eResearch and Libraries
A Perfect Partnership?
eResearch partnerships

• External and internal relationships
• UNSW eResearch Coordination Group
• Partnerships involve several UNSW Library units
Information management

• Library information management skills
  – Storage and backup
  – Organisation and documentation
  – Preservation
  – Ownership, intellectual property and copyright
  – Privacy and confidentiality
  – Archiving and retention
  – Access

• Transfer of skills to eResearch services
  – Generic and specific requirements
  – Disciplinary variations, models of research, funding requirements etc.
What do researchers want?

I would like to think the ACData project is causing my students to see their basic output (data) in a new light and understand the resource they have created and how it fits into the output of a research intensive university … hopefully metadata will become as familiar as the output of their instruments.

*Professor, Chemistry*

Taking away all that pain associated with [RIF-CS] … the more data management requirements library can manage for us - the better!

*Senior Research Fellow, Biomedical*
Library repository services

• Connect with research workflows
• Faculty-based repositories for research material
  – Decentralised services
• Library-based repositories to aggregate and disseminate output
  – Catalogue of research publications
  – Catalogue of research datasets
Case study: faculty-based repositories

An ‘out of the box’ solution

“Of course the collaboration with the library re. the dance archive is an amazing show of support for my area of research and teaching. I hope in return to make UNSW a locus for research in this field.”

Researcher, Faculty of Arts and Social Science
Why libraries?

- Commonalities between information management and eResearch including interoperability, metadata creation, sustainability and ensuring that systems meet the needs of client communities.

- Capitalises on existing librarianship knowledge bases such as classification, metadata schemas, ontologies, taxonomies and thesauri.
Why libraries?

“...I think librarians also bring a strong service development approach, which can be useful in terms of ensuring that ‘projects’ actually have sustainable outcomes of some kind.”

Sam Searle
What are the challenges of partnerships?

- Budgets and funding
- Relationship building
- Communication
- Infrastructure
- Policy and politics
- Need for new skills
What are the challenges of partnerships?

“New, undefined area - because this is developing it can be daunting for staff who are involved. It also takes time to create new work flows and processes.”

Constance Wiebrands
What are the challenges of partnerships?

“Challenges are generic ones that we all face - getting things coordinated and included in the planning at an institutional level.”

Associate Professor, Faculty of Science
What are the benefits of partnerships?

- Capitalise on existing skills
- Leverage existing client relationships
- Exploit institutional knowledge
- Create opportunities for new skill development
- Increase the library’s profile
- Build new relationships across the university and other universities
What are the benefits of partnerships?

“Getting involved in eResearch is very rewarding at a personal level. It is possible to develop really effective professional relationships with researchers, technologists and other groups of staff and to work as part of multidisciplinary teams doing work that can be very exciting.

Your understanding of the entire research process becomes much deeper, and ideally this should feed into other services that the Library delivers, such as training and collection development.”

Sam Searle
What are the benefits of partnerships?

“As researchers I think we understand the importance of our data, but we don’t necessarily understand the best or most relevant ways of managing that data.

The library is good at managing lots of “stuff” (books, journals, etc) so they provide a good perspective here for the researcher in this regard.”

Early Career Researcher, Faculty of Engineering
Your turn...

• What’s the set up at your institution?
• If you are a researcher, do you work with a library? Why or why not? Has your strategy been successful?
• If you are a LIS professional, how have you found it working in the e-research space? Are you based in a library?
• How can researchers communicate their needs with the library?
• How can libraries engage and connect with researchers?
• Do eResearch/library partnerships work?