



The client: Francis Crick Institute

The challenge:

The Library and Information Services team at this growing research institute wanted to use technology to help with monitoring its publications and maximising the opportunities to publish open research.

The solution:

They selected a best-in-class research information management system which brings together Symplectic Elements and Figshare to allow them to:

- Monitor their publications better
- Capture manuscripts earlier to add acknowledgements of grants and all Crick staff contributions
- Get a repository that handles both papers and data for open research

Powered by:

 SYMPLECTIC figshare

People:

Frank Norman
Head of Library &
Information Services

Patti Biggs
Information Services Specialist

A Pathway to Open Research with Richer Research Profiles

The Francis Crick Institute is using technology to empower its researchers to have richer research profiles and to make it easier for them to publish their papers and data Open Access.

Founded in 2015, the establishment of the Francis Crick Institute was made possible through an innovative partnership between a UK government funding agency, two charities and three leading universities. The growing institute has over 1,200 researchers and with just four library staff to support their valuable work, efficiency is key so the institute's Library and Information Services (LIS) team use technology to streamline their work.

A fresh start

Following the move into the new Crick building and the bringing together of two legacy institutes in 2016, the LIS team took a fresh look at its operations and systems. Frank Norman, Head of LIS, says "We wanted to ensure that we were addressing the needs and expectations of a bigger and more complex institute. We also wanted to make sure that we were maximising the opportunities to make our research open."

Their homegrown publications monitoring system, inherited from one of the legacy institutes, had reached the limit of its usefulness and needed to be replaced. They decided to go to market to find a best-in-class research information management system which would allow them to monitor all the publications produced by the institute's researchers, and capture information about associated grants through funding acknowledgements.

Frank explained that in replacing their existing system they hoped to empower their researchers whilst ensuring they would be capturing the breadth of work happening at the Crick: "We wanted to offer self-service profile generation so the researchers could easily go in and update their own profiles and publications. We wanted publication lists for all of our research staff - from PhD students to group leaders - and we wanted to ensure that these lists were kept up-to-date."

With the growing importance of open access initiatives in research, the library team also wanted to make the institute's open access workflows more efficient, consolidating open access processes with publications management. Future proofing was also a key driver, with the team wanting to ensure the new system would cater for any future needs in areas such as research evaluation, reporting and analysis.



"The Crick brought together the research information management capabilities of Symplectic Elements with the all-in-one repository functionality of Figshare"

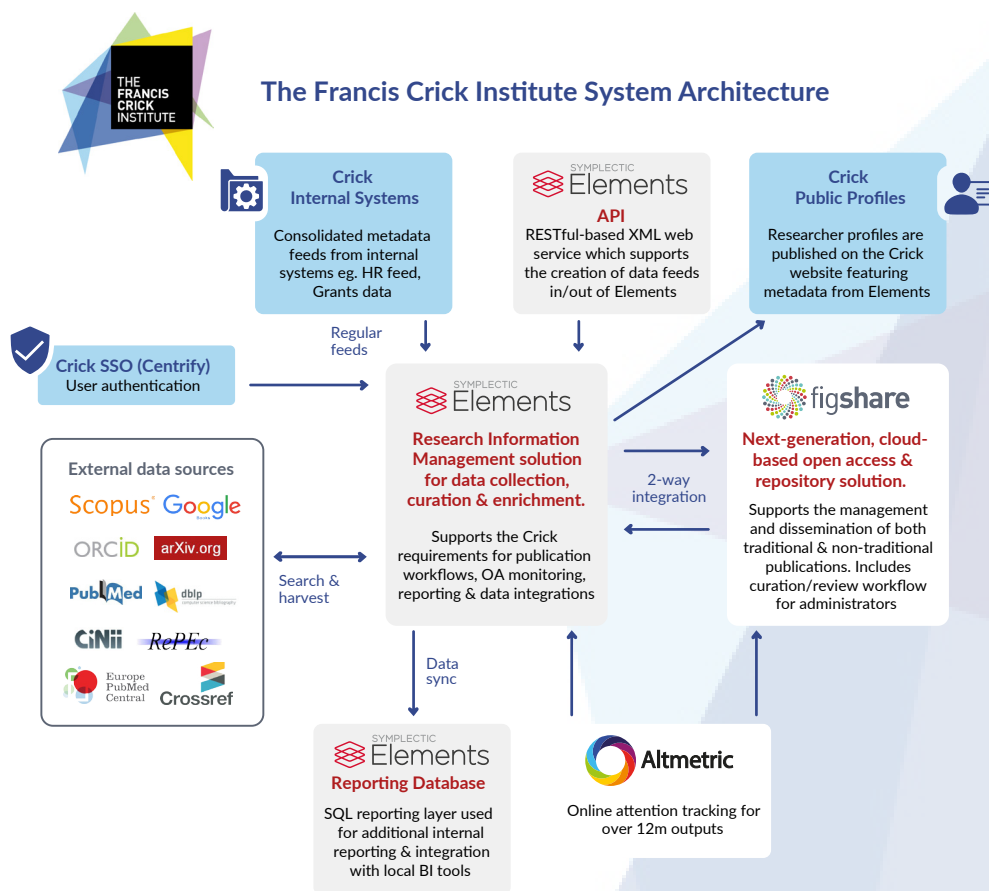
Choosing a solution

With their clear set of goals in mind, the LIS team conducted a market survey to assess their options before moving to a formal tender process in which they selected a joint offering from two of Digital Science's companies, Symplectic and Figshare.

The Crick brought together Symplectic Elements' research information management capabilities with Figshare's all-in-one repository functionality. The robust APIs of both systems would allow further functionalities to be built around the institute's developing needs.

