



discovery

A metadata ecology for
UK education & research

open data open doors

Issue 06 - February 2012

Articles in this edition:

- » **Building momentum** – the latest round of Discovery projects will be developing services and releasing openly licensed metadata
- » **Will's World** – creating a registry of Shakespeare resources in the first of two major Discovery exemplar projects
- » **Help for collections managers** – one step closer to a national approach with the Copac Collections Management Tool
- » **Case studies and workshops** – information, advice and guidance to help institutions make resources more discoverable
- » **Supply chain development** – approaching systems vendors, publishers and other key actors in the metadata ecosystem

Building momentum

January saw the completion of contracting for the [suite of projects](#) funded by JISC to play a key role in exemplifying the Discovery principles and thereby enabling the wider community to take the initiative forward.

If Discovery started as a pathfinder activity – bear in mind that the Phase 1 projects (<http://discovery.ac.uk/projects>) were encouraged to undertake and report on experiments in exposing openly licensed metadata – then Phase 2 might be described as signposting. These projects are intended to exemplify practical ways of advancing the discovery of our collections and reuse of their metadata.

There are almost 20 projects, bound together in their practical enactment of the Discovery licensing and technical principles for open metadata. Some involve several institutions, and several cut across library / archival / museum domains, so the overall programme is significantly expanding its reach and visibility across the sector. In simple terms, the librarian, archivist or curator should be able to ask 'Is there anything here that speaks to me, to my institutions, our collections, my responsibilities?' ... and expect to find some real touch points.

The projects are divided in to two broad groups – those developing services and those releasing openly licensed metadata. The groups do of course overlap in many ways – especially as they are all committed to instantiating, testing and refining the Discovery principles. In addition there are two topical subject-themed exemplar projects, covering Shakespeare (introduced in this newsletter) and World War One.

Discovery Phase 2 Projects

	Developing Services	Releasing Open Metadata
Cross domain	Digital Bodleian DiscoverEDINA Pelagios 2	Bricolage Cardiff Music Collections
Libraries	CLOCK Copac Collection Management Open Bibliography Search25	Open Education Metadata
Archives	Step Change	Trenches to Triples
Museums	Contextual Wrappers 2 The Cutting Edge	Open Book
Repositories	Servicecore	

« Continued from page 1

Each project will be keeping its own blog, linked from the JISC programme page and several will also become part of our institutional case studies (see page 3).

Right now, at the beginning of this six month journey, you can find out more in our blog posts on the [Open Metadata projects](#) and the [Service Ideas projects](#).

For an overview of how the whole Phase 2 Discovery programme fits together please visit the [JISC website programme page](#).



Will's World

Will's World is a short project with a broad scope, aiming to demonstrate exciting possibilities of aggregating metadata as a tactic for improving 'discoverability' by creating a registry of different resources about Shakespeare.

The project will show how improving the usability of underlying metadata and clarifying provenance and licensing can open the way to building interesting new services for users.

The Audience – who will come into Will's World?

The intended audience and main consumers in Will's World are developers, in all their various roles and guises. They may have a web development background, be working within a particular institutional type and mission or simply be interested in doing cool things with an interesting subject.

The Actors – who and what are the main players?

Will's World is directed and produced by **EDINA**. Other principal actors include the British Museum, which is mounting an exhibition of artefacts relating to Shakespeare in July to coincide with the London Olympics.

Roles are also being taken by the BUFVC, Shakespeare's Birthday Trust, UKOLN, the University of York, and the Theatre & Performance Department of the V&A museum in London. The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and the BBC are also key players.

Three main dimensions to the script reflect three different perspectives:

- » *Performance* – for many people, Shakespeare is a set of roles and performances, including key performances by some of the most celebrated actors in history
- » *Text* – Shakespeare's works are coincidental with the development and popularisation of printed material, including quartos made available as playbooks
- » *Commentary and interpretation* – including a mixture of popular and erudite sources. GIS data relating to the locations of the plays will enable visual and geographical experiences for a walk through Will's World.

The Direction – what technologies make up the scenery and props, and how will people interact with them?

A key element of the technology is the development of a registry, which has potential as a sustainable service. Peter Burnhill of »

« EDINA explains: “An inventory is a list drawn up for a specific purpose. A catalogue describes a collection. A directory is produced from what others have in their collections. A registry enables and encourages others to advertise their collections in a meaningful organisation. In principle, anyone with an artefact and associated metadata can access and inform the registry, and so advertise the artefact for the wider world to use.”

Most of the material populating Will's World should be available on an open licensing basis. Part of the rationale lies in helping to make sense and support the use of products where JISC and its partners have already made some investment on behalf of the sector. In the first instance, it is likely that metadata will be gathered for resources relating to Hamlet and Macbeth, and Shakespeare's poetry.

The Plot – what's the strategy for developing Will's World?

The prologue will take the form of a hackfest which is scheduled for 23 April 2012 (Shakespeare's birthday). The event is being organised in conjunction with [CultureHack](#) and is likely to take place in or around Stratford upon Avon.



Subsequent acts may include further improvisation of the scaffolding to demonstrate additional possibilities for enhancing Shakespearean scholarship and appreciation through metadata aggregation. The project strategy also includes evaluation, focusing on the difference between scaffolding and edifice in the conceptual move from directory to registry. As the plot thickens, consideration will be given to the extent to which Will's World has a life of its own, and what that life might be.

More information on the Discovery Exemplars is available on the [Discovery blog](#).

