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## Kultivating Kultur: Increasing Arts Research Deposit

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### Table of Contents [hide]

1. Research Methodology
2. Barriers to Increasing Arts Research Deposit
3. Embedding a Culture of Arts Research Deposit
4. Conclusion: Increasing Arts Research Deposit
5. Acknowledgements
6. References
7. Author Details

Funded by the Deposit strand [1] JISC Information Environment programme and led by the Visual Arts Data Service (VADS), a Research Centre of the University for the Creative Arts, Kultivate will increase arts research deposit in UK institutional repositories.

Through community engagement with the Kultur II Group [2] and technical enhancements to EPrints, Kultivate is sharing and supporting the application of best practice in the development of institutional repositories that are appropriate to the specific needs and behaviours of creative and visual arts researchers. The Kultur II Group consists of participants of the Kultur JISCMail list, a closed email list set up during the JISC-funded Kultur Project (2007-09), and participants at the meetings held after the end of the Kultur Project from 1 October 2009 to September 2011. The Kultur Project established institutional research repositories at the University of the Arts London and the University for the Creative Arts which were more appropriate for arts researchers, and which were visually enhanced to display multimedia outputs [3]. The Kultur II Group is open to all specialist creative arts institutions, departments within larger multidisciplinary institutions, and researchers in the UK; members include repository managers and administrators, researchers, librarians, technical staff, academics, and research office staff.

### Research Methodology

This article presents an overview of the current arts research repository landscape in the UK. Data has been gathered through a literature review investigating current and recent JISC-funded projects and other initiatives, focusing primarily on the UK research repository community. Qualitative and quantitative data have also been acquired through the Kultur II Group and the wider repository community through two surveys: *Kultivate Events Feedback*, completed by delegates to the four community-led workshops and conference; and an *Advocacy for arts research* survey [4] that was sent to the UK Council of Research Repositories (UKCoRR) and Kultur II Group JISCMail lists. Each workshop has included open and frank discussion which has been recorded in detailed minutes, quoted in this article as anonymised anecdotal evidence. In addition, a simple matrix was employed in gathering data from four one-hour recorded interviews. Participants included:

- A: one experienced specialist creative arts institution with the Kultur enhancements;
- B: one experienced multidisciplinary institution with the Kultur enhancements;
- C: one specialist creative arts institution about to install the Kultur enhancements; and
- D: one multidisciplinary institution that had recently installed the Kultur enhancements.

### Barriers to Increasing Arts Research Deposit

#### What is a Repository?

An institutional research repository could be described as an online environment that enables researchers to make their research outputs publicly available. A more in-depth analysis of this question would need to take into account the different stakeholders and relationships that the repository facilitates, including but not limited to: institutional policies, funder mandates, socio-cultural and ideological concepts, and administrative processes. Repositories present particular challenges in the arts.

The words 'institutional repository' represent the first hurdle in integrating a research repository into the researchers' day-to-day workflow. During the Kultivate community-led workshop on Advocacy, February 2011, a session on terminology discussed alternatives to replace words such as 'institutional repository', 'IR', 'post prints', 'author's final version', 'pre-prints', 'EPrints', and Open Access terminology such as 'green' and 'gold'. The group agreed that instead of words that suggest a final output, terminology such as 'curated exhibition' and 'documenting the process/journey' might be more applicable to artistic research. This is confirmed by feedback from artists who have spoken about their research as an ongoing process [5]. Cooke (2007) writes:

*'Context and presentation are often considered as part of the work by artists, and work is conceived for a particular context.'* [6]

During the Kultivate Archiving and Curation workshop, March 2011 [7], the visual artist Ruth MacLennan presented an archive of her work using the workshop as a new context, a new performance for her work. Repository managers mediating deposit have also described the complexity of hierarchical relationships in archiving artistic research with examples of outputs that may be presented in different ways in a variety of exhibitions and contexts [8]. As a result the Kultivate Project will include technical enhancements to the EPrints repository platform, used by the majority of Kultur II Group members, in order to address this issue by contextualising and presenting deposits more effectively. At time of writing, September 2011, of the 24 members of the Kultur II Group with live repositories, 79.1% use EPrints. A further 5 members are building EPrints repositories which are not yet live.

