge.
The researchers’ perspective

But the biggest benefits I see are for the researchers – to raise their profile, nationally and internationally. That’s why I am already talking to early career researchers about ORCID and the benefits of creating a researcher identifier in terms of having an up to date profile with recent publications visible. It’s a question of visibility. For researchers there is always the problem of having to update their information in multiple places and on multiple systems. So every time they apply for a grant or a promotion or a new job or have to make reports or returns to the research councils, via ROS for example, they have to copy and paste to a large extent – or even retype. My hope is that one day they’ll be able to put that information into ORCID (or somewhere else using the ORCID identifier) and then it will get pulled or pushed out into the right places.

We have been promoting Open Access to our staff for a long time with our own Open Access fund which enables researchers to publish in Gold Open Access journals if appropriate and our repository is another very important tool for visibility. Patents are also important for us as our biggest research activity is in engineering. ORCID would be relevant and helpful for all of these. Research students and post docs could also benefit from getting and using and ORCID early in their careers. Masters students, even undergraduates are also co-authoring papers these days. In fact I would advise anyone who may go on to have an academic career to get an ORCID. It has to be an expected part of being an academic.

Collaboration and critical mass

When looking at possible collaborations and pulling together very early stage collaborative proposals, a lot of work is done on Google – looking for people’s profiles and achievements, making sure you’ve got the right people. ORCIDs would make this process much easier and more accurate. But there is the issue of critical mass – these uses will only work when you can rely on the majority of early career researchers already having an ORCID. That’s why I like the idea of the university setting the process off, getting ORCIDs for each of its staff. There is general agreement here that the batch upload process would be useful for us, and I haven’t heard any opposition to ORCID here. The two big questions then are “Will the staff use it?” and “Have ORCID got robust procedures in place to stop people accidentally having more than one ORCID?”. After that, it’s the uptake that’s crucial – if a lot of one’s colleagues are doing it then there is pressure to do it – it becomes a race.

One thing that would make it more attractive would be to be able to import publications and the sort of grey literature which people have already entered on Google Scholar, for example. Often they feel they have already spent a great deal of time curating their material on Google Scholar so it would be a high priority to be able to automatically import that. The European dimension is very important too, it would be good to see ORCIDs being used in applications for EU funding – it’s a good sign that there is a field in CERIF which is being used for ORCIDs.

Summarising

I’m enthusiastic about the potential for ORCID. At the moment there are multiple identifiers in use and people struggle with that – and also have very little control over the information attached to those IDs. The information held by SCOPUS or Web of Science or several different research councils might each be slightly different and the researcher can’t easily change that information. ORCID could potentially put that control in the hands of researchers, so when they change jobs or projects or get married and change names or add research interests all these things can be updated in one place with some confidence that eventually this change will be spread around to different systems which are an important part of the researcher’s life.
Appendix – topic guide for interviews

Topics

1. Particular areas where you think ORCID identifiers might benefit your organisation.
   Ways in which using ORCID identifiers might benefit:
   - your management information and processes\(^1\)
   - internal and external communications.
   Examples?

2. Particular areas where you think ORCID identifiers might benefit your individual researchers and Principal Investigators? Publications, grant applications and awards, data? Other examples?\(^2\)

3. Particular areas where you think ORCID might benefit your research managers (if this has not been covered above). Examples?

4. If you were/are to act as an advocate for ORCID use in your institution, what would make this easier and what would be the critical concerns of individuals and management?

5. Institutions who are members of ORCID can perform a batch upload and allocate ORCID IDs for all (or groups of) their staff and postgraduates. Is this facility something you are considering or would value? What issues arise? How are you or might you implement this?

6. Any technical issues or problems you anticipate or have encountered using person IDs.
   Comments on any particular systems needs and interoperability requirements which are crucial for your institution.

7. Do you have any relevant present or future functional requirements for an identifier which you believe are not (or not yet) available through ORCID?

   [If not mentioned during the discussion, other cue words to inspire discussion:
   - privacy, security, FAQs, UK and EU legislation, collaboration, REF.]

\(^1\) There have been several use cases expressed in this area, management of information on staff and PIs in the form of researcher profiles, but also management of personnel records and access to university resources (e.g., library subscriptions). ORCID identifiers have been suggested as the key to link disparate research office and IT systems on campus. Another interesting use case is tracking graduates, and the idea that graduate students should include their ORCID iD with the submission of their thesis.

\(^2\) Suggest explicitly asking about students here