Question for Debate

Research Data Management Plans (RDMPs) are failing to create the cultural change they are meant to inspire

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RDMPS: A multiplicity of purpose
So, why do you need me to fill out yet another form?

Hmmm… I’m sure I’ve answered many of these questions elsewhere. So many questions!!

Well, there are a number of reasons:

Capacity planning

Funders and publishers require that you manage and share your data

Your research data could be a valuable institutional asset that we need to know about

We see RDMPs as a real way of effecting cultural change
RDMMPs: Exemplifying “Best Practice”
Internationally, RDMPs are seen as a “best practice” approach to managing data. They help you understand and tackle many of the RDM issues you will face throughout your research project.

I’m not convinced. I agree that I now know more about what RDM covers, but RDMPs don’t help solve many of the issues I face in managing my research and research data.

Besides, who say’s that RDMP completion translates to BP?

And, who’s checking to see if I’m doing the right things with my data?

Compliance isn’t here yet, but it’s coming!
RDMPs hold the same currency as New Year’s resolutions
I don’t have all the answers yet. My research is still at an early conceptual stage, and bound to change as the project progresses. Will a few little white lies matter…

Maybe I could just copy and paste from my colleague Sally’s RDMP. She’s written some great stuff in hers… She won’t mind if I borrow a bit of text here and there.

Keep updating as things change… we’re looking to make that process easier.

Anyway, who will know if I follow through with what I write in my RDMP?
RDMPS: Funders and institutions require them
Last time I checked the Aust. Code didn’t mention RDMPs!

No, you’re just imposing another compliance tool to lock my research down! I’ll only do what is necessary to get me over the line.

The Code is currently under review…

We’re just getting ready for funder policies to change - a pre-emptive strike if you will.
RDMP completed

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Managed data
We can’t ensure researcher’s practices are compliant with what they’ve promised in their RDMPs...

That’s RDM sorted yeah? Job done and dusted!

We have their RDMPs though - we’ve done our bit.
RDMMPs: There are benefits for researchers
RDMPs benefit researchers because they help funders and institutions establish the framework and resources to support the management of research data, which translates to better time management and lower costs for researchers during project work.

Managing my research data costs money and time. Both resources I don’t have to spare. Not to mention the admin overhead created by RDMPs.

If committed to following your RDMP, the benefits are many fold.

But do those benefits stack up?
Are we listening to each other?
I need help during the research design phase of my project.

We need to meet our obligations to funders.

I need help identifying all the right tools for my research.

We need to know what data assets are being generated by our researchers.

I need help with data and metadata management workflows.

We need information that will help us plan future research support services.

An RDMP may prompt what I need to think about, but doesn’t provide me with how to do it.

RDMPs aren’t perfect, but they generally serve their purpose.
In one word describe what you think of current DMPs

- unverified
- despised
- fraught
- essential
- anti-researcher
- disconnected
- bureaucratic
- tiresome
- new
- irrelevant
- tickbox
- lengthy
- tedious
- hated
- efficacy
- years
- not-fit-for-purpose
- unsubstantiated
- paper-exercise
- evolving
What’s the purpose for RDMPs at your institution? Is it clearly articulated?

Given that purpose, could there be an alternative approach?

- If not, how can we improve and realise tangible benefits from the completion of RDMPs, for all stakeholders?
- If so, by what other mechanisms can full-lifecycle data management issues be addressed?

Isn’t it about time we included researchers in the conversation?