### What is Artistic Research?

Even in the case of visually enhanced research repositories, such as those established through the Kultur Project, the question 'What is artistic research?' still remains to be answered. This question lies outside the scope of the Kultivate Project; however it must be acknowledged that it underpins what can validly be deposited within an institutional research repository. This question has also inhibited the deposit of arts research with anecdotal evidence from the Kultur II Group at the Archiving and Curation workshop, pointing to a lack of clarity regarding which elements of practice-led art are considered research. Another example was given by a delegate at the Kultivate Advocacy workshop, of a researcher who had been commissioned to produce an international exhibition who was not sure whether it was good enough to be deposited in the institutional repository. The answer was definitely 'yes'. This is also an issue at the institutional level; in the case of interview participant (A), some senior management have held back from validating outputs as research in order to debate the issue of 'what is artistic research?' more adequately first [9].

All four interview participants were asked about the cultural and disciplinary differences between the arts and other subjects. Both of the specialist creative arts institutions mentioned the variety of research outputs, the uniqueness and breadth of content. The multidisciplinary research institutions noted the disparity between artistic research and research in other disciplines.

Greater clarity regarding the nature of artistic research is needed, but also brings conflict, for example one arts researcher who stated the importance of both theory and practice, at the same time notes that 'A definition becomes a possible limitation' [10]. Biggs (2010) discusses the relationship between traditional academic research and arts research in terms of similarities and differences, for example:

*'Artistic knowledge seems to have more potential in relation to the human individual, their experience, their emotions and their embodied relationship with the world rather than something as abstract as the scientific concept of knowledge.'* [11]

As the keynote speaker at a University of the Arts seminar entitled 'What is Art and Design Research?' Professor Biggs presented clearly and visually a model for defining artistic research. In the resulting discussion one of the points made by a member of the audience was:

*'Finding connections may let you take steps, but labels often get in the way.'* [12]

One of the features of a repository is to label and catalogue the research in order for it to be discovered and cited. So although the research outputs may be edited and added to, a repository can also be perceived as an archive of academic work; one arts researcher reported feeling suspicious about how her institution may intend to use the records, for example for performance appraisals [13].

The French philosopher Jacques Derrida in his 1995 book *Mal d'Archive* describes the archive in political terms:

*'There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory.'* [14]

Derrida (1996) presents the archive as the place of control, the word itself originating from the Greek 'arkheion', 'the residence of ... the archons, those who commanded' [15]. Interviewee (B) noted that, 'There's also resistance to audit culture as a political position...' [16] within her institution. Elsewhere an artistic researcher who had deposited in an institutional research repository discovered that once she had moved to another institution, she could no longer make changes to previously deposited work; she had lost control of her work and said this would put her off using institutional repositories in the future [17].

At the Kultivate Metadata workshop, May 2011, the issue of control and access was also raised; a specialist arts institution reported that researchers needed to be able to edit their records so they could add exhibitions held at different venues; however, currently this required the repository manager to return the item to the review area which removes it from public view until it goes through the deposit workflow again. Another specialist arts institution reported trialling editing privileges for researchers for their own work, on a discreet basis offered to those who asked for these privileges. A multidisciplinary institution at the same workshop reported that they had customised their repository to include a 'Request Amendment' button which sent a request to the repository staff.

The *Journal for Artistic Research* (JAR) takes a different approach to a research repository. Although it is sponsored by academic institutions, it sits outside institutional control, and instead of depositing peer-reviewed final outputs, artists begin with depositing one or more objects into a holding area. These objects can then be set in an individually designed context as they choose to 'expose' their work as research, designing 'expositions' which can then be peer-reviewed and published. The approach is designed to display artistic practice in a manner that 'respects artists' modes of presentation' [18] allowing them a flexible and visual online space, instead of the inflexible traditional journal article format. Despite these artistic freedoms, there is still a rigorous copyright policy which requires those registering accounts to print, sign, and post an agreement form [19]. JAR and the Research Catalogue, which is the software that sits behind the Journal, were presented at the Kultivate Archiving and Curation workshop.

## Recognising and Clarifying Rights

As part of the Kultur Project, VADS produced guidelines and scenarios for copyright [20]; and Gray (2009) highlighted that there was a need to 'allay fears, misconceptions and ignorance in respect of copyright and IPR' [21]. Despite JISC initiatives such as Web2Rights [22], RoMEO [23], and the Copyright Toolbox [24], copyright with artistic research remains problematic. As described in the Kultur Project scenarios [20] this can be: due to the use of third-party material; arts practices such as collage and reinterpretation; layers of rights issues with performance works; and combinations of rights issues occurring in collaborative creative projects. Interviewee (D) mentioned the example of a graphic designer who illustrates books, but in recording his work cannot capture the text as it is copyrighted; they have had to be inventive in taking images of their work to document their own research without infringing the copyright of the author [25].

