

Addressing the RDM Learning Gaps: The Development of the Research Data Management Librarian Academy (RDMLA)

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Abstract

This study provides background information on the Research Data Management Librarian Academy (RDMLA) project launched in October 2019, the motivation for establishing the Academy, the process of constructing individual units and the course, and the team's continued coordinated efforts to provide comprehensive RDM training. RDMLA is a global professional development program for librarians and other professionals who work in a research-intensive environment. The current course curriculum, consisting of eleven units, will be showcased, with information on accessing the course, obtaining CE credit, and future endeavors. The CE credits are offered by Simmons University, School of Library and Information Science. RDMLA is financially sponsored by Elsevier. To date, there are 4,679 active learners from 153 countries worldwide. To gauge librarians' learning needs, a needs assessment survey and environmental scan were conducted in 2018. Practicing librarians responded to questions regarding their RDM training needs, challenges offering RDM services, and essential RDM skills needed for professional success. The findings provided insight into RDM practices and the state of RDM training. Additionally, an environmental scan of available RDM training demonstrated growth in RDM instruction, but exposed missing areas and a lack of a holistic, accessible, self-paced, and expandable curriculum. The RDMLA course framework consists of eleven units addressing expressed RDM needs while avoiding redundancy in current training offerings. Recognizing the learners' needs as reflected in the study, the RDMLA project team was formed and tasked with developing course units that filled the learning gaps. The team features a multi-institutional collaboration of librarians, LIS faculties, and industry professionals. The year of 2019 was devoted to course development and site building, followed by quality assurance assessment, user experience, and

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usability studies to continuously improve the program's design and features. While the course is currently available to English-speakers, a traditional Chinese version of the course is under development and will be available in summer/fall 2021. The RDMLA project team remains committed to its efforts to create new units, expand outreach, promote broader accessibility, and establish diverse partnerships. Through the RDMLA, we seek to build a global community of practice of RDM and further advance RDM practice in libraries and beyond.

Keywords: Research Data Management, Continuing Education, Data Librarians, Online Curriculum



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