

Hello, I'm Kate Byrne and I'm the Manager, Research Reporting at UNSW Library. What does it mean to be the 'Manager research reporting'? To be honest it means different things at just about every institution. In some institutions, like mine, it is a role that is based in the library – and others it is in the research office, or the faculties.

It is a role that is a little unconventional for a librarian, however it grows pretty organically out of librarianship - it is all about information management – just managing research outputs instead of library collection items.

In my role, I'm responsible for a few things. I'm the business owner for a system called ROS, which I will talk more about in a minute, and I'm responsible for collecting data about all of the research published at UNSW. I can't do this on my own so I work with numerous teams across the Library and UNSW. There are also other elements to my role. I am responsible for relationship building between UNSW Library, our research office and our IT department, I'm responsible for ensuring the library has the IT infrastructure it needs and I work with the other managers at our library who have research responsibilities to provide strategic advice about research support.

But today, today I'm here to tell you a story...

Slide 2



Image: 'reminisce about france trip 2005' by KE-TA CC by-ND 2.0

This is the story of a journey. One of those journeys where you have lots of different stops along the way, those journeys where you bought your plane ticket to get to the first stop on your way there – even though you aren't really sure where 'there' is yet.

Slide 3



Image: 'Two Tunnels' by arbyreed CC by-NC 2.0

And actually I lied – it's really going to be a story about two journeys. One, the journey of UNSW to implement ROS and another, my personal journey into the world of research publications management.



Image: 'quite a long time ago' by Stephen McKenzie CC by-NC-SA 2.0

The first of these journeys began once upon a time – all the way back in the distant past of 2009!

In 2009, UNSW's research reporting first transitioned from a paper based system to a digital system. The new digital solution adopted by the Library and UNSW was an in-house system called ResPubs. The old paper based system involved thousands of pieces of paper circulating around the university in an attempt to collect information about all the publications produced at UNSW. And the goal of the new system was pretty simple - move that paper based system online to more efficiently record publications data. At the same time, the collection of publication data was moved from the Division of Research to the University Library.

Whilst some the data collected in ResPubs was reused, system was standalone and essentially single purpose – that is, reporting to the Australian Government on for the publications component of the annual HERDC collection.



Image: ['Pause? 272/365'](#) by Dennis Skley CC by-ND 2.0

I'm just hitting pause here for a second because I'm mindful this presentation is pitched at people who might be new to research publications management. Who here knows what a HERDC return is? Can you raise you hands for me?

If there is uncertainty:

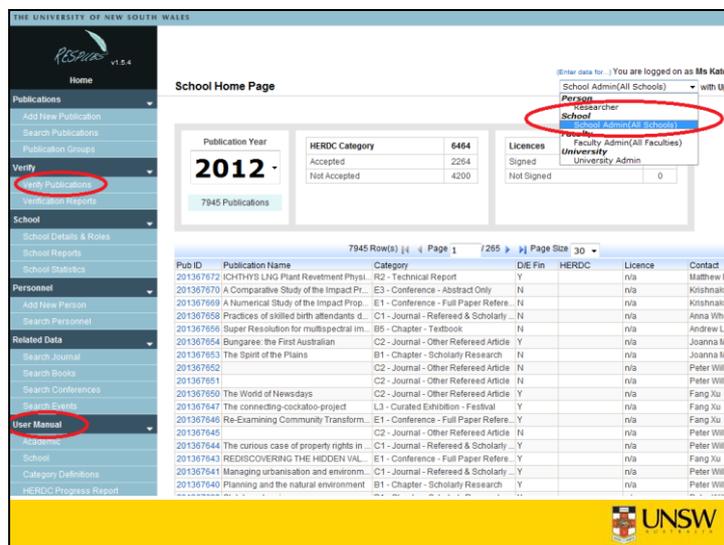
The Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) comprises of research income and research publications data submitted by universities each year. Data collected, along with data from the Higher Education Student Data Collection, is used to determine annual funding allocations from the Australian Government.

The HERDC collection is guided by extensive specifications which outline specifically what can and can't be included in the return. It is focused on counting the number of scholarly books, book chapters, journal articles and conference papers. It does not look at the quality of those publications as there is a separate collection, the ERA, that for that purpose.

There are essentially two steps to the annual HERDC collection - collecting information about the publications produced at UNSW and ensuring those publications comply with the specifications.

