

Follow the Yellow Brick Road: The Career (and Learning/Skills) Journey of eResearchers BoF

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DESCRIPTION

The title of this BoF references the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz* in which Dorothy finds herself and her dog Toto whisked away to a new and different land. To get where she wants to go, Dorothy is counselled to “follow the yellow brick road”. This road is not any that Dorothy has traveled before. She’s unsure where it **really** leads and what she’s got to do or know along the way.

- Does Dorothy’s journey on an unfamiliar road resonate with you, as a new PhD student or a new (or seasoned) eResearcher?
- What are the milestones and key tasks (markers) along your career journey?
- What skills, knowledge, technologies and tools, do you need to equip yourself along the way, and when exactly do you need to be upskilled or ‘uplearned’?
- Is there a roadmap to guide you along each part of the journey, from new to mid to late career?
- And what about those skills that will build career resilience – where and how do they fit in?

The overarching goal of this BoF is to demystify the eResearcher’s journey. We seek to do that by collectively creating a roadmap of that journey. The roadmap will be broken into three sections: early career, mid career, and late career eResearch. Each section will be iteratively analysed and discussed for the unique challenges and opportunities it encompasses.

One objective in each section is to overlay “typical” milestones and key tasks (markers), specific to that stage of eResearch. This overlay is one in which collective idea generation has a distinct advantage. When one is in a stage, without experience of that stage, it can be difficult to identify key markers. Those who have passed through a stage – even **just recently** so – can inform and provide insights. The goal is to consult with others’ experiences to build out the general markers for each stage.

A second objective in each section is to extend upon the identification of markers, by adding **what** eResearchers need to do to prepare for those markers. That is, what are the required skills, capabilities and/or knowledge needed to perform, complete, or attain each key marker? What lead time is needed? Do eResearchers need a one-off, hands-on (coding) workshop? Or, is an ongoing learning series more appropriate? And what about the skills needed for career resilience, when and how are those taught and/or acquired; and should they be required?

A third (stretch) objective is to identify the forks in the road coming out of domain or technology specialties.

This BoF is targeted at both eResearchers and those who teach and train them (formally or informally). The participants at this BoF will simultaneously drill into the consolidated ideas generated from the earlier Workshop (with the same title) and extend those ideas by contributing their own ideas and experiences. Information from the [Australian Research Data Commons \(ARDC\) Skills Summit](#) (29-30 July) will also inform the Workshop and BoF.

To trigger individual ideas and to leverage the collective thinking and power of the group, in this BoF we will use several techniques:

- Introduction and Problem Statement: 10 minutes
- Brain Dumping: 10 minutes
- Brain Writing: 15 minutes
- Facilitated Discussion: 15 minutes
- Recap and Next Steps: 10 minutes

BoF participants are not required to attend the earlier, related ½-day Workshop to take part in this BoF, but they are encouraged to do so.