

# Across Canada, across disciplines: Research data management practices and needs in the social sciences and humanities

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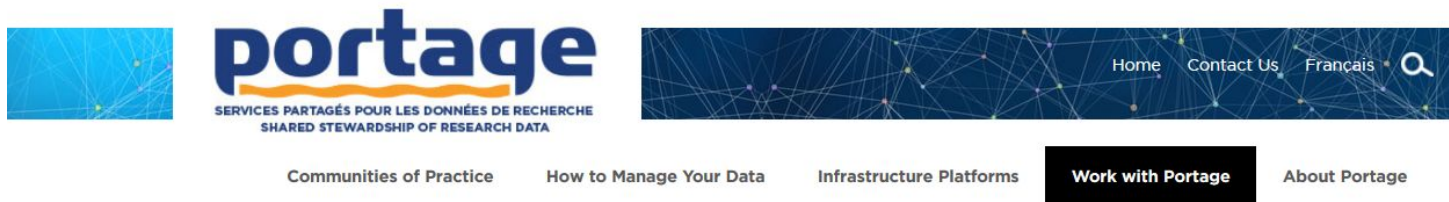
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IASSIST 2017

# Context



[Home](#) > [Work with Portage](#) > [Network of Expertise](#) > [Canadian RDM Survey Consortium](#)

## Canadian RDM Survey Consortium

### Background

Several Canadian universities have committed to working together, using a common survey instrument to gather information about their respective researcher communities and generate a richer understanding of their users' RDM practices and attitudes.

Faced with looming changes in Canadian funding requirements around data sharing, data preservation and the submission of data management plans, librarians at these institutions are collaborating to better understand both national and local needs, as well as to generate a richer understanding of disciplinary practices by generating comparative data for cross analysis.

### DMP Assistant

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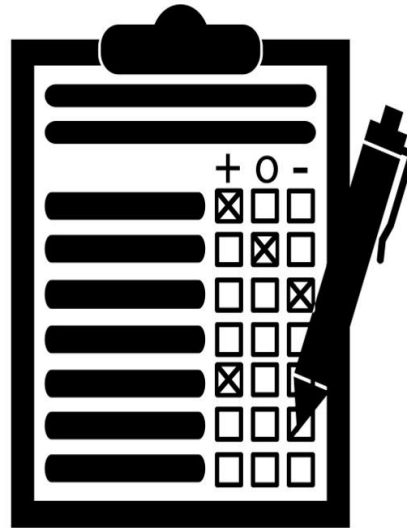
### NEWS

[CARL and OCUL Work Together to Enhance Canada's Data](#)

