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The Significance of CoreTrustSeal Certification: A Case Study of Stellenbosch University

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Abstract:

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Stellenbosch University's (SU) recent achievement of CoreTrustSeal (CTS) certification represents a significant milestone in the institution's commitment to excellence in research data management. This certification, granted to its data repository, SUNScholarData, underscores the university's dedication to upholding international standards of data integrity, accessibility, and sustainability.

CTS is a globally recognized certification awarded to data repositories that demonstrate adherence to best practices in data management (Dillo and Leeuw, 2018). For SU, this certification signifies compliance with international standards, including the FAIR principles, ensuring that research data is findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable. Moreover, it highlights the university's commitment to maintaining data integrity and quality, thus enhancing the credibility of its research outputs.

To attain CTS certification, SU had to meet a comprehensive set of requirements outlined by the CTS Board. These requirements encompassed data integrity and authenticity, appraisal criteria, documented storage procedures, preservation planning, data quality assurance, workflows, data discovery and identification, and data reuse capabilities.

Beyond compliance, CTS certification reinforces SU's commitment to long-term data accessibility and preservation. By securely storing and making research data accessible for future use, the university contributes to the longevity of scholarly contributions and facilitates collaboration across diverse research projects. Additionally, the certification promotes interoperability, enabling seamless data sharing and integration with other institutions.

Stellenbosch University's attainment of CTS certification enhances the trustworthiness and credibility of its data repository among researchers, funders, and the broader academic community. It positions the university as a trusted hub for valuable research data and highlights its dedication to responsible data management practices. As Stellenbosch University continues to advance in research and innovation, CTS certification serves as a guiding beacon towards a future where data is managed, preserved, and shared responsibly for the benefit of the global research community.

The aim of this presentation will be to share the experiences of SU Library and Information Service as it went through the rigorous process of applying for the CTS certification. Both presenters have been intimately involved in the process from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (which is yet to receive a certification) and SU. It is hoped that the experiences shared may trigger more interest from other institutional repositories to follow the same process.

References:

DILLO, I. & LEEUW, L. D. 2018. CoreTrustSeal. Mitteilungen der Vereinigung Österreichischer Bibliothekarinnen & Bibliothekare, 71, 162-170.

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