



8-21-2017

ICPSR Convenes Stakeholders on Researcher Credentialing Project

Monica King
University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.upenn.edu/admindata_interviews

Recommended Citation

King, Monica, "ICPSR Convenes Stakeholders on Researcher Credentialing Project" (2017). *ADRF Network Newsletter Interviews*. 5.
https://repository.upenn.edu/admindata_interviews/5

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. https://repository.upenn.edu/admindata_interviews/5
For more information, please contact repository@pobox.upenn.edu.

ICPSR Convenes Stakeholders on Researcher Credentialing Project

Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

ICPSR Convenes Stakeholders on Researcher Credentialing Project

August 21, 2017

By Monica King

For every researcher who gains access to a restricted dataset, countless of hours are spent processing the request. Not to mention the months that pass while the review takes place. Imagine, then, a widely-accepted credential that enables researchers to access multiple restricted datasets across institutions without undergoing a cumbersome and time-consuming approval process each time.

Margaret Levenstein and her team at [ICPSR](#) are embarking on a researcher credentialing project that will bring us closer to that vision. Their project will help streamline the process, cutting red tape and creating more research opportunities in less time.

Community of Trusted Researchers

Similar to how sharing economy platforms like Airbnb and Uber have built communities of trust, Levenstein and her team want to create a community of trusted researchers by establishing a set of transferable credentials for restricted data access.

On July 24, ICPSR and Georgetown University's Office of the Provost convened over two dozen representatives from government agencies, data repositories, and academic institutions for feedback on their work in progress. During breakout sessions, the group considered the attributes that should go into this researcher identity. In general, they agreed that fundamentals like professional and institutional affiliations, training certifications, grants received, and publication history can attest to researchers' qualifications.

Using Carrots and Sticks

Levenstein also asked the group to weigh in on keeping track of researchers' detrimental actions. For example, if a researcher consistently forgets to lock the door to a restricted data use facility, should this identity reflect these irresponsible behaviors? Many agree that if these types of negative behaviors were recorded, researchers in this community would be held accountable for their behaviors and would be more likely to adhere to data security measures.

On the flip side, the participants brainstormed the kinds of positive contributions to the community that should be a part of the researcher identity. They agreed that researchers who share data, code or add to metadata should have these contributions reflected on their credentials, especially since these actions are not usually rewarded in the professional academic setting. Incentivizing the positive contributions to the data

itself also creates an environment where data providers are more willing to share their data.

What's Next?

As Levenstein and her team move forward with this project, they will consider the best way to implement their credentialing system given existing efforts like the [ORCID](#) identifier. One idea that emerged from the meeting is to form a cooperative where institutions can buy into accepting several standard credentials. Additionally, the team is developing and testing the software and web interface of this system. The group will publish their findings and recommendations in a White Paper this winter.

The [Researcher Credentialing Project](#) is funded by the [Alfred P. Sloan Foundation](#).