

# EPrints: Sustainability Panel

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# Mission Alignment - Context

- Intelligence, Agents, Multimedia Group,  
School of Electronics and Computer Science,  
University of Southampton
  - *Wendy Hall, Hugh Davis, Les Carr et al*
  - Open Hypermedia – links as first-class objects
  - Digital Libraries – technologies to support large scale collections
  - Semantic Web – formal techniques for expressing and using knowledge
  - Web Science – impact of the Web on society

# Mission Alignment - History

- “Open Journals” project – JISC ELib programme – applying open hypermedia linking techniques to online journals (1994)
- “CogPrints” project – JISC Elib – Harnad’s Cognitive Science version of arxiv for Word users (1995)
- “OpCit” project – JISC / NSF International Digital Libraries II –applying open hypermedia linking techniques to arxiv citations (1999)
  - Main outcome: Citebase
  - Off the radar outcome: generalise CogPrints to make EPrints to support OAI-PMH adoption.

# Mission Alignment - Today

- Many *research activities* in ECS use EPrints as a platform for achieving their own ends
  - HCI technologies, E-learning, E-research, Semantic Web, Linked Data, Web Science
- Also *infrastructure activities* within our School and Institution
  - Delivers on administrative reporting, research management, strategic planning

# Funding

- Chris Gutteridge: chief architect (2000-) and core developer
  - *Day job ECS Webmaster (Special Ops).*  
*Supports 250 web sites and all the teaching and research web services run by the department.*
  - Allowed 20% time to devote to EPrints community
  - Also time for school & institutional repositories
  - Also night time
- Tim Brody: core developer and release master
  - Supported by JISC projects (services)
- Dave Tarrant: core developer
  - Supported by JISC projects (preservation) and PhD
- Sebastian Francois: developer (*e.g.* SWORD)
  - Supported by JISC projects (e-learning)
- Patrick McSweeney: developer
  - Supported by JISC projects (e-learning)
- Les Carr: chief technical director & repository manager
  - *Day job: academic*

# Funding: EPrints Services

- commercial hosting, bespoke development, training, support
- based inside school. Not spun off.
- two fulltime repository developers/supporters
  - Adam Field & Tim Miles-Board
- *Provides resources for conference attendance etc*
- *Justifies key staff involvement and low overhead*
- *Now starting to fund PhD studentships*

# Resources for Innovation

- JISC (and other) new funding
  - Proposals by ECS or in collaboration with the wider UK repository community
  - “augmenting” project agendas
- Commercial customers
  - New developments are often made available to community
- PhD students
  - application of student research and innovations
- Main resource: the existing team & project portfolio
  - Regular discussion, brainstorming, argument
  - Listen to the community
  - Engage in forums

# Community

- EPrints 'community' is determined by UK context
  - UK funding pots are smaller
  - Less investment to develop a specific community (£45k)
  - JISC provides national context / meetings in area
  - UKCoRR inter-platform community
  - Technical development led from Southampton
- Expectations
  - We do as much support and bug-fixing as possible (EPrints Technical mailing list)
  - We encourage contribution through plugin architecture
  - We encourage collaboration
  - in terms of innovation, programming, support, funding etc.



# Benefits and Risks

- Pros
  - Coherent development team / code
  - Effective innovation environment
  - Good balance of for-free and for-pay services
  - Low commitment from platform adopters
  - Stable context to adapt to changing circumstances
- Cons
  - Low commitment from platform adopters
  - Little inter-adopter contact
  - Reduced visibility of platform in wider community