

## **The proposal:**

Establishment of a national forum for Research Support Officers Research IT staff and librarians involved in RDM

## **Main aims:**

Bring together research support staff and research IT staff from Irish Universities, Technological Universities, other Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) and Research Funding Organisations (RFOs) to discuss items such as:

- Challenges in supporting researchers and emerging requirements in respect of:
  - Services
  - Systems
  - Infrastructure
  - Tools
- Success stories, local initiatives, case studies
- How to collaborate on addressing challenges, or on new initiatives, where applicable
- Best practices in research support
- How can HEAnet support, initiatives HEAnet is involved in

## **Core Activities**

The forum will start by developing a landscape analysis, which will be achieved by developing a survey to which all members of the forum will respond with their organisation's input. The survey will ask questions such what services they offer to researchers, what tools help them in their support to researchers, what challenges do they face in supporting researchers and what challenges do researchers have.

The result of this analysis will help identify where and how members can collaborate and/or learn from each other.

Presentations will be given on success stories by members of the forum on how past and current challenges are being addressed.

Working groups can be formed on a voluntary basis by members to address common challenges, which may result in new service proposals, adoption of new/emerging technologies etc.

Presentations will be given on ongoing relevant developments at local, national and international scope. These can be given by members or by invited experts.

## **Membership**

Membership of the forum is open to individuals at RPOs, RFOs, HEAnet, and ICHEC as follows:

- IT staff who are involved in supporting researchers at their organisations with IT services
- Librarians, research data management staff, who have an interest in Open Science
- Staff from research support offices

## **Working Methodology**

The day-to-day collaboration of the forum will be via use of a mailing list and use of MSTeams. The mailing list is: [RESEARCH-SUPPORT-FORUM@listserv.heanet.ie](mailto:RESEARCH-SUPPORT-FORUM@listserv.heanet.ie). It is recommended to use this list for making announcements or for starting threads of discussions which can then move to the chat function in MSTeams.

The MSTeams team ( <https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3aXRiBCOHjuTELaMLfMa3Odkxs7pbrCbIFhEEP2kmBQBY1%40thread.tacv2/conversations?groupId=d91a5fe7-beca-4d3c-8e28-0f900f34ab78&tenantId=cd9e8269-dfb6-48e0-8253-8b7baf8d3391> )

is managed by HEAnet who manage membership of the forum.

Any member or guest can setup a channel if they feel one is needed for a specific topic.

Documents are stored in “Files” and are visible to all members.

Meetings will be held approximately every 3 months, with at least 1 meeting per year held in person at a suitable venue and date.

Additional ad-hoc meetings can be held on a need-to-basis if there is a specific topic of interest to be discussed.

## **Governance**

Proposal is to have minimal governance.

- A Convenor to organise the working of the forum, communicate events and agendas and support the Chairperson. It is suggested the initial convenor is from HEAnet
- A Chairperson who will chair any in-person (or virtual) meetings. The Chairperson can be appointed for the initial duration of the forum.
- Each member covers its own costs to take part in the forum.

**Duration**

It is suggested to run the forum for a period until 31 December 2023 after which its purpose and impact will be assessed, and discussions will take place on its continuation.