Ok, now to un-pause.

Slide 6



ResPubs did get rid of the paper-based system but it basically moved it online. It was digital but still very labour intensive. All data entry was manual, with very few authority files to assist with data integrity. This mean the data was largely unusable in downstream UNSW systems. Even when researchers tried, such as using it to upload publications information to the UNSW research gateway the system made it hard. It took about a five-point plan to get a publication onto the web.

Because ResPubs was difficult to use, researchers and admin staff only added minimal information to meet requirements, resulting, we believe, in under reporting – which ultimately meant less research income for the University.



Image: '[Overunder Outstretched Arm, Bushwick](#)' by Shaun Hoke CC BY- NC -ND 2.0

In 2011 the Outreach team was brought in to help support the research community with the annual HERDC collection.

As a key communication arm of UNSW Library, the Outreach Team is responsible for communication with, and support of, the UNSW academic community. With at least one Outreach Librarian per faculty, each academic at UNSW has access to their own Outreach Librarian who provides a single point of contact for all library related questions, comments or assistance. The role of the team encompasses two facets, to promote UNSW Library's collections and services in line with the needs of each particular client and to gather information about the needs of our clients and the environments around them to bring back within the library to shape service development and delivery.

The Outreach model worked well in allowing the team to support ResPubs and the annual HERDC collection. The Team provided support through a range of mechanisms as well as troubleshooting for individual researchers and administrators. It was a fairly steep learning curve the first year as the team got their heads around the complex HERDC guidelines and learnt ResPub's quirks. However soon it settled in amongst other research support services.

Slide 8



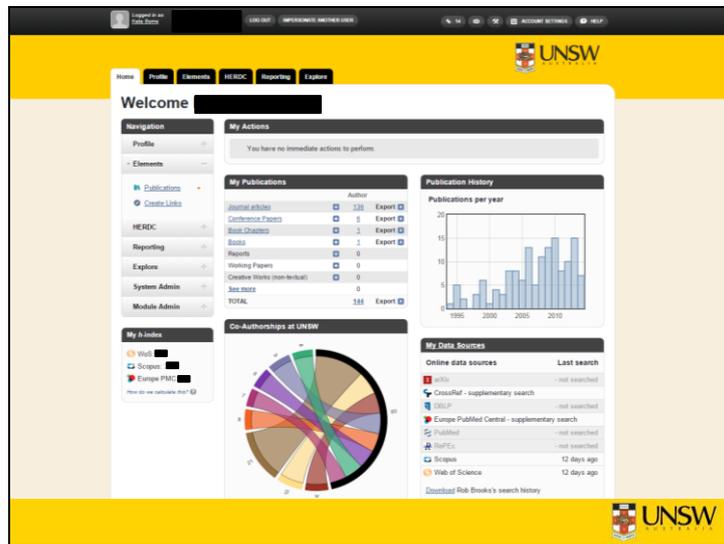
Image: 'S10: Librarian' by .SilentMode CC BY- NC -SA 2.0

And this is the point of the story where I come in. There I was, an Outreach Librarian for the Faculty of Law, minding my own business and learning all about research support services such as research impact. In that role I gained my first experience with the HERDC return, helping my clients collect and assess their publications. I had no idea at the time that my own journal into publications management was beginning.



Image: 'Myanmar/Burma Market' by Eustaquio Santimano CC BY- NC -ND 2.0

Whilst all of this was going on, UNSW was already looking for a better solution for collecting publications information. In 2011 the University went to the market, and after a procurement process, engaged Symplectic to provide its Elements publication management system as a replacement for ResPubs



UNSW’s installation of Elements is known locally as ROS (Research Outputs System). Considering publications alone, ROS was a significant improvement on ResPubs. Elements supports an HR and Grants feed and the linking of publication data to authors (current and non-current) imported through the HR feed. It also imports publication data from a number of external sources such as Scopus, Web of Knowledge, arXiv and others – resulting in much more accurate data. The improved quality of the data collected has made it possible to repurpose the data to populate downstream systems such as UNSW’s Research Gateway and faculty websites.

The ease of use and the reusable data that results has encouraged researchers to add records to Elements and to correct mistakes in their records. Login statistics demonstrate researchers are using the system year-round. ROS now really is the source of truth for UNSW research publications outputs.