# Who is involved?

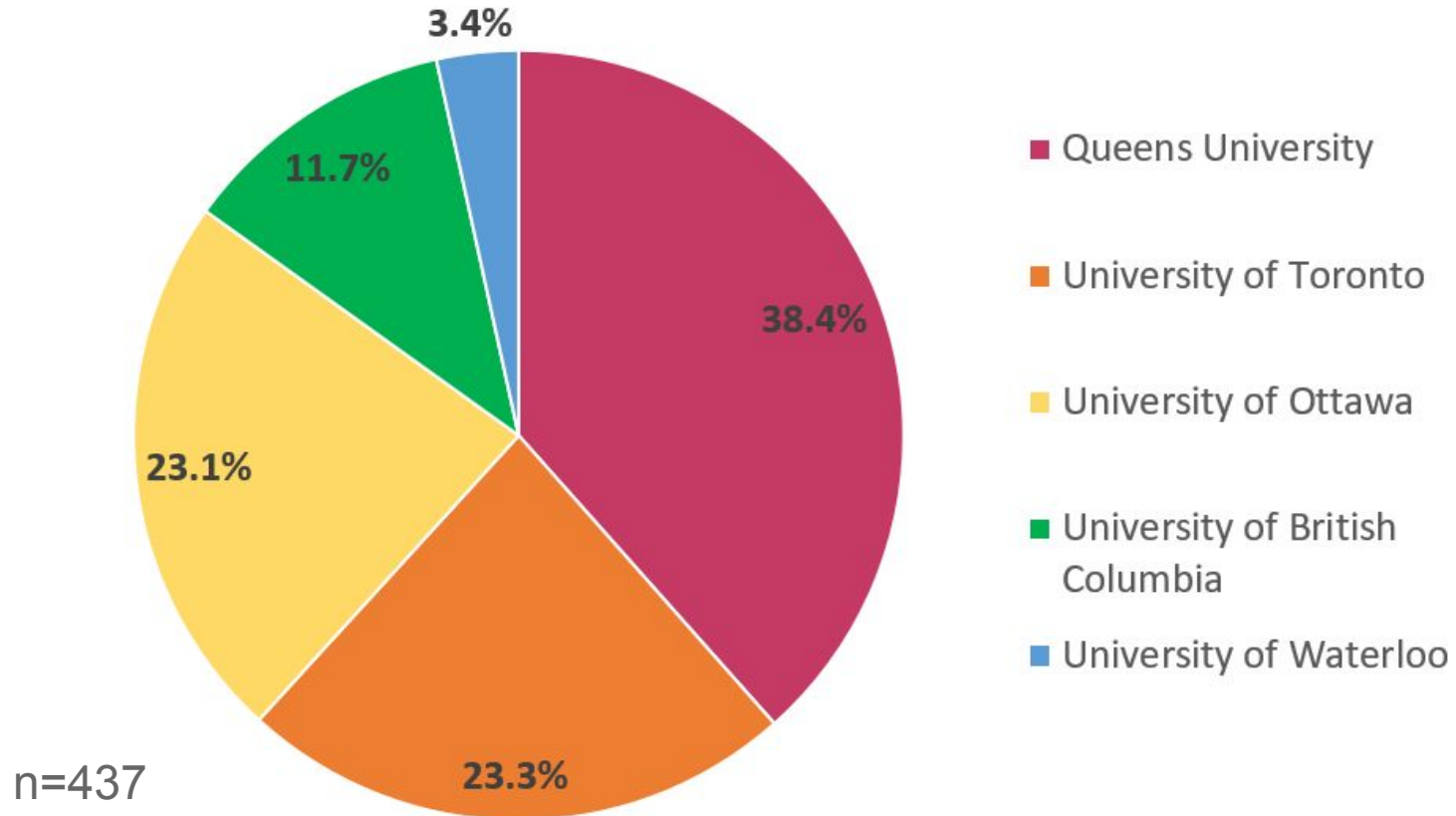


# Methods - data collection and analysis

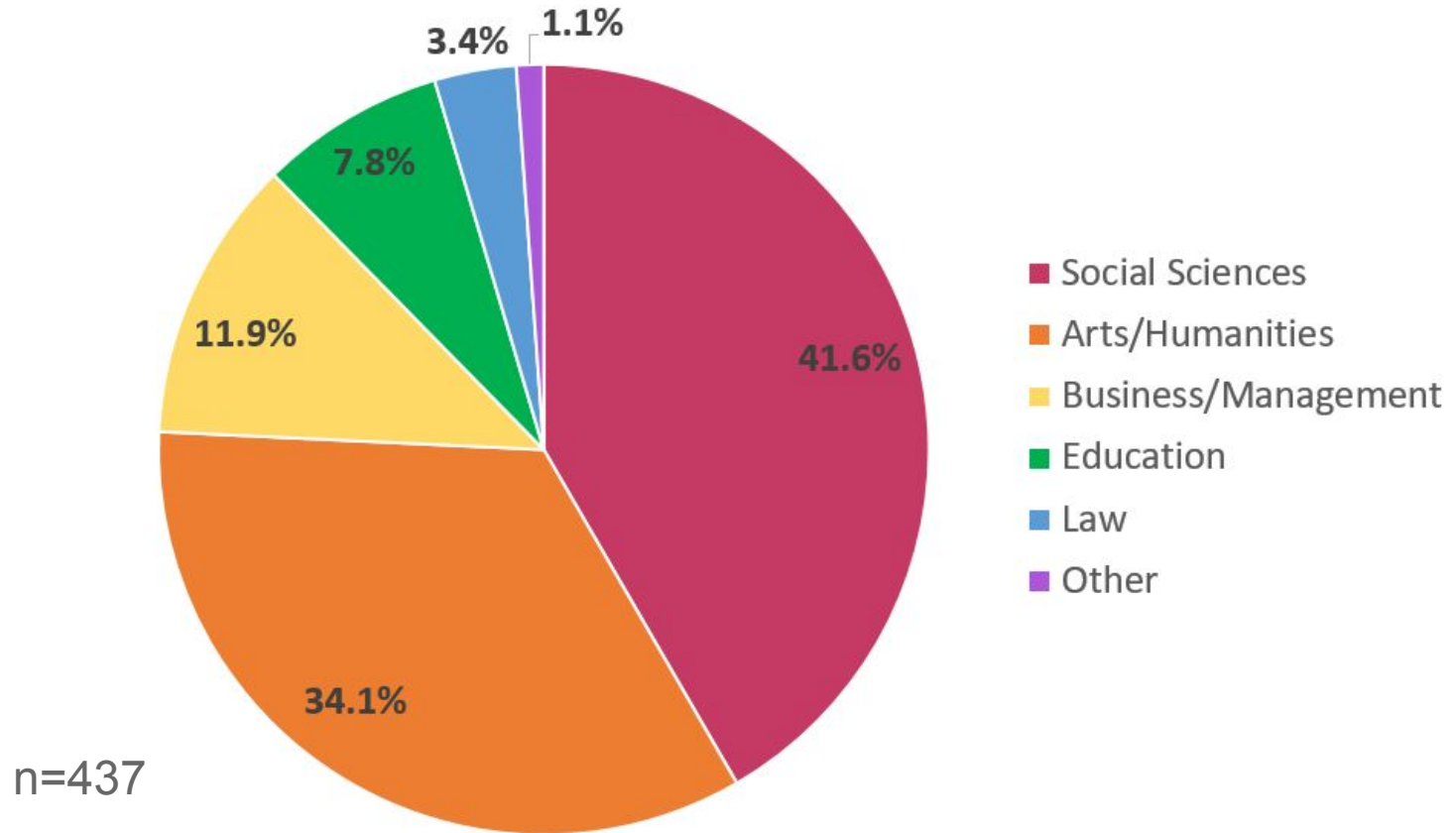


