

Social networking site for researchers aims to make academic papers a thing of the past

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myExperiment, the social networking site for scientists, has set out to challenge traditional ideas of academic publishing as it enters a new phase of funding.

The site has just received a further £250,000 funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) as part of the JISC Information Environment programme to improve scholarly communication in contemporary research practice.

According to Professor David De Roure at the University of Southampton's School of Electronics and Computer Science, who has developed the site jointly with Professor Carole Goble at the University of Manchester, researchers will in the future be sharing new forms of "Research Objects" rather than academic publications.

Research Objects contain everything needed to understand and reuse a piece of research, including workflows, data, research outputs and provenance information. They provide a systematic and unbiased approach to research, essential when researchers are faced with a deluge of data.

'We are introducing new approaches to make research more reproducible, reusable and reliable,' Professor De Roure said. 'Research Objects are self-contained pieces of reproducible research which we will share in the future like papers are shared today.'

The myExperiment Enhancement project will integrate myExperiment with the established EPrints research repository in Southampton and Manchester's new e-Scholar institutional repository. With its emphasis on social networking, myExperiment provides essential social infrastructure for researchers to discover and share Research Objects and to benefit from multidisciplinary collaborations.

'We are investigating the collision of Science 2.0 and traditional ideas of repositories,' said Professor Carole Goble. 'myExperiment paves the way for the next generation of researchers to do new research using new research methods.'

In its first year, the myExperiment.org website has attracted thousands of users worldwide and established the largest public collection of its kind.

More information: www.myexperiment.org

Source: University of Southampton

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