

Integrating user support for eResearch services within institutions.

Lessons learned from AeRO Stage 2 User Support Project and future plans for joined-up support.

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OVERVIEW

Significant investment in the Australian eResearch infrastructure since 2009 via federally funded initiatives such as the Education Investment Fund (EIF) and the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) heralded new ways for researchers to access, integrate and connect data across subject disciplines and locations.

This increase in eResearch capability and capacity resulted in provisioning of new eResearch services distributed across multiple organisations, research disciplines, locations and countries. Operational challenges associated with providing high quality and available eResearch services with a good user experience have increased. Addressing these challenges helps ensure uptake and utilisation of eResearch services in this exciting era of Australian eResearch capability.

To address these challenges, AeRO sponsored the AeRO IT User Support Project that aimed to increase user support for national eResearch services and applications through developing a joined -up user support resource. The project focused on three sector personas - eResearch applications and services, infrastructure operators and research institutions – and explored solutions to the following issues:

- How to provide ICT support to 10,000's of researchers using 100's of eResearch services across more than 40 Australian universities;
- Preventing services being developed, implemented and then “orphaned” with no support;
- Streamlining the process for 100's of service development projects attempting to establish individual service agreements with individual universities;
- Exposing products/application services to wider audiences and providing improved support.

This presentation provides an overview of key project outcomes including the AeRO Tick framework and User Support Maturity Model, discusses lessons learned from the Stage 2 project implementation and introduces the AeRO Aware concept for institutions.

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

Hamish Holewa is the Project Manager of the AeRO IT User Support project. He has lead the development of the AeRO Tick framework that provides a method of increasing users support and discovery of eResearch services nationwide. Mr Holewa has been responsible for many innovative, cross-institutional, large scale eResearch Tools and Virtual Laboratories including Quadrant and the Biodiversity Climate Change Virtual Laboratory. He has worked in research, management and policy development roles for the previous 10 years, has been involved in over 16 research projects across Australia, New Zealand, UK, China, India and Bangladesh and named author on over 35 research publications. His research and professional interests include: technology development for research collaboration; technology and application user experience; sustainability models; health economics; international health inequality; and supportive care issues. Mr Holewa has an interest in sustainable eResearch applications models and holds the role as COO for the Austral-Asian Journal of Cancer.

Loretta Davis is a seasoned Solutions Specialist with over 25 years' experience in the IT industry. Loretta has held senior communications, technical and management roles across the commercial, government and higher education sectors and holds tertiary qualifications in languages, information technology, quality management and international business.

Loretta is a seasoned presenter and regularly presents to national and international audiences. She is currently employed as the Executive Officer for AeRO – Australia eResearch Organisations. For the last 5 years has worked as an independent consulting focussing on operationalizing commercial start-up ventures and improving the viability of existing businesses for venture capitalists and private organisations.