The quantitative data gathered in the Kultivate *Advocacy for arts research* survey also points to copyright being a significant barrier to arts research deposit. For question 23 which gave a weighting (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) to question 22 'What issues do researchers perceive as barriers to deposit?' three of the top four responses were: 'concerns regarding clearing copyright with a publisher'; 'concerns regarding clearing Third Party copyrights'; and 'concerns regarding the use of their work by others'. In terms of how their work will be used, one of the advantages of using repository software is that levels of access can be provided, whether through temporary embargoes or simply by making lower-resolution images available.

In the case of textual arts research, such as journal articles and publications, repository managers can be proactive in increasing deposit, for example interviewee (A) has set up Google alerts when the institution's name is mentioned in order to try and increase full text items in the repository [9], and they also use SCOPUS [26] and RoMEO [23] to acquire publications' information. However, in the case of non-textual arts research, this may be more difficult to find in the first place owing to the lack of appropriate documentation or metadata.

## Support for Managing Research Data

There has been a correlation with the work of the Kultivate Project and the JISC Managing Research Data programme [27] in particular relating to Project CAiRO (Curating Artistic Research Output) and JISC Incremental; both projects presented at the Kultivate Archiving and Curation workshop, and a Kultivate case study was produced on 'Documenting Performance Art for the Archive' [28].

Project CAiRO held a Summer School for PhD researchers at the University of Bristol in June 2011 [29], and has also produced an online training module entitled *Managing Creative Arts Research Data*, tailored to the specific needs of artistic researchers and including case study examples [30].

In the JISC Incremental end-of-project blog post, they highlighted that:

*'researchers ... are positive about data sharing in principle, though almost universally reluctant in practice' [31]*

This is reflected in the results of the University of Huddersfield's Open Access survey (2010) in which:

*'88% of those who responded were in favour of the principles of Open Access and 86% were in favour of adding their research to an Open Access Repository. This compares to only 29% of content which is available in full text in the University Repository. ' [32]*

The Kultivate *Advocacy for arts research* survey's qualitative data suggests that one of the key barriers for researchers to deposit is a lack of time. For question 22 'What issues do researchers perceive as barriers to deposit?' comments in the free text box included: 'Time is by far the biggest barrier...' and '...complaints about the time it takes to deposit...'. Interviewee (D) cited time as the biggest barrier for arts research deposit, as the process takes longer for arts items than for a journal article [25]. Interviewees (C) [33] and (A) [9] mentioned time as the top barrier to deposit; interviewee (B) also mentioned time as a key barrier to deposit [16].

## Embedding a Culture of Arts Research Deposit

### Making Arts Research Deposit Easier

Feedback from other JISC-funded projects, such as DepositMO, and from the Kultur II Group meetings suggest that making the deposit process as easy as possible by reducing the steps in the workflow will encourage an increase in deposit as this will save researchers' time.

The Kultur II Group has been interested in the DepositMO Project which supports deposit into the repository via the Microsoft Word application from a researcher's desktop using the SWORD protocol [34]. At the JISC Programme meeting, March 2011, Steven Hitchcock demonstrated how DepositMO could be used with 'watch folders' to upload images; although the lack of metadata supplied with images currently means that the tool is not as effective for uploading images as it is for Word documents. The concept and terminology of 'watch folders' is also used by the database software Extensis Portfolio, which is designed for photographers and 'creatives'; images added to watch folders are automatically catalogued with a variety of image metadata standards supported, including EXIF and IPTC [35]. This nonetheless fails to include subject terms or keywords unless they have been written into the image files by the photographer during image capture or processing, although it is possible to add groups of keywords across an entire folder of images simultaneously.

The Royal College of Art produced a Kultivate case study entitled *Implementing a Repository for Research Practice in Postgraduate Art, Design, and Visual Communication* [36]. It describes how the College staff worked closely with the researchers at their institution and with EPrints Services in order to streamline the deposit workflow, building further on the Kultur Project enhancements. The case study includes a screenshot showing the original Kultur metadata schema next to their streamlined version which has 18 fewer fields [37]. The study also discusses how they improved the deposit process by moving the request to upload files to the end of the workflow, before deposit, instead of at the beginning of the process.

