Using Figshare to showcase a portfolio of research

Three mini case studies from the University of Salford, Purdue University Graduate School and Bath Spa University

Research isn't shared in a single dataset or document - it's comprised of a variety of formats and pieces of documentation that are created at different points of the research lifecycle. To accommodate this flow and breadth of research, three universities using Figshare to store their research outputs have implemented a portfolio system for collecting and sharing this research data.
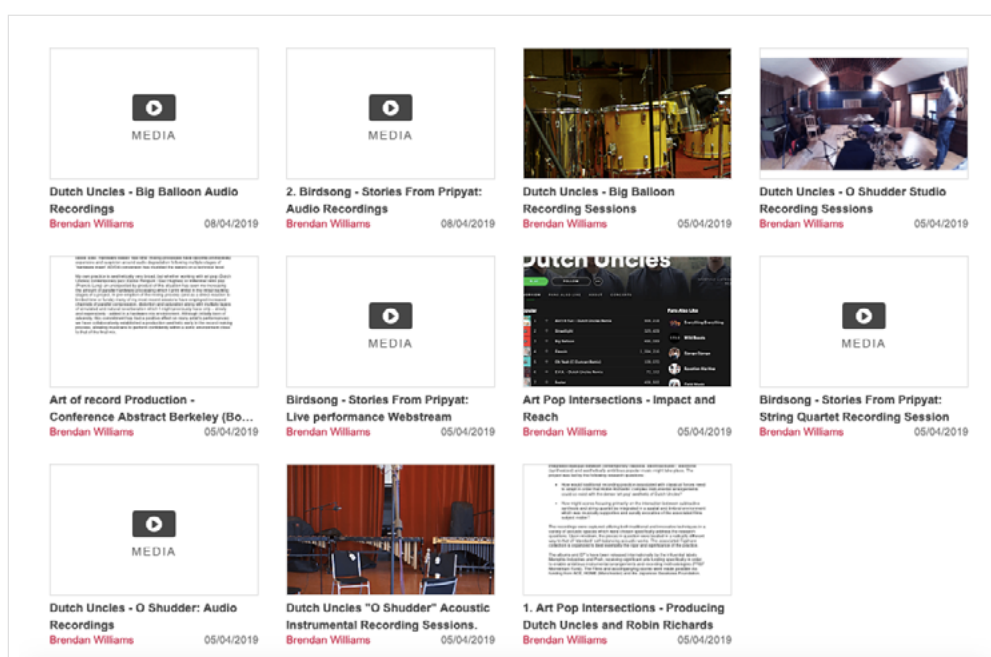
University of Salford
Practice-as-Research Centre of Excellence

Researchers from the Practice-as-Research Centre of Excellence at the University of Salford have created collections in their Figshare data repository consisting of various formats of research outputs and curated research data. One example of this is "Art Pop Intersections", a collection of research by Brendan Williams, one of the programme leaders of BA Music: Creative Music Technology in the School of Arts and Media.

Brendan has uploaded data including audio recordings and images of recording sessions alongside documentation for his REF (Research Excellence Framework) submission like his 300-word supporting statement and Spotify screenshots and media reviews which show the impact of his research.

When submitting this research to the REF, the University can reference the DOI to Brendan's collection to see a holistic picture of this piece of research.

As Brendan says: "This approach to creating REF friendly collections for our practice-based research outputs was instigated by the Centre of Excellence lead in collaboration with our Library. Figshare's ability to host and preview a variety of media means that my work, particularly the photographic and audio elements, can be easily accessed and speak for itself, supported by the contextual literature. It's also useful to be able to gather items that demonstrate impact and reach in one place, alongside my outputs".

Williams, Brendan (2019): Art Pop Intersections - Producing Dutch Uncles and Robin Richards.
figshare. Collection.
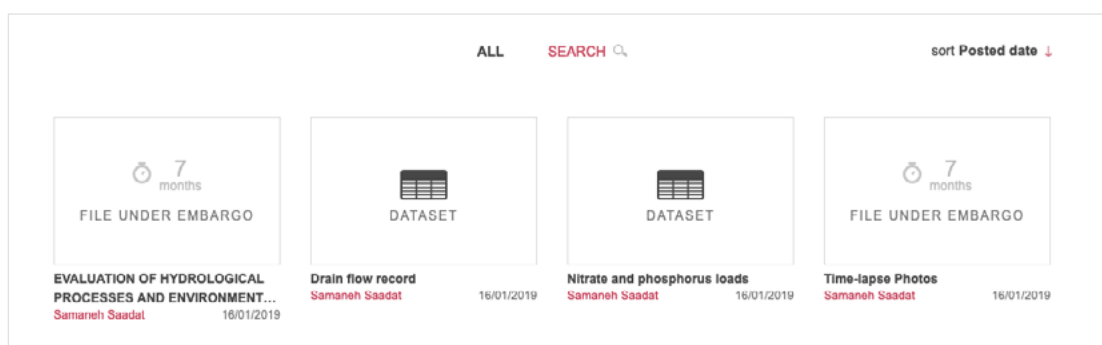https://doi.org/10.17866/rd.salford.c.4458851.v1

Purdue University Graduate School
Theses Repository

Purdue University Graduate School needed a place to store not only theses, but the supplemental material and data alongside the thesis.