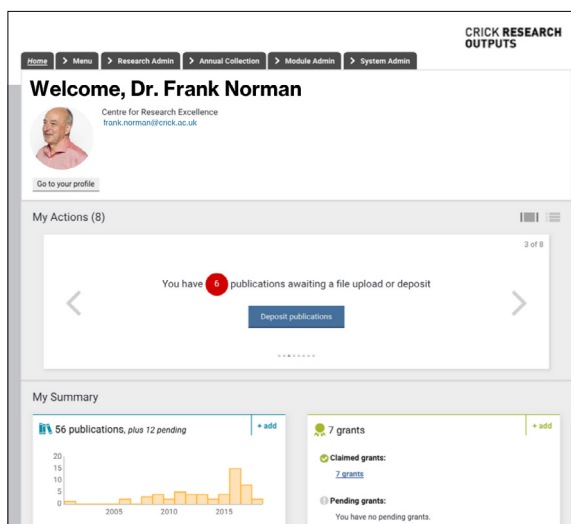
The feeling among the library team and other users from the Crick was that Elements offered them the most flexibility, and was most likely to be configurable to align with the institute's needs. Frank remarked, "For a couple of the systems we looked at, we asked if we could configure some things and the answer was always no. Elements met our need to do a certain amount of customization."

Frank added that some of the emerging, new systems were promising but would have needed significant development, and input from Crick technical teams. "We needed something that was proven to work and could be set up to work without delay," he says. Elements was selected for this reason. Frank says, "Elements is a mature product and two of our partner universities are using it. Coming to our first CRIS project we wanted to be sure that the people helping us to install the system had a good deal of experience in this market."





"Symplectic Elements met our need to do a certain amount of customization. We needed something that was proven to work and could be set up to work without delay"



In this sample research profile from the Crick's Elements system Frank Norman has 56 publications and 6 publications awaiting deposit.

Moving to a self-service model

Their previous homegrown system required that all interactions had to be mediated through the library team, a process that could not scale with the institute's growth. By implementing Elements, the library can now let the researchers themselves go into the system to update their profiles, add and claim publications and make deposits to their new Figshare repository.

Full publications lifecycle tracking

The library team aims to use the new system to monitor publications from the start of their lifecycle to the end, tracking the paper from when it is first created and submitted through to the time it is published and beyond. They are keen to not just report on this journey but to showcase these outputs on their research profiles and make as much of their research available openly as possible. Patti Biggs, Information Services Specialist in the LIS team says "At the moment, we are dealing with the publications part by capturing all of researchers' publications and linking them to their authors and contributors affiliated to the Crick. The next phase of the project will involve linking individual publications to their grants, and then we will move to making profile information available on our website."

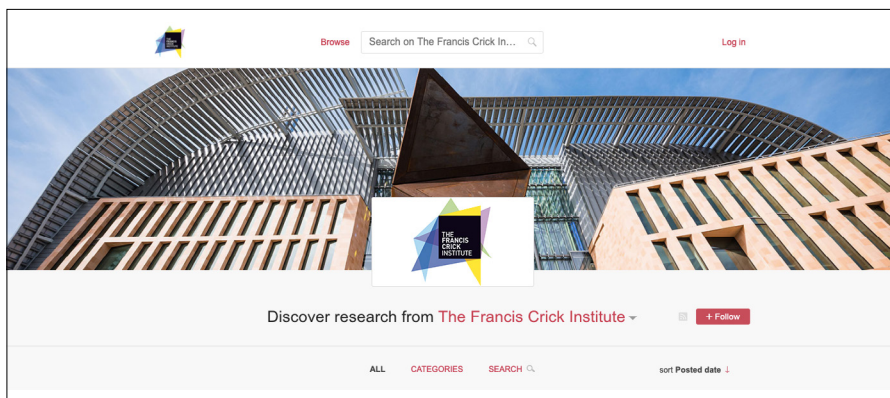
The library team are also particularly keen to encourage researchers to submit copies of their manuscripts to the system as they submit to the journal. This will allow the team to review the manuscript and advise on missing or incorrect acknowledgements to funders before the paper gets accepted. Patti says "It's much harder to get these corrections made after a paper has been accepted by a journal."

Supporting Open Research

Figshare, as their institutional repository, will play a role in the Crick's open access workflows. The library team see Figshare as a "shop window" for the Crick's research. It also provides the Crick's researchers with a one-stop-shop for depositing not just publications but also data and supplementary files, ready to share with the research community around the world.



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The Crick repository using Figshare

Patti says "We like that Figshare can handle multiple types of material. We also felt we were breaking ground by being one of the first institutions in the UK to adopt Figshare as a publications repository. We also like Figshare's flexibility and its array of viewers for different file types so that if researchers need somewhere to place data files or supplementary data files to a paper, they could make them easily accessible."

Measuring success

Mid-way through their implementation, the library team has already started to consider how they will assess the success of the new system, aiming to match the capabilities of the new system to the business benefits they hope to realise.

They already have some measurements in mind such as:

- Proportion of Crick researchers engaging with their research profiles
- Completeness of these research profiles
- Increase in the number of papers the library is notified about pre-publication. (The library team is looking for the earliest possible notification of new papers from their researchers so as to allow them to assist with open access requirements).
- Increase in deposits of author manuscripts at the submission stage (pre-publication).

Frank concludes by saying "The importance of our project to the research evaluation processes is something that has crystallized while we have been executing the project. We expect our project to contribute to the next five-yearly reviews of the institute, and this will be one of the success measures."