



Building Research Data Management Capacity: Case Studies in Strategic Library Collaboration

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Research data management (RDM) is an increasingly vital strategic interest for academic libraries, and many collaborate with other libraries to scale resources. Library collaboration is a strategic decision that can transform your institution's RDM capabilities, but successful and sustainable partnerships are not guaranteed and require careful consideration.

Building Research Data Management Capacity: Case Studies in Strategic Library Collaboration provides actionable recommendations based on real-world case studies that libraries can apply to make their own collaborations successful and sustainable. The report shares experiences from the Texas Data Repository, Portage Network, and Data Curation

Network to illuminate the challenges, opportunities, and considerations of building RDM service capacity through collaboration.

The case studies use an economics-focused framework introduced in the 2022 report *Library Collaboration as a Strategic Choice*.¹ This framework leverages fundamental economic concepts to develop a deep understanding of key factors relating to coordination, costs, change, and control that impact the potential for a collaborative partnership to be successful and sustainable. Examining how these concepts manifest as part of real-world partnerships yields insights and perspectives that can inform library collaborations in the RDM space and beyond.

¹ Lavoie, Brian. 2022. *Library Collaboration as a Strategic Choice: Evaluating Options for Acquiring Capacity*. Dublin, OH: OCLC Research. <https://doi.org/10.25333/mt16-0c57>

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Explore real-world examples of successful and sustainable RDM partnerships

Building Research Data Management Capacity shares experiences and insights from institutions that have built RDM capacity through collaboration. It describes the challenges, opportunities, and trade-offs of choosing to collaborate to build RDM service capacity through the following case studies:

- **Texas Data Repository** (TDR)—leveraged an existing consortium, the Texas Digital Library
- **Portage Network** (now the Digital Research Alliance of Canada)—established and coordinated RDM infrastructure at a national scale
- **Data Curation Network** (DCN)—created a new RDM collaboration to fill shared curation expertise gaps

This report applies four strategic frames introduced in the report *Library Collaboration as a Strategic Choice* to the case studies explored here. Derived from economic concepts, these strategic frames can help to understand a collaboration's potential success and sustainability:

- **Coordination:** Consider strategies for coordinating group-scale efforts, mitigating risks, and fostering trust and commitment among partners.
- **Costs:** Analyze the transaction costs associated with collaboration, from identifying partners to achieving consensus and allocating staff resources.
- **Change:** Navigate the challenges of change management with insights into path dependency and the costs of switching to collaborative solutions.
- **Control:** Discover how to address the principal-agent problem, especially in governance arrangements, and establish effective oversight mechanisms.

KEY FINDINGS

- Recognize that collaboration requires investment
- Balance the trade-off between start-up and consortial models
- Start collaborations early
- Value the intangible benefits of collaboration
- Leverage preexisting trust relationships
- Find your people
- Cultivate commitment
- Plan for success
- Be strategically ambitious and tactically restrained
- Align with institutional goals
- Recognize that contributions and benefits may be asymmetrical



Download the free report at oclc.org/rdm-collaboration-report.

Read this report for actionable recommendations drawn from real-world examples that can help library collaborations be successful and sustainable.



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