Establishment of team-based Data Stewards in a large NZ research institute

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- One of seven NZ Crown Research Institutes
- 700 science staff, 76 science teams
- 14 sites across NZ
- Wide-ranging research fields
Two Year ‘Science Data Facilitation’ Project

» Introduction of new position: Science Data Facilitator (1 FTE)

» Sponsored by the Chief Scientist

» Supported by Data Science group and Information & Knowledge Services
Two Year ‘Science Data Facilitation’ Project

» Four main goals:
  » Creation of a Science Data Types Catalogue
  » Development of Best Practice Guidelines
  » Establishment of Data Management Plans
  » Training of team-based Data Stewards
Data Steward training course

» 2-day training course, 2 main presenters, 12 trainees at a time

» Sessions on:
  » Data management basics and principles
  » Data Management Plans
  » Change management
  » Excel dos and don’ts
  » Microsoft SharePoint
  » Internal science database applications
  » Data management scenarios
  » Create draft plan for improving team’s data management

» Follow-up meetings with each Data Steward and their team leader to discuss Data Improvement Plan
Current rewards and challenges

» Rewards:
  » Increased awareness of the importance of good data management
  » Increased adoption of metadata templates, SharePoint and databases
  » Engagement in new initiatives
Current rewards and challenges

» Challenges:
  » Organisational culture of ‘my data’ rather than ‘our data’
  » Limited data governance policies or processes in place
  » Lack of standardisation within PFR, eg metadata fields
  » Science staff generally lack data science skills
Future plans

» Science Data Facilitator role will continue after completion of the two year project

» Continue to cultivate Data Steward community
  » Quarterly group catch-ups
  » Discussions, tips and updates over Yammer
  » Train new Data Stewards as needed
  » Opportunities to upskill
  » Data Steward ‘tiers’/continuum
  » Data Steward stream in annual Data Science Summit
Thank you

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