Contribution ID: **233**   Type: **Session**

Building Trust in Data Repositories: Lessons from Global Certification Efforts

Thursday 16 October 2025 11:00 (1h 30m)

The World Data System (WDS) seeks to cultivate and support a global network of members committed to scientific data repositories and effective data stewardship. To keep pace with advancing technologies, growing data volumes and types, shifting user demands, and deeper integration into scientific workflows, WDS member repositories must continuously evolve. Ensuring that data remains accessible alongside scholarly publications and processes is crucial. A key function of WDS is to collaborate on developing standards and certifications that uphold the reliability and trustworthiness of scientific data repositories while actively tackling the challenges repositories face in adapting to changes.

In November 2023, the WDS Scientific Committee established a subcommittee to address these challenges and evaluate and recommend standards and certifications relevant to WDS member repositories. The subcommittee's work included gathering information on existing certifications like CoreTrustSeal (CTS), nestor, TRAC, and PuRE, as well as conducting a survey to understand the certification landscape across different scientific fields and geographic boundaries.

During the proposed session, Daniela Santos Oliveira and Dale Peters will present the results from the WDS subcommittee's work and discuss recommendations regarding extended certification for lowering entry barriers and fostering a more inclusive expansion of WDS membership.

Moreover, this session will feature representatives from the global community who will share their experiences as members of cohorts of data repositories working together toward CTS certification. Key lessons from their experience will be shared. Among these is Dr. Chiware, Library Director at Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa, who will discuss the importance of forming a Community of Practice (COP) for support through the process of applying for CTS certification, and how the cohort approach made the daunting task of certification more manageable.

Additionally, we are recruiting two or three representatives from other nations who have formed their own CTS support cohorts to give testimony of their experiences. We are currently exploring the possibility of having participation from the CoreTrustSeal Certification Support Cohorts of Canada and Australia, and from a digital data repository in South America. We aim to have testimonies that cover a broad geographical distribution and ample perspectives on the certification process.

Forming COPs, either regional or discipline-specific, is potentially one of the ways WDS can support its members by providing mentorship during the application process. The testimonies will highlight the benefits of community efforts in achieving certification and contribute to what we expect to be an enriching discussion with the data repository community regarding the importance of certification and how WDS can support its members in achieving that milestone.

This session aims to provide valuable insights into the certification process, promote community collaboration, and encourage inclusive participation in WDS membership.

Confirmed speakers:
- Dr. Daniela Santos Oliveira, WDS-IPO Program Manager
- Dr. Dale Peters, Vice-chair, WDS Scientific Committee; Chair, WDS SC Subcommittee on Standards and Certifications.
- Dr. Elisha Chiware, Library Director at Cape Peninsula University of Technology.
- Dr. Richard Ferrers, Data Consultant at Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC)
- Dr. Marcel Garcia de Souza, Coordinator for Processing, Analysis and Dissemination of Scientific Information, Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia (IBICT)
- Dr. Lee Wilson, Director of Research Data Management at the Digital Research Alliance of Canada

Session Structure
1. Welcome and Interactive Polling Exercise (10 minutes)

Speaker: Daniela Santos Oliveira

Mentimeter will be used to identify the characteristics of the audience.

2. WDS Subcommittee on Standards and Certifications (15 minutes)

Speakers: Daniela Santos Oliveira & Dale Peters

- Overview of WDS Subcommittee work

- Importance of standards and certifications

- Recommendations

3. Presentations from International Representatives highlighting their experiences/testimonies with certification (40 minutes)

Speakers:

- Elisha Rufaro Chiware (10 minutes):

* South Africa: Experience with COP

- Lee Wilson (10 minutes)

* Collaborative efforts in certification, Digital Research Alliance of Canada's CoreTrustSeal Certification Support Cohort

- Marcel Garcia de Souza (10 minutes)

* Brazil: Regional perspectives on certification

- Richard Ferrers (10 minutes)

* Trusted Data Repositories Community of Practice

4. Q&A (15 minutes)

5. Closing (5 minutes)

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Track Classification: SciDataCon Persistent Themes: Data, Society, Ethics, and Politics