The Kultivate Project has provided a demonstrator service, called ARTSUK, to the Kultur II Group to use as a test site for both the Kultur enhancements, and the new proposed Kultivate technical features. ARTSUK is an EPrints repository platform with the Kultur enhancements pre-installed; users can create a login and have permission to upload content. At the Kultivate Technical workshop, January 2011, delegates reported that there were problems with cataloguing projects, particularly those which may need to be revisited, edited or supplemented. Building on the Readiness4REF [38] Project containers feature, and the latest version of EPrints

3.3, Kultivate is working with EPrints to address the levels of complexity that occur through relationships and workflows of artistic research. For example, a piece of artistic research could be an object that is incorporated into one or more exhibitions, on each occasion being given a different context, the object and exhibitions could also include supporting material such as reviews, tickets, programmes, signage, preparatory research, documentary material such as videos, and there could also be learning and teaching objects associated with the research outputs. These issues were discussed by members of the Kultur II Group during the Technical workshop. The Kultivate Project container feature will save researchers' time and also improve the discoverability of research for those accessing institutional research repositories as a resource.

### Building Arts Research Repositories

The original Kultur Project brought together the University of Southampton, University of the Arts London, University for the Creative Arts, and VADS; Leiden University was an associate partner. The first meeting of the Kultur II Group, as it is now known, took place on 1 October 2009 following the end of the Kultur Project, as a result of the community's interest in both the Kultur enhancements and the issues of increasing arts research deposit. The Kultur II Group now consists of over 40 institutions, organisations, and projects [39]. As discussed at the Kultivate Advisory Group meeting, May 2011 [40], it can be difficult to quantify the impact of the Kultivate Project, and the Kultur II Group, due to the timescale and the variables at each institution; one institution reported that although it had followed the Kultur Project's developments since 2007, it was only now at a stage in 2011 where it was beginning to implement the Kultur enhancements [41].

As outlined in the original Kultivate proposal, OpenDOAR suggests that arts content is under-represented within UK institutional repositories; searching across the categories 'Arts and Humanities General' and 'Fine and Performing Arts', there are only five repositories listed out of a total of 145 UK institutional research repositories [42]. Many institutions are at early stages in terms of arts research deposit, whether they have existing repositories or are in the process of building them. Ten institutions from the Kultur II Group are either in the process of building, or planning to build, institutional research repositories. A Kultivate case study from the University of Falmouth details the stages in 'Initiating an Arts Repository: the gateway to research at University College Falmouth' [43], and the Royal College of Art case study describes building a repository [36].

A sub-group of GuildHE [44], the CREST Research Network [45], is working to integrate an EPrints repository platform with other institutional research repositories to form CREST Collections, and to create a social networking area for researchers called CREST Collaborate, using the open source Mahara software. The researchers from GuildHE institutions will also be able to upload content into the research repository via Mahara. A Kultivate case study has been written about progress so far, entitled *EPrints and Mahara: sustainable approaches to conserving Art/Design/Media/Performing Arts outputs using a consortia model* [46]. Even before a repository goes live, advocacy is a vital part of the process, and this is one of the aspects that the CREST Research Network supports through its community engagement.

### Advocacy, Advocacy, Advocacy

Advocacy is an area that is relevant to all institutional research repositories, and something that needs to be continuously worked at; one of the issues tackled by the University of Exeter, through the JISC-funded RePosit Project, was how to sustain regular deposits after an initial surge in deposit which then dwindles [47]. William Nixon, speaking about the University of Glasgow's approach to embedding their repository at the JISC 'Repositories: Take-up and Embedding' programme meeting, talked about the importance of building relationships [48] and aiming for the repository to be 'culturally, technically and holistically ... stitched into the institution' [49]. Interviewee (B) mentioned the new PhD students were getting to grips with the repository so it is becoming embedded in their practice and will eventually be embedded in the research culture that way [16].

The Repositories Support Project (RSP) has produced documentation on advocacy [50] and held events; at an event discussing Open Access the University of Nottingham mentioned that:

*'no matter how much advertising you do - there is always room for more – advocacy' [51]*

The RSP presented at the Kultivate Advocacy workshop, and provided advice on the *Advocacy for arts research* survey and Kultivate Advocacy toolkit [52]. Advocacy for arts research deposit has many similarities with the approach needed for other subject areas; lessons learned suggest that advocacy must be ongoing, it must reach all stakeholders i.e. not just aimed at depositors, and that it requires both a carrot and stick approach [53].

