

From Open Access to Open Assessment

Institutional Repositories as Engines of Research Culture Change

Dr Sadiat Adetoro Salau

Director, Centre for Open Distance and eLearning

Federal University of Technology, Minna

Research Assessment shapes Research Behaviour

What an institution rewards influences:

- What researchers choose to publish
- Whether they share data or other research outputs
- Whether they collaborate
- Whether research is accessible to society
- Whether researchers prioritise quality, openness and transparency

Are our current assessment practices encouraging the kind of research culture we want our universities to build?

What is Responsible Research Assessment (RRA)?



RRA is an approach that asks institutions to evaluate research more fairly, transparently and holistically

In addition to quantity and citations, RRA encourages funders, research community & publishers to focus attention on:

- Quality and rigour
- Research integrity
- Openness and transparency
- Diverse research outputs
- Contributions to research infrastructure
- Societal engagement and impact

Where Do Institutional Repositories Fit?

Institutional Repositories (IRs)



What we know about IRs

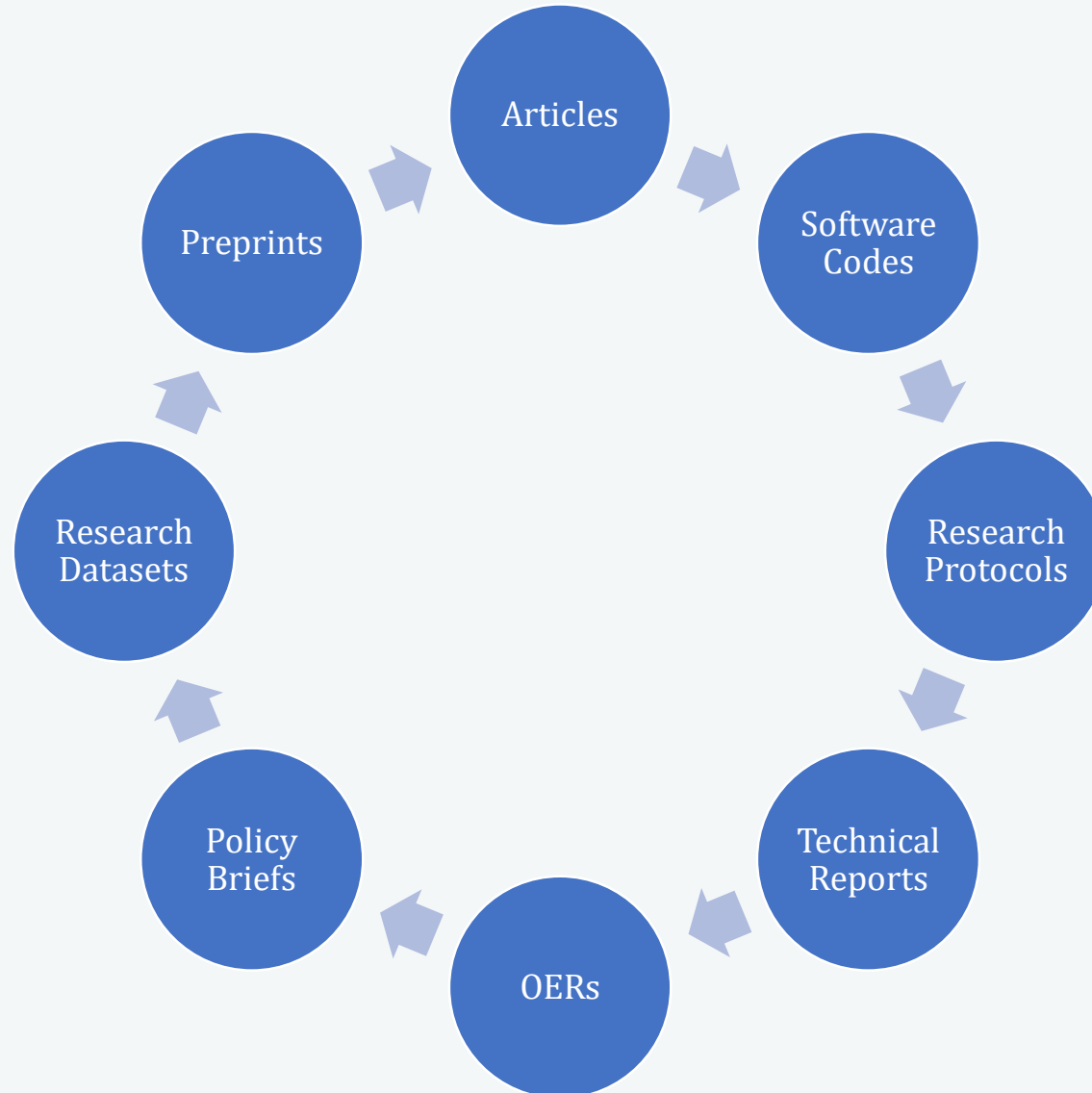
A digital centralised hub where academic works such as journal articles, theses, dissertations, research reports, conference papers, data sets, and even multimedia materials are preserved and made freely available to a global audience.



