

University of East London

Research Data Management Solution

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Unlocking the full potential of EPrints as a research data platform

Following the announcement of new data policies, the University of East London (UEL) looked to the University of London Computer Centre with their wealth of expertise, to develop an EPrints repository which could meet the needs of the university.

The University of East London has been educating the public since 1898. Today, it has more than 120 different nationalities represented across three campuses, all based in east London. Together with their world-class research, ranking them 70th in the UK, academic and enterprising opportunities they have created a vibrant university with a collection of high profile accomplishments and awards.

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David McElroy,
Research Data
Management Officer,
University of East London



Challenge

There has been a growing expectation from research councils and other funders that once collected, data should be made available and preserved long term. With this in mind, Higher Education institutions have started turning to the data repository community for solutions. In 2012, UEL introduced a Research Data Management policy which required a registry and portal for datasets, making them suitable for sharing both now and in the future. **David McElroy**, Research Data Management Officer from UEL states: “*We interpreted these requirements into a single data repository that could both manage data deposited in it and describe data created at UEL but held elsewhere.*” The decision meant UEL would have to look for an external partner to develop a repository which could fulfil the policy requirements at a reasonable cost.

Solution

UEL were already using the EPrints digital repository software to disseminate their research publications - although historically focused on research publications it was clear that EPrints was also gaining momentum as a platform for building data repositories due largely to work by the UK Data Archive¹ and the University of Southampton².

UEL wanted to take advantage of these innovations, and turned to ULCC to help them unlock the full potential of EPrints as a research data platform - this collaboration led to the launch of Data.uel³ in July 2014.

With ULCC’s expert advice and guidance, UEL have also been able to contribute an innovation of their own back to the EPrints community, in the form of the “Bootstrap” plugin⁴. This plugin uses the Twitter Bootstrap libraries to restyle EPrints with a more modern - and responsive - look and feel that can be viewed on any device from a smart phone to a desktop PC.

Outlook

UEL plan to continue growing their fruitful relationship with ULCC and sharing their work and experiences with the EPrints community. As McElroy states: “*We were particularly happy with the support and guidance which were available to us during the development stage and now regularly tell other members of the community about our work with ULCC.*” The work with UEL has also helped ULCC better understand the requirements for data repositories and develop an enhanced solution for other institutions with similar needs.

1 <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/create-manage/projects/rd-essex>

2 <http://datapool.soton.ac.uk/>

3 <http://data.uel.ac.uk/>

4 <https://github.com/eprintsug/bootstrap>