# Demographics

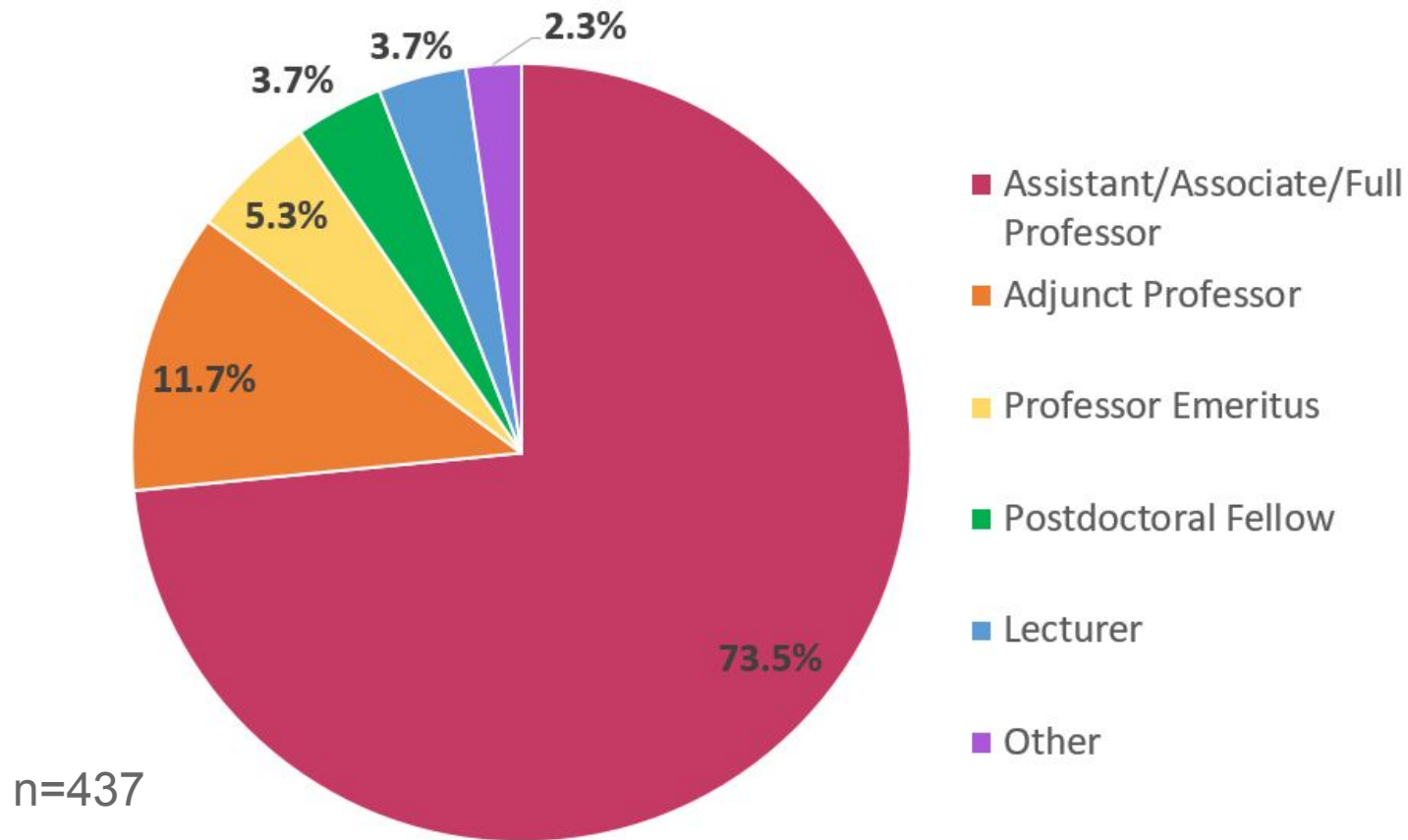
# Respondents by institution



# Breakdown by