Help for collections managers

With demands on budgets and space at a premium, libraries need to make sure that their research collections are effectively used and managed. But how do they make informed decisions about the retention, conservation, and disposal of materials?

Thanks to funding from the Discovery programme, Mimas is working with RLUK, the University of Leeds and the White Rose Consortium to develop and test a new web-based service through the 'Copac Collections Management Tool' project.

Their goal is to look at how Copac can make a real difference for collections managers. By making Copac data work harder and building the prototype on top of its extensive database, the collections management tool can provide valuable information from the catalogues of the UK's major research libraries alongside rare collections held in museums, scholarly societies and university special collections.

So far the team has developed a beta version of a service that uses a variety of tools to support library staff in their collection management and development decisions – and they're working closely with selected libraries to trial and test the tools in real-world contexts. Using data visualisation techniques, the prototype service is already helping these libraries to quickly identify the locations of items, and batches of items across the UK. For example, maps and graphs are used to show where items are held across the country, and how many items exist within specific libraries.

There's a great deal more to be done in terms of refining and developing the tools, but according to Mike Mertens of RLUK, there is optimism that “this project takes us one step closer to building the foundations for a national approach to collections management, offering the potential for collaboration and sharing of materials between institutions across the UK, and protecting access to the UK's rich research collections into the future.”

To keep up-to-date on the progress of this project, see <http://copac.ac.uk/innovations/collections-management>

Case studies coming

Discovery team members David Kay, Paul Miller and Owen Stephens have started working with institutions on a series of Case Studies to show how they have adopted the [Discovery licensing and technical principles](#) to increase the visibility of their archival, library or museum collections. The Case Studies will be based on a standard framework focusing on the practical steps that enable collections to be more reliably discovered:

- 1. Adopting unambiguous terms of use** - Adopting open licensing; Requiring clear reasonable terms and conditions
- 2. Adding value to data** - Using easily understood data models; Deploying persistent identifiers; Establishing data relationships by re-using authoritative identifiers; Optimising data for reuse by third parties

- 3. Making interfaces usable** - Providing clear mechanisms for accessing APIs; Documenting APIs; Adopting widely understood data formats
- 4. Ensuring services are sustainable** - Ensuring data currency and accuracy; Ensuring services are supported; Using your own APIs; Collecting data to measure use

As Owen Stephens explains, “We do not expect any institution to have ticked all these boxes, but we are looking for those that can demonstrate success and value in benefitting from taking a number of these steps. We hope our case studies will therefore increase practical understanding of the Discovery principles and give more teams the confidence and encouragement to take the steps that will deliver real benefits.”

Workshop programme

Part of the core mission of Discovery is to provide information, advice and training. We have now firmed up approaches for case studies and supporting guidance, to assist libraries, archives and museums in practical take up of the Discovery principles.

This has helped identify a series of workshop events aimed to touch some professional development hot spots and geared especially for those who are NOT already experts in the field. Joy Palmer and Adrian Stevenson at Mimas are leading on this work for the Discovery team. We're proposing to run three workshops twice between May and September, with the materials being enhanced though the process to become a useful online resource, integrated with our Case Studies. The events will take the form of

- » A licensing clinic (date and venue to be announced early March)
- » A workshop on 'Making the most of your data on the web'
- » An Un-developer hands-on development event – we're looking for a better title to capture the spirit of this one!

More information will follow shortly.

Supply chain developments

Based on the [Discovery licensing and technical principles](#), the Discovery team is now seeking to engage with systems vendors, publishers and other key actors in the metadata ecosystem, covering the lifecycle from origination and ingest to enhancement and re-use.

There are obviously a large number of actors at different stages in supporting these ways of working. Therefore our initial objective is to engage with organisations that have critical mass in different segments of the community (for example, the small number of systems vendors in UK archives and museums; for libraries the major publishers and knowledge base providers).

We believe that examples of how these key organisations can productively support the Discovery principles will be of value across the supply chain as well as yielding direct benefits to libraries, archives and museums.

If you'd like to discuss how your organisation can develop its contribution, please contact Liz Wallis at rdtf-discovery@sero.co.uk.

In other news...

Meeting at the Royal Library of Denmark, the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL), has voted overwhelmingly to support the [open licensing of their data](#). CENL represents Europe's national libraries, and is responsible for the massive collection of publications that represent the accumulated knowledge of Europe.

Following on from this we've seen two major initiatives from European Libraries which align with Discovery principles:

The German National Library is now using CC0 for its linked data, and in addition to the previously published authority data is now publishing the German national bibliography. See [this post](#) from Adrian Pohl.

The Spanish National Library (Biblioteca Nacional de España) has also announced work on publishing Linked Data working in cooperation with the Ontology Engineering Group (OEG) at the



Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM). See the website <http://datos.bne.es>. The BNE is publishing 2.4 million bibliographic records and 4 million authority records in RDF, following the Linked Data Principles and under the CC0 (Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication) open license. More information can be found in the [DataHub entry](#)

Stay in touch

To endorse the Discovery Open Metadata Principles visit:

<http://discovery.ac.uk/businesscase/principles>

To make contact with members of the project team:

<http://discovery.ac.uk/contact>

To sign up to this newsletter simply send an email to:

rdtf-discovery@sero.co.uk

Discovery website: <http://discovery.ac.uk>

Discovery blog: <http://blog.discovery.ac.uk>

In the next issue

- » An interview with Professor David Baker on the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) and Discovery
- » Mimas re-discovering World War One
- » Next steps in our major exemplars

Do you have news items to highlight in the newsletter or through other means? Contact rdtf-discovery@sero.co.uk