Editor's notes: Sharing qualitative research data, improving data literacy and establishing national data services

Welcome to the fourth issue of volume 43 of the IASSIST Quarterly (IQ 43(4) 2019).

The first article is authored by Jessica Mozersky, Heidi Walsh, Meredith Parsons, Tristan McIntosh, Kari Baldwin, and James M. DuBois – all located at the Bioethics Research Center, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri in the USA. They ask the question 'Are we ready to share qualitative research data?', with the subtitle 'Knowledge and preparedness among qualitative researchers, IRB Members, and data repository curators'. The report is obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews with key personnel involved in scientific data sharing: 30 data repository curators, 30 qualitative researchers, and 30 IRB staff members in the USA. IRB stands for Institutional Review Board, which in other countries might be called research ethics committee or similar. There is an increasing trend towards data sharing and open science, but qualitative data are rarely shared. In health and medicine, qualitative methods are frequently used to explore sensitive topics. The sensitivity of such data necessitates that data are adequately de-identified to protect confidentiality, but this may, in turn, hinder maintaining sufficient contextual detail to enable secondary analyses. De-identifying qualitative data is challenging as sensitive information can be hidden in every corner of data. In contrast, standard methods for de-identification of quantitative data exist at the individual variable level. The article provides insights into the differences in knowledge and preparedness to share qualitative data between the three stakeholder groups. All stakeholder groups lack preparedness for qualitative data sharing. Qualitative researchers associate data sharing with quantitative data and are generally unfamiliar with sharing qualitative data, while IRB members also have limited experience. Among data curators, about half had curated qualitative data, but many only worked with quantitative data. There is a strong need for guidance and standards on qualitative data sharing.

The second article is also raising a question: 'How many ways can we teach data literacy?'. We are now in Asia with a connection to USA. The author Yun Dai is working at the Library of New York University Shanghai, where they have explored many ways to teach data literacy to undergraduate students. These initiatives, described in the article, included workshops and in-class instruction - which tempted students by offering up-to-date technology, through online casebooks of topics in the data lifecycle, to event series with appealing names like 'Lying with Data'. The event series had a marketing mascot - a 'Lying with Data' Pinocchio - and sessions on being fooled by advertisements and getting the truth out of opinion surveys. Data literacy has a resemblance to information literacy and in that perspective, data literacy is defined as 'critical thinking applied to evaluating data sources and formats, and interpreting and communicating findings', while statistical literacy is 'the ability to evaluate statistical information as evidence'. The article presents the approaches and does not conclude on the question concerning 'How many?'. No readers will be surprised by the missing answer, and I am certain readers will enjoy the ideas of the article and the marketing focus.

With the last article 'Examining barriers for establishing a national data service', the author Janez Štebe takes us to Europe. Janez Štebe is head of the social science data archives (Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov) at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. The Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) is a distributed European social science data infrastructure for access to research data. CESSDA has many - but not all - European countries as members. The focus is on the situation in 20 non-CESSDA member European countries, with emerging and immature data archive services being developed through such projects as the CESSDA Strengthening and Widening (SaW 2016 and 2017) and CESSDA Widening Activities (WA 2018). By identifying and comparing gaps

and differences, a group of countries at a similar level may consider following similar best practice examples to achieve a more mature and supportive open scientific data ecosystem. Like the earlier articles, this article provides good references to earlier literature and description of previous studies in the area. In this project 22 countries were selected - all CESSDA non-members - and interviewees among social science researchers and data librarians were contacted with an e-mail template between October 2018 and January 2019. The article brings results and discussion of the national data sharing culture and data infrastructure. Yes, there is a lack of money! However, it is the process of gradually establishing a robust data infrastructure that is believed to impact the growth of a data sharing culture and improve the excellence and the efficiency of research in general.

Submissions of papers for the IASSIST Quarterly are always very welcome. We welcome input from IASSIST conferences or other conferences and workshops, from local presentations or papers especially written for the IQ. When you are preparing such a presentation, give a thought to turning your one-time presentation into a lasting contribution. Doing that after the event also gives you the opportunity of improving your work after feedback. We encourage you to login or create an author login to https://www.iassistquarterly.com (our Open Journal System application). We permit authors 'deep links' into the IQ as well as deposition of the paper in your local repository. Chairing a conference session with the purpose of aggregating and integrating papers for a special issue IQ is also much appreciated as the information reaches many more people than the limited number of session participants and will be readily available on the IASSIST Quarterly website at https://www.iassistquarterly.com. Authors are very welcome to take a look at the instructions and layout:

https://www.iassistquarterly.com/index.php/iassist/about/submissions

Authors can also contact me directly via e-mail: kbr@sam.sdu.dk. Should you be interested in compiling a special issue for the IQ as guest editor(s) I will also be delighted to hear from you.

Karsten Boye Rasmussen - December 2019