discipline



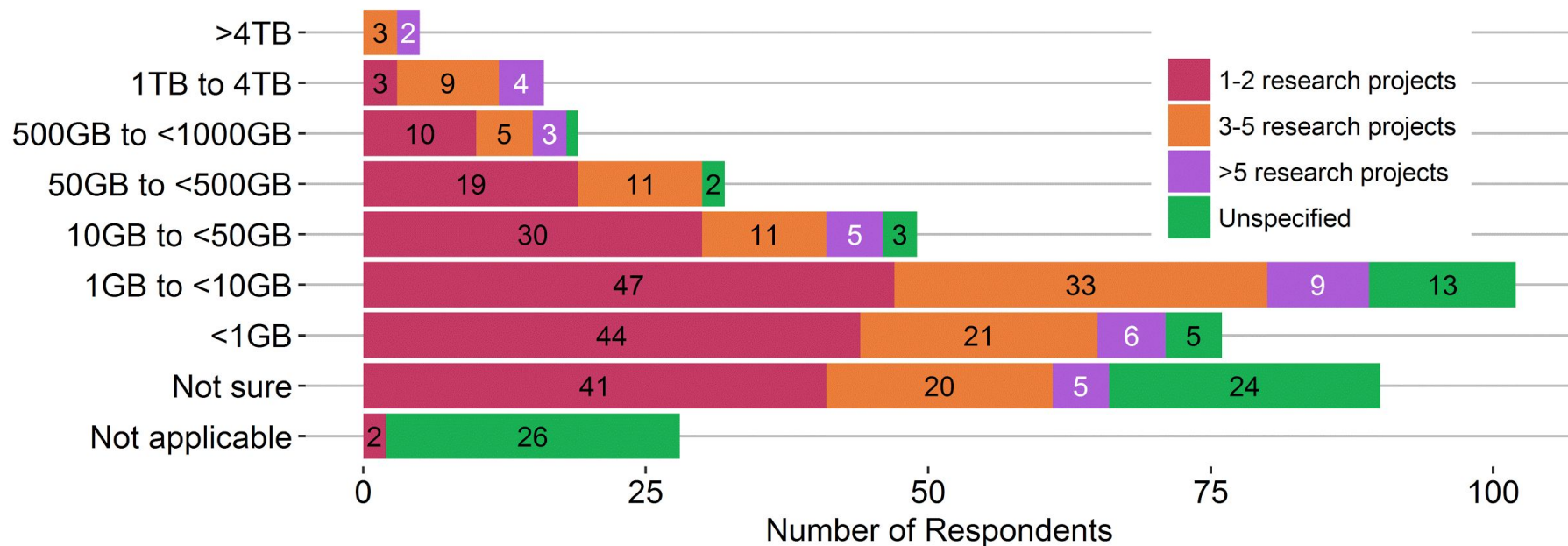
# Respondents by rank



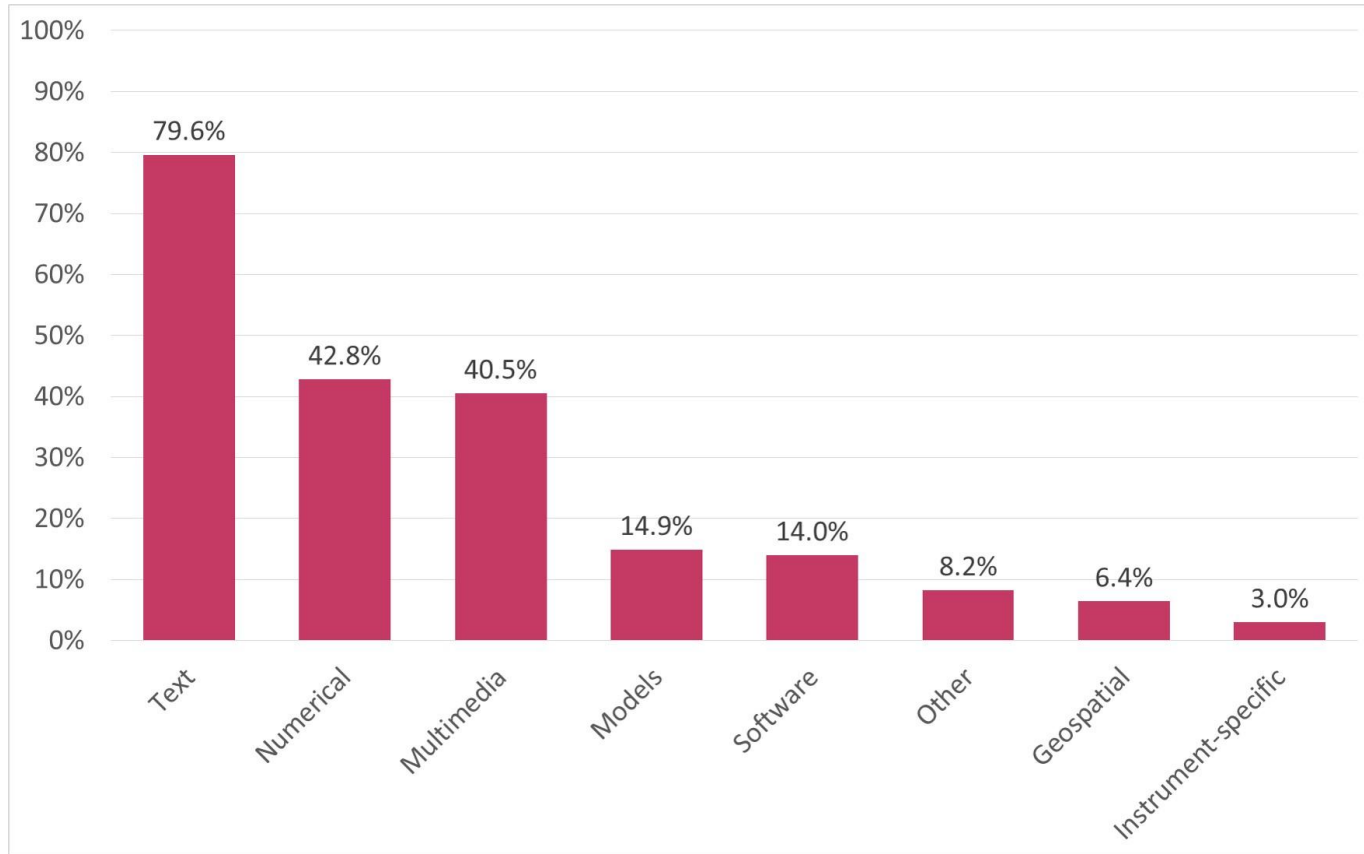


