

## **FRIS as a regional CRIS: challenges and opportunities in reusing data for research reporting**

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### **Introduction**

This contribution gives an idea of how a funding organization uses a regional CRIS as a primary data source for research reporting. Research information needs to be put correctly in the institutional CRIS, then needs to be sent to FRIS, the regional CRIS of Flanders, and finally can be retrieved by the funding organization to prefill the researchers' report. This leads to less administrative reporting burden for the researcher and to more complete information in FRIS.

### **FRIS as regional CRIS in Flanders**

In Flanders, knowledge institutions have a long tradition of using a CRIS and sending information to the regional CRIS, called FRIS (Flanders Research Information Space). Since its beginning in 2006, FRIS has been steadily expanding as well in depth (more information objects) as in width (more knowledge institutes). From 2013 on, the architecture of FRIS was completely redesigned to have information flowing automatically from knowledge institutions to FRIS using webservice, the idea behind it being to reduce administrative burden on the side of the institutions and at the same time having more quality results on the side of FRIS.

In 2019 the span of info to be provided to FRIS was widened (also infrastructure, patents and datasets were added) and FRIS was also used to monitor Open Science.

### **Research Foundation – Flanders connects with FRIS**

In 2023, the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) decided to make a new step in the way they ask their researchers to report on the results of the research projects FWO is funding. Researchers have to report on the status of their research halfway the project and at the end of it. One of the elements that have to be listed in the report are the peer-reviewed publications that resulted from the research project. In 2024, a pilot was done where the reports of the research projects were prefilled with information that FWO extracted from FRIS: a list of all peer reviewed publications, which have a link to the research project was shown in the researchers' report. Now, after this successful implemented workflow, we are working on new types of publications: non-peerreviewed journal articles, books, book contributions and datasets.

### **Advantage of linking and reusing data from FRIS**

If a publication is missing, or if information is not correct, the researcher cannot change the info in the report, but he/she will have to make sure that the info is corrected at the source (e.g. mostly the library or CRIS-system of the knowledge institutions), after which the updated info is sent to FRIS and then retrieved by FWO. This procedure guarantees that the correct information is maintained by the owner i.e. the research institute where the research is taking place.

To make a deduplicated list of publications for FWO, FRIS created publication golden records. So if several institutions participate in the same publication, FRIS will return it only once in the golden record service and no duplicates will be in the list extracted by FWO.

### **Researchers' advantage**

Researchers are expected to have registered all necessary information about their research into their institutional CRIS. From the institutional CRIS, the information should flow to FRIS. As most of the institutional CRIS's have already a kind of quality process in place, and by ingesting the information in FRIS and passing the validation rules, the information should be of a certain qualitative standard. So, when FWO retrieves the information on publications to prefill the researchers' report, all information should be correct. And the researcher has less extra administrative reporting burden, as his/her information is reused in the reporting template of the funder.

### **Challenges**

Building so called golden records, we need to have some requirements like the link between projects and publications on one hand, and persistent identifiers (pids) on the other hand. On top of that, you also need a logic to decide upon giving priority of one information over the other.

One of the straightforward challenges we face right now, is the use or not-use of pids with book contributions: can we use a DOI? Can we use an institutional URL? What is the result of it? Can we even merge book contributions?

### **Opportunities**

At the same time, we also see some opportunities with artificial intelligence (AI). ECOOM, an expertise centre that works for the government, is developing a method via AI/ Large Language Models, to automatically predict possible links between projects and publications. This is still in the experimental phase but looks promising.

The same model could possibly be used to add keywords and even disciplines from a managed classification list. This looks promising and will add extra service that FRIS can provide to institutions.

### **Conclusion**

A new and unique functionality of FRIS is being the primary source for research reporting by the research funding agency FWO. Golden records of publications are built and are retrieved by FWO to have a deduplicated list of publications in the researchers' report. At the same time, this brings new challenges and new opportunities.