

eResearch in Australia: From Build to Buy?

Nick Tate, Rhys Francis

1 The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, n.tate@rdsi.uq.edu.au

2 eResearch Futures P/L, Melbourne, Australia, rhys_francis@me.com

DESCRIPTION

Affirmative

- The commercial sector is showing us how, we should buy in, and they are sustainable

Negative

- Outsourcing can't buy the next generation, and research is all about the next generation

With dwindling eResearch funds being available from state and territory Governments and reduced funding from the Commonwealth, the future is uncertain as to the maintenance of some existing eResearch infrastructure let alone the development of new infrastructure. This point counter-point session seeks to explore sustainability models and identify if they are adequate to ensure the continuity of services. Will service providers sink or swim if government funding runs dry?

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Dr Nick Tate is Director of the Australian Government's Research Data Storage Infrastructure (RDSI) project which is based at the University of Queensland (UQ) and is Immediate Past President of the Australian Computer Society (ACS). RDSI is a \$50m project funded under the Super Science initiative which aims to transform the storage of research data throughout Australian Universities and Research Institutions. Prior to this role, he was Associate Director of the Australian Research Collaboration Service (ARCS) which developed and deployed cloud computing and cloud storage services for researchers across Australia. He has been an Adjunct Professor in IT and Electrical Engineering at UQ since 2008.

He is currently a Director of Higher Ed Systems Pty Ltd (HES) and was Chair of CAUDIT for four years. He has overseen the negotiation of several sector wide IT procurement arrangements, including most recently an agreement with Global Cloud Computing supplier, Amazon Web Services. Nick was previously both IT Director at UQ and Director of the Australian Computer Emergency Response Team (AusCERT). He is also Founder and Co-Chair of the eResearch Australasia conference and was Chair of the World Computer Congress in 2010. Prior to UQ, Nick worked on the development of anti-missile systems for Royal Navy Warships and on real-time air traffic control systems, before spending twenty years working for investment banks, eighteen years in London and then two years with Macquarie Bank in Sydney. He was Head of IT for the United Bank of Kuwait in London during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in the first Gulf war when there was a run on the bank and the overnight abolition of the Kuwaiti Dinar which was the bank's main currency of account.

Nick holds a Bachelor's degree in Physics from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, a Master's degree in Computer Science and a PhD in IT security. He is also a Chartered Engineer, an ACS Certified Professional (CP), a Chartered IT Professional, a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and a Fellow of the ACS. He has over 39 years IT experience with 16 years at CIO level in a University and two banks. He has over 14 years' experience as a company director.

Dr Rhys Francis is currently Director of eResearch Futures P/L. Previously Rhys was the Executive Director of the Australian eResearch Infrastructure Council. The council sought to articulate a strategic view of Australian eResearch infrastructure priorities, impacts and challenges, and provide strategic advice to the Australian Government through its Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.

Rhys spent the first decade of his career as an academic teaching and researching parallel and distributed computing systems. The next decade and a half included roles in research programme management and strategic management in

Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). Over the period Rhys had many roles including research programme leader for ICT research teams in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra, was appointed CSIRO's sector leader in the area of information and communication technologies and also its director for high performance scientific computing.

In 2005 Rhys moved to the Australian Partnership for Advanced Computing to take up the role of grid programme manager, to oversee the development and deployment of an Australian national computational grid. From 2006 Rhys was invited by the Australian Government's National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) to facilitate the development of its investment plan in eResearch and subsequently was appointed as the Executive Director of the Australian eResearch Infrastructure Council. In these roles Rhys has worked to harness advancing information and communication technologies to the benefit of research. From July 2013, Rhys has directed a new project to assist the NCRIS national infrastructure operators coordinate better delivery of storage as a service, data as a service and data tools as a service.