

Research.fi's researcher profiles supporting the recognition of diversity in research

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This paper introduces researcher profiles, which is the latest feature of Research.fi, a national service for collecting and sharing information on research conducted in Finland. The paper briefly discusses the ideology behind the profile tool, and future development plans to pilot openness profiles as part of the service to enable recognition of diverse research activities, especially in open science.

Introduction

Research.fi is a service offered by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Minedu) that collects and shares information on research conducted in Finland. The service was launched in 2020 and is developed gradually. At the moment, it contains information on the Finnish research system, publications by Finnish organisations, projects funded by public and private research funders, information on researchers operating in Finland and their research activities, and statistical information on the development of research resources and impact. In Spring 2023, the service introduced researcher profiles. Now researchers are able to create their own affiliation independent profiles using the Researcher's Profile Tool, which enables users to combine information from a number of sources, such as their home organisation and ORCID record. Researcher information includes contact information, affiliations, education and qualifications, fields of research, description of their own research, research activities and expert positions. Users can also attach information already in the Research.fi, such as publications, datasets, and projects. As the information included in the profile comes from ORCID record, local CRIS systems or Research.fi, there is no need for manual input of data. There are two requirements for being able to use the profile tool: first of all the user must have an ORCID iD, and secondly they need to e-authenticate using the Suomi.fi-service. Suomi.fi-service is a strong identification for e-services of public administration organisations in Finland. So to sum it up, there is no need for an affiliation to a research performing organisation, but a connection to Finland (i.e. Suomi.fi identification) is necessary.

Researcher profile in light of Responsible Research Assessment

Creating a profile is voluntary for researchers, and they are able to choose the information that is displayed in their profile. This is in line with the MyData approach (Poikola et al, 2014) the core idea of which is that individuals should be in control of their own data. Research.fi contains personal data which falls under the GDPR. Being a governmental organisation, the Ministry requires specific authority for processing personal data on the Hub's purposes (e.g. publish, enrich, disclose, etc.). To address these questions, the Parliament of Finland passed an act on Research Information Hub in 2021. The Parliament especially addressed the researcher's profile considering the planned MyData approach

appropriate and emphasising the right of researcher to control their public profile and reuse of profile data.

The MyData approach is also in line with principles of responsible research assessment (RRA). According to Curry et al (7, 2020) RRA is an umbrella term for assessment approaches that consider the plural characteristics of research and support a diverse and inclusive research culture. RRA is defined in a continuum of various declarations and principles that have been published during the past decade starting from the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) published in 2012, developing through the Leiden Manifesto (Hicks et al 2015) and the Metric Tide (Wilsdon et al, 2015) and building up to the most recent addition, the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (European University Association et al, 2022). This is not an exhaustive list of RRA documents, but includes some of the most well known.

The first core commitment of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment is about broader recognition of diverse practices, activities and careers in research. While this commitment mainly refers to recognising diversity in assessment, in the case of Research.fi's researcher profiles it is reflected in the researchers' ability to showcase their research activities based on their own personal deliberation - may it be grounded on disciplinary considerations or at what career stage the researcher is. And, even though Research.fi is not an evaluation tool, nor is it meant to support evaluation, it needs to be taken into consideration that information found in the service can still be used for evaluative purposes. This is also the case for information found in researcher profiles. Evaluations taking place on an individual level carry more risks in terms of potential harmful effects than evaluating, for example, organisations (Himanen et al, 2023). One way of mitigating these risks in advance is to allow researchers to decide how they want to present themselves, i.e. choose the information displayed in their profile. Another way is to give researchers full authority to decide who can use their information and for which purposes. And in the near future, with further development of APIs for Research.fi, researchers will be able to authorise the disclosure of their information to funders or other relevant actors.

To further enable the recognition of diverse research activities, Research.fi is piloting Openness Profiles (presented in more detail in the following section) as part of an EU-funded project, GraspOS (<https://graspos.eu/>). The project supports the emerging policy reforms and paves the way towards an open science aware responsible research assessment system. Taking part in this project is of national interest, as advancing open science has been a strategic priority for the Finnish science policy since 2014 (Ministry of Education and Culture 2014), and as many stakeholders of Research.fi are signatories of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment.

Openness Profile

The concept of an Openness Profile was developed in the international collaboration network Knowledge Exchange (<https://www.knowledge-exchange.info/>) along with a set of requirements and use cases outlined and defined in the reports 'Openness Profile: Defining the Concepts' (Murphy & Jones, 2020) and 'Openness Profile: Modelling research evaluation for open scholarship' (Jones & Murphy, 2021). In the GraspOS project, the concept is being further developed, enriched with the help of real-life use cases involved in the project and

transformed into a diverse inventory of Open Science attributes. Once mature, the Openness Profile will be made available for use through the Research Activity Identifier (RAiD), which is a Persistent Identifier service providing identification of research objects both for individuals and research groups.

The Openness Profile will enable documenting those contributions to Open Science that are essential to research but still unrecognised by the current research evaluation practice. The Openness Profile complements the researcher's profile and will display and describe a variety of contributions to Open Science, ranging from for example source code made openly available to preprint publishing and open data sharing. The profile will allow both quantitative and qualitative information, including both metrics as well as narratives. This will help Open Science contributors in getting credit for their contributions and will incentivise the uptake of Open Science activities.

The RAiD service makes use of the CReDiT taxonomy, which covers a rather extensive list of object types. The nine pilot organisations, Research.fi being one of them, involved in the GraspOS project provide an ample opportunity to further explore the identified needs and wishes for recognising even a broader range of qualities and contributions to Open Science to be included in the metadata schema of the Openness Profile. Different templates will be made available, for example to cater for individual and group assessments. The narrative template will include structured and evidence-based input and will provide a differentiated input for Open Science activity based assessment. The main ambition with the Openness Profile is to help different actors involved in the Open Science endeavour to get credit, contribute to increased transparency and trustworthiness in research, and hopefully make this type of activities part of normal research routine.

Piloting the Openness Profile

Currently the preliminary plan is to build a test site for volunteering researchers to test the Openness Profile as part of their regular researcher's profile in Research.fi. Tentatively the Openness Profile would include all activities and outputs that can be found for a given researcher. This would mean listing also OA publications even though they are already listed in the section for publications. This is to emphasise the role of openness in all research activity. Here, again, it is completely up to the researcher to choose which activities or outputs they wish to include in their openness profile. After the testing period we plan to collect feedback from the users through surveys and interviews.

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