ROS has also changed how the HERDC collection happens at UNSW. The government requirement is just that it happens, and so the data collection is managed in different ways at different institutions. For us, making the data collection simpler has meant that we can now really encourage researchers to be responsible for their own data.



Image: 'A long stretch of highway' by Mark Stevens CC BY- NC -SA 2.0

The journey to implement ROS was a long one – one I don't have time to cover in its entirety today but the crux of the implementation was this: After doing a public call for proposals to replace ResPubs it was clear Symplectic's Elements was the best solution, however there was one problem. We needed functionality to support our HERDC data collection and this didn't yet exist in Elements.

The HERDC requirements are detailed but Symplectic indicated they would be keen to develop a module to support this. So we made the decision early on that as the HERDC collection is such a crucial part of publications management at UNSW, we would not go live with Elements until the newly developed HERDC module was ready.

We worked through a very detailed development and implementation plan with Symplectic. This became a collaborative and iterative process, because Symplectic's developers were unfamiliar with HERDC. We found that we needed extensive communication to explain in detail what we were trying to achieve and to gain a shared understanding.

We began our implementation process in earnest in August 2012, went live in September 2013 but our implementation was not really complete until we submitted our first HERDC return successfully in June 2014. This is obviously a fairly prolonged implementation timeline, and it was certainly longer than we originally planned. However it has some unexpected benefits – as it allowed time for staff to develop alongside the system.



Image: 'Swiss steam train wedding 2' by Andrew Nash CC BY- SA 2.0

As the process that turned ResPubs into ROS was just beginning, I was progressing from being a member of the Outreach Team to leading that team.

Over those three years as Outreach Team Leader I undertook a range of projects surrounding research support including re-designing UNSW's research impact guide, and working with UNSW's researcher development unit to develop a series of workshops on strategic publishing, developing a research profile and tracking impact. I also just got to answer lots and lots of client questions. All the tricky ones my team weren't sure what to do with came to me and I consulted my boss, research impact guru Robyn Drummond, and learnt on the job.

And the Outreach team, under my leadership, continued to flourish into a vital communication link between the library and the research community.

And so when the ROS project was announced, I was asked to be involved in the implementation project to assist with the communications and training roll out.



Image: 'Deal' by clement127 CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The progression from – helping with the communications and training rollout to managing the communications and training roll out wasn't exactly a complicated negotiation process. The conversation pretty much went like this:

Director: So how much of this process are you guys willing to handle?

Us: How much do you want us to do? We could just do all of it.

Director: OK – great!

And then when the implantation was delayed – we found that we slowly had a bigger and bigger role to play.

The Outreach Team ended up being responsible for the development and deployed of the communications and training strategy, the writing of all of the help documentation – which we ended up turning into an online guide. As well as being a key connection between clients and the technical teams.

We brought to the project skills and knowledge that the technical team didn't have. We knew our community inside out, we knew which bits about the old system drove them crazy and how we could use those things to help sell them on the new system. We had the context about the HERDC return, why it mattered and how each of our schools and faculties preferred to manage it. And after a couple of years of working on the return – I knew those guidelines very well. And we new how to help clients find their way around a system, in terms our clients would understand.



Image: 'Learn' by carnagenyc CC BY- NC 2.0

Throughout the 12, 18 months of the implementation I learnt so much. I took every opportunity I could and I ran with it. I spent a lot of time with the system and rapidly developed an in depth knowledge of it. Together with my colleague Clare McKenzie, we trained all the trainers – helping library staff to learn the system so they could train or assist others. And we did so much troubleshooting – we got so sick of answering questions some days we thought we were going to scream. Clare and I worked very closely with the Manager and Director responsible for the system and then when that manager left in April – 2 months out from the HERDC return – we amped up our support even further, helping Susan - the Director of Digital Library Services get the return in on time.



Image: 'Merit' by Marion Doss CC BY- SA 2.0

And we were rewarded for our efforts:

UNSW's research publications included in the HERDC return showed significant growth - an overall increase of 13% above the previous return. The growth in total publications is more than double the Go8 average. The most dramatic increase was in the number of journal articles included in the return, which grew by 20% in comparison to the 2012 return. There was an increase in publications across most faculties, with the most dramatic increases correlating with groups for whom publications have been traditionally harder to collect such as conjoint staff and research centres.