They implemented their instance of Figshare to allow graduate students to upload their thesis and supplemental material themselves by integrating with the university's single sign-on system. Submissions go through a reviewer before they're published and become publicly available. Theses with multiple files (thesis and supplemental material) are uploaded into a collection with its own DOI (Digital Object Identifier).

Uploading the theses portfolios as individual items in a collection allows flexibility around embargoes - the student can apply an embargo on their thesis per the university's policy but make some or all of the research materials openly available immediately. This example from student Samaneh Saadat contains a thesis and photos under embargo but two datasets which are openly available now.

Saadat, Samaneh (2019): Evaluation of Hydrological Processes and Environmental Impacts of Free and Controlled Subsurface Drainage. figshare. Collection. https://doi.org/10.25394/PGS.c.4368542.v1
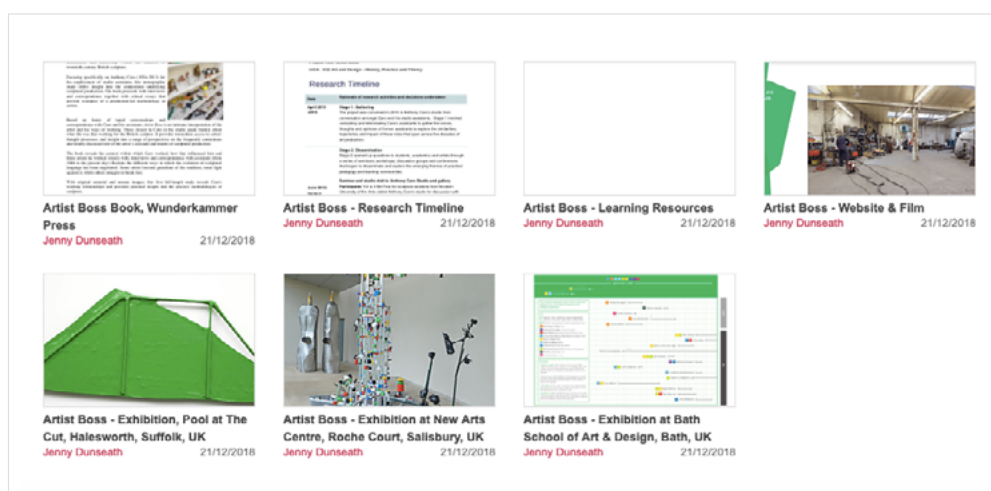
"This thesis portfolio by Samaneh is our first portfolio in the new repository," said Ashlee Messersmith, manager of the Thesis & Dissertation Office. *"All these items were encapsulated in one portfolio despite the fact that each file had its own unique DOI. We also like how quickly we can publish on Figshare. We don't have to wait several months for third parties to evaluate and approve - it's instant."*

Find out more:

hammer.figshare.com

Bath Spa University
BathSPAdata

Bath Spa University has begun uploading portfolio projects across a variety of research areas from teaching to fine arts. Like the University of Salford, research in these portfolios includes a mixture of research and research data management documents to support Bath Spa's submission to the REF.

For research in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, Bath Spa needed a place to showcase research that is predominantly displayed physically in a show or exhibition in a digital way.

One such piece of research, "Artist Boss", is a collection of items that "represent three public exhibitions curated by Jenny Dunseath, a collection of learning resources about the project, a research timeline, links to and documentation of the Artist Boss website, and details of the book publication, Artist boss: Anthony Caro's studio assistants and issues of legacy in British sculpture (2016, Wunderkammer Press)" (Dunseath 2018).

Dunseath, Jenny (2018): Artist Boss. figshare. Collection.
https://doi.org/10.17870/bathspa.c.4327292.v1

"The Artist Boss portfolio was our first completed e-portfolio," said Miranda Barnes, Research Publications Librarian at Bath Spa University. "We undertook the creation of several case study e-portfolios with researchers in various Units of Assessment (UoA's), including Art and Design. These portfolios were developed with the intention that they would be the preferred REF output template for multi-component outputs in creative practice research areas, particularly those that benefit from Figshare's vibrant previewing capabilities for audio-visual file types. Artist Boss is a large project, including several exhibitions, learning materials, videos, and a website, as well as the final book publication with Wunderkammer Press. The challenge was how to gather the documentation together into 'items' in a way that made sense, was comprehensive and intuitive, and told the story of the research in a cohesive and organised way. Thankfully, Jenny was very organised! So building this initial case study e-portfolio in collaboration with her was a fluid process, and set the standard in many ways for similar e-portfolios in the future."

Find out more:
data.bathspa.ac.uk