Greetings! – to the RDA Interest Group for "Data Rescue" (DR-IG), to the former CODATA "Data At Risk" Task Group, and to others who have expressed interest in Data Rescue.

Barcelona Plenary 9

At the recent Plenary (P9) in Barcelona, the mandate of DR-IG was formally recognized as consisting of two parallel strands: (A) Data Rescue: the recapture and digitization of (mostly) heritage data whose analogue-only formats place them in danger, and (B) Data At Risk: data which can get deliberately wiped without consultation (thus, mostly recent electronic data).

For the present, and until the Data Rescue movement has evolved sufficiently to be independent, activities of Data Rescue will be under the aegis of the RDA. DR-IG has nearly 80 members.

This is an active era for Data At Risk. Events in the US, and in other lands with similar "information-burying" policies that can zap scientific information without due warning, are happening with alarming frequency. Matters of losing heritage data do not hit the headlines with quite such a thump, so it is important that DR-IG continue to champion that other aspect of data rescue too, and with comparable energy.

TWO RDA Data-Share Fellows

Important things are happening right now for DR-IG, and involve the installation of not one but *two* RDA **"Data-Share" Fellows**: **Alia** and **Morgan**! The selection was based on the quality of the applicants rather than on any stated needs of the IGs to which they would be attached, so DR-IG has truly fallen on its feet! We must try hard to work with them, and to make something doubly powerful out of this dual opportunity. Welcome, Morgan and Alia!

Alia Kahn has broad and hands-on experience working with Polar Data, and is based at the National Snow & Ice Data Center in Boulder, Colorado, USA. She is in her first Post-Doc at the University of Colorado. Please visit https://nsidc.org/research/bios/alia-khan. Alia's involvement in the Data Rescue mission will be assisted by co-Chair Dave Gallaher, from the same institution. Her efforts will be geared towards cementing Data Rescue as an entity in its own right on the world stage, and seeking out the "best" (efficient, economic, influential) routes to that objective. She will contact as many as possible of the groups or individuals world-wide who are, have recently been, or wish/need to be, active in data rescue. and many of you may well want to inform her of efforts that are known to you. The Workshop which we held in Boulder last September constituted an excellent start in this direction, and her appointment embodies the purpose, which the Workshop declared, of building on and up ways and means to rescue *and re-use* our scientific heritage.

Morgan Currie has a background and active participation in matters concerning policies that "manage" scientific data. With Steve Diggs (Scripps Institute, UC at San Diego) she already has a good working experience of standing up for policies that can cause valuable research data to disappear in a trice, and more of the same will be her role in DR-IG. At Barcelona the DR-IG meeting discussed setting up a special WG whose task would be to understand the scope of this whole matter of losing valuable electronic data. Morgan will be central to that effort, whether or not a WG is actually created. She is transferring to a new Post-Doc at Stanford University in September, and you can read more about her at www.morgancurrie.com. Morgan's immediate point of contact will be our new co-Chair Steve Diggs.

It is excellent that we are – for a year, at least – able to pursue our two distinct strands of data Rescue under the leadership of two separate people. Both Fellows will receive a small remuneration from the RDA, and some travel funds. Let's help them both make something truly valuable out of this special effort! These appointments by the RDA represent considerable investment of trust and confidence in the DR-IG in its support of the value of DR to science and to society, and we must not betray it.

Article in *Nature*, May 18, 2017

Your attention is drawn to a publication on May 18, 2017, in the popular *World View* section of *Nature*, that discusses Data Rescue. As it points out, an important resource for Data Rescue is success stories, so please continue to send relevant literature references to Bill Anderson (band@acm.org), who is compiling a bibliography of that resource. Thank you!

Appointment of New Chairs

The DR-IG is also doing some expanding of its own. Rather than having three co-Chairs (Dave Gallaher, Lesley Wyborn and me), of whom only Lesley is based outside North America, we now have six: Steve Diggs (California, USA)
>David Gallaher (Boulder, USA)
>Elizabeth Griffin (Victoria, Canada)
>Usha Munshi (New Delhi, India)
>Jamie Shiers (CERN, Switzerland)
>Lesley Wyborn (Canberra, Australia).

There is in fact no limit to the number of co-Chairs, but we were expected to include members from other regions of the world. It is getting high time that I step down anyway, and I would look for a replacement from a southern country such as South Africa.

Guidelines for Data Rescue

Just prior to P9, we published a 13-page *Guidelines* on our Web-site. No need to log-in: go to **https://www.rd-alliance.org/guidelines-rescue-data-risk** and "Guidelines-2_1.pdf". It deals exclusively with the challenges of rescuing and re-using heritage data, and is constructed as (a) a 2-page Executive Summary, (b) a 4-page descriptive Background, and (c) the *Guidelines* themselves. There is plenty of scope for enlarging the *Guidelines* in Section C(A), which is planned as a summary of the bibliography of Case Studies. That is where your input is much needed! The list needs to embrace as many different fields as possible, so as to illustrate how problems face heritage data in every field of science and research – and social sciences as well.

Textbook on Data Rescue

A proposal to produce a book on Data Rescue was mooted some time ago. What was visualized was a "textbook" that would explain the rationale, value, benefits, etc., of Data Rescue (as defined above), and include write-ups of something like a dozen Case Studies, each around 10–15 pages. The chapters would be volunteered by authors, either single or multiple, and would be subject to editing in order to maintain uniformity of style. In addition, a few reports that ended in failure because the data had been destroyed would help bring the message home. Producing a hard-copy book will not constrain the contents in time, because it will be accompanied by an on-line Newsletter that updates the Case Studies yearly or so by offering fresh examples.