IRs Now

Institutional repositories are no longer just shelves for digital papers; they can become institutional research infrastructure for making research more visible, transparent, reusable and assessable.

An Institutional Repository can capture:



Nigeria has a large and growing research ecosystem, but these research outputs remain fragmented across:

Institutional Websites

Journal Platforms

Researcher Profiles

Commercial Databases/Repositories

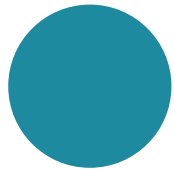
Personal Devices and Emails

Institutional repositories can provide a trusted institutional layer that connects the outputs across these platforms. They provide ownership!

The opportunity is not merely to increase deposits; it is to make Nigerian research more visible, connected and reusable; it is not merely to have a repository, but to use the repository as a means to change how we access research and ultimately the culture

IRs as a digital infrastructure is a practical place open research culture gets built

Collect



Collects traditional research outputs and other diverse outputs like PG theses, datasets, and inaugural lectures, not usually captured by traditional metrics

Connect



Link outputs to people with ORCID, & DOIs and feeds the university website for visibility.

Credit & Catalyse



Staff member's publication records are seen, which gives assessment panels open, auditable evidence they can actually trust.

Open does not mean “everything must be unrestricted.” Access conditions should follow ethics, copyright, privacy and funder requirements.

How repositories can support responsible assessment



Openness

Provides access to diverse research outputs



Collaboration

Persistent IDs and contributor roles makes outputs easier to discover and share responsibly



Reproducibility

Data, code and protocols versioned, linked, and rerunnable



Societal Engagement

Enables access beyond the academic community



Diversity

Can capture outputs beyond articles, conference papers and books

How repositories can support responsible assessment



Research Integrity

Supports links to data, protocols and other research materials



Recognition

Provides evidence of diverse research contribution for recognition

What prevents our institutional repositories from delivering this?

- repository seen as a library project rather than institutional research infrastructure;
- weak or absent deposit policies;
- limited awareness among researchers;
- copyright uncertainty;
- inadequate staffing and technical capacity;
- poor metadata quality;
- fragmented systems;
- weak integration with ORCID and research information systems.

So, before we ask *Which repository software should we use?* we should ask:

1. What research behaviour do we want to encourage?
2. What outputs should be openly discoverable?
3. Who owns the process?
4. What policies support deposit?
5. What services will help researchers comply?
6. What incentives make openness worthwhile?
7. How will success be assessed?

..And then universities can



Recognise the IR as a strategic research infrastructure



Align assessment with responsible research principles



Require deposit of eligible research outputs



Recognise diverse research contributions



Provide sustainable funding staffing and technical support for the infrastructure



Integrate repositories with other global research management systems

Key Stakeholders

Universities already owns almost everything an open research culture needs. The parts just aren't connected.



University Leadership

Leaders visibly value what the new criteria say they value and embed openness in the research workflows



Library

Capacity Building and Policy Implementation



Appointments & Promotion Committee

A&PC criteria appraisal that reward responsible research principles



Community

Faculty members, PG students, faculty champions



In conclusion:

Repositories are already in place. The next move is to use them to drive an open responsible research culture.



Thank you for Listening