Where advocacy for arts research differs, is in the cultural and specialised needs of artistic researchers who

often have different workflow processes, complex multimedia research outputs, and operate in a different context in terms of their relationship to the institution and their research. One repository manager evaluating a Kultivate workshop commented:

'Not being artistic, I'm keen to learn more about what is a very different world!' [54]

Gray (2009) notes that during the Kultur Project 'the visual aspect of the repository loomed large in all our minds' as the team were:

*'dealing with an arts community which by definition has a highly 'tuned' sense of the visual aesthetic' [21]*

This was echoed in feedback from members of the Kultur II Group, and from interviews, particularly from multidisciplinary institutions. For example, interview participant (D) mentioned that she wanted to incorporate the Kultur enhancements into her existing repository in order to increase arts research deposit; the reaction from demonstrating it to the researchers was, 'That's good - that's what we want.' [25] Another multidisciplinary institution reported being very successful with deposit from other subjects, but after demonstrating the Kultur features to its arts researchers was unable to encourage them to deposit until it installed the promised features [8]. Three of the six JISC 'Repositories: Take-up and Embedding' projects [55] are looking to implement the Kultur enhancements in order to encourage greater use and engagement with their research repositories, two in EPrints repositories and one for a DSpace repository.

Two of the six Kultivate case studies focus on the theme of advocacy; at the University of the Arts London 'Developing a Screencast of the Research Deposit Process' [56] and 'Art and advocacy: designing dialogues' [57] from Goldsmiths College, University of London. Statistically speaking, the approach at Goldsmiths, as detailed in its case study, led to a '1,000% increase in deposit activity' in the six months following its tailored advocacy programme with the Art Department [58].

At the University of Huddersfield, staff use the IRStats plugin for EPrints to encourage take-up of the repository by researchers. One of the features of IRStats is to show download statistics by country of origin; Stone (2011) provided the example of a researcher who as a result is now:

*'pursuing collaborative research projects with music studios and researchers in Mexico and Norway.' [59]*

The Kultivate Project is working to enhance the IRStats plugin visually, based on feedback received from the Kultur II Group through the Kultivate Advocacy workshop.

As part of her advocacy strategy, Interviewee (B) reported demonstrating a Google search to show the high ranking of research outputs from the repository [16]. Interviewee (D) presents the repository as enabling researchers to 'build up esteem; build up a name; build up their career' [25]. The role of the repository in building up a research profile especially in terms of measuring impact is of importance with the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework (REF). All four interviewees were unanimous in their answer to the question 'What motivates researchers to deposit?': answer 'the REF'. Although the REF 2014 is an important and useful motivator, advocacy also needs to keep the wider agenda of Open Access part of the strategy to sustain deposits in the longer term.

## The Future of Arts Research Deposit

It remains to be seen how repositories handle the REF submission process and how relationships to Current Research Information Systems (CRIS) and other institutional systems, develop and enhance, or change, the position of institutional research repositories, and therefore affect the rate of deposit.

All four interviewees reported that none of their institutions have a CRIS at the moment, although this is planned for both the specialist arts institutions, interviewees (A) and (C) [9] [33].

The Research Information Management System (RIMS) projects [60] were mentioned by interviewee (D) since at his institution this will facilitate:

*'...pulling repository data, HR data and ... Research Office [data] ... into one place ... integrating everything, that's then the CRIS...' [25]*

Interviewee (D) explained that senior management is sending a clear message that the repository is now 'the single point of truth in the University', meaning that 'if the research isn't in the repository it won't go into the REF' [25].

It will be interesting to see the pattern that emerges in the next few years across the UK research repository landscape and how this will influence the rate of arts research deposit.

## Conclusion: Increasing Arts Research Deposit

The key factors that encourage arts research deposit in UK institutional research repositories can be summarised as follows:

- Make the repository more visually appealing; a better showcase for artistic research and multimedia research outputs.
- Carry out tailored and continuous advocacy.
- Demonstrate statistics, international interest, and good visibility in Google's search engine results.
- Foster arts researcher champions and senior-management support for the repository.
- Reflect on the use of terminology and the language of 'repository-speak' versus the arts researchers' own vocabularies and understanding.
- Make the deposit process as easy and streamlined as possible, saving time with data entry and avoiding duplication of effort.
- Support and foster good practice in managing arts research data, including training in respect of both researchers' own IPR and clearing third-party copyright.

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