Outreach engagement with the UNSW community has gone through the roof as a result of the new and expanded relationships they were able to develop through the ROS role out. And ROS has become a big part of those conversations. The system is shaping our services – for example we no longer supply researchers with an h-index on request– instead we help the tweak their search settings in ROS and they ROS will automatically calculate their H-index for them so they can get an up to date h-index any time they want.

But we were also personally rewarded through the knowledge and experience we had gained.

In fact, when the new role of Manager, Research Reporting was advertised, I was able to demonstrate quite clearly how I had the knowledge and experience to be the best person for the job.

And that was a few months ago – my role continues to challenge and develop me – just as we continue to develop ROS.

In the past few months I have seen us through an upgrade and worked with our tireless project manager Megan South as we push and push to get ROS integrated with UNSW's institutional repository. My new role also includes responsibility for supporting the

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relationships between the library, the research office and IT – so I am building on the knowledge gained from my work with ROS in new contexts – I've just managed the library's end of the Library website being migrated to new servers. Something I would never have dreamed of doing a couple of years ago.

So what advice would I give to someone hoping to move into this area?



Image: '550d – YES' by @Doug88888 CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Be open to everything – say YES! You never know where an opportunity might lead – and projects and extra tasks are a great way to ‘try before you buy’ – both to build up skills and experience in new areas but also to get a feel for them and see if you like them.



Image: "Amsterdam Aeropuerto Self-Service transfer" by Alquiler de Coches CC BY 2.0

Look for transferable skills. Jobs like mine are fairly rare – so you are unlikely to ever have a perfect match with all the selection criteria – but if you think about your transferable skills you might match more than you think. Librarians have very flexible skills sets – cataloguing is really about information management and the application of standards, reference interviews are a perfect blend of problem solving skills and client relationship management skills.



Image: '4/366(Y2) – Research' by Nomadic Lass CC BY- SA 2.0

Context is king! Get reading. Learn about the environment. One of the most valuable things I brought to the ROS project was my detailed knowledge of the research environment, especially at UNSW. This is something that anyone can learn by keeping their eyes and ears open and doing their background reading. If you want to know where to start come talk to be afterwards and I can give you a list of blogs.



Image: 'King Penguin (Aptenodytes patagonicus)' by David Cook CC BY- NC 2.0

Share knowledge and build relationships. We are lucky enough to be a part of an industry that places value on sharing knowledge – take advantage of that – get to know your colleagues in different departments and different organisations, learn more about what they do. This will help you when you need someone to help solve that problem you are having but also will expand your own knowledge.



Image: "Careers board game" by Huppyie CC BY- NC-ND 2.0

And what about if you are an employer? What can you do to set up your team for roles like mine?

First and foremost, create opportunities – especially small ones. As library roles evolve into more and more non-traditional areas, help your staff make the transition but creating smaller opportunities along the way. This might be project work or new tasks but also includes opportunities to seek out new knowledge and share it with the team.



Image: 'Trust' by ... CC BY- NC 2.0

Trust your team and help them trust you. Give people the opportunity to surprise you – once you've created that opportunity, give them the support they need from you to run with it. I cannot speak highly enough of Susan for the trust she placed in us throughout the ROS project, and that trust gave me space to rise to the occasion.



Image: 'Castellers in London' by Jaume Escofet CC BY- 2.0

Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing but provide direction. Create an environment that encourages your staff to share knowledge and skills, but guide it. Collaboration is only really collaboration when there is a sense of shared purpose and clear goals. Talk to your staff about how you see your library changing in the future and then allow them to help you get there.



Image: '4.IX Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai'' by MITTO Settembre Musica CC BY- 2.0

Encourage distributed leadership. You are the conductor, you keep the orchestra in time – strong leadership at the top is vital but also give space to leaders throughout the organization – your first violin to keep everyone in tune and your percussion section that gives every a sense of rhythm. Distributing leadership opportunities throughout your organization creates opportunities to help your organizations achieve their strategic aims but also will let your future leaders shine.

The Library is rapidly moving towards a different model of provision. The traditional print library is less prominent, while online services grow in importance. Professional librarians' skills are being applied to manage institutional scholarly content.

Whilst the role is changing the importance of the library service to the academic mission of the university is if anything increasing.

- Closing remarks from divisional report by Andrew Wells