# Working with Research Data

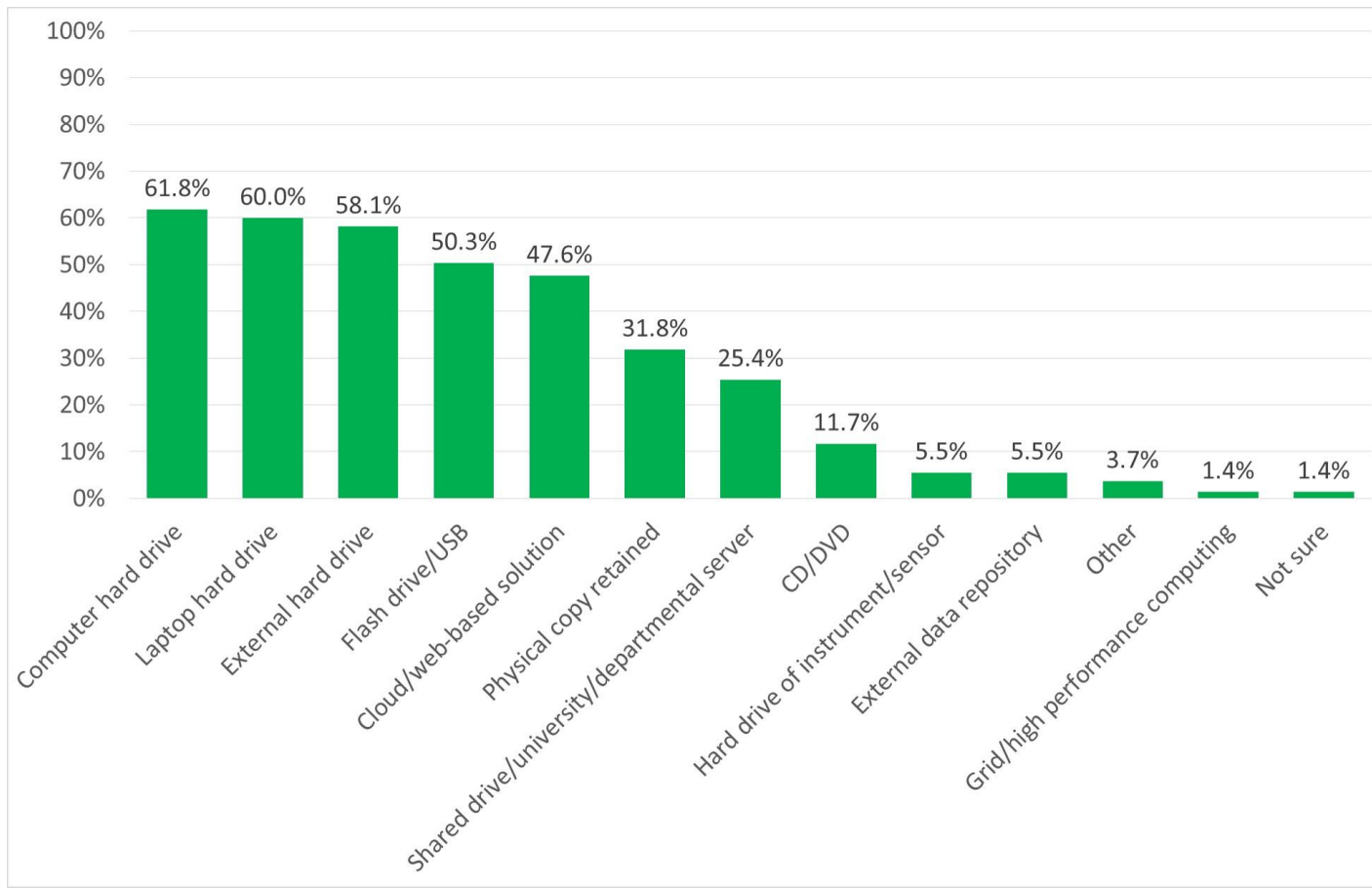
# Storage volume, by number of research projects



# Types of research data generated



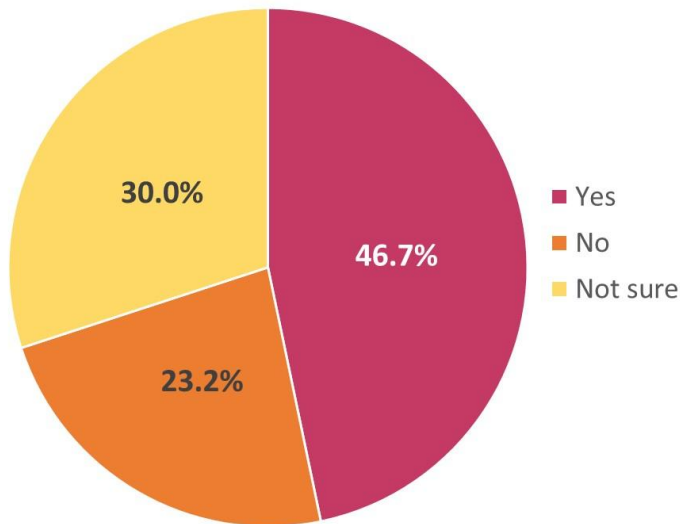
# Storage media used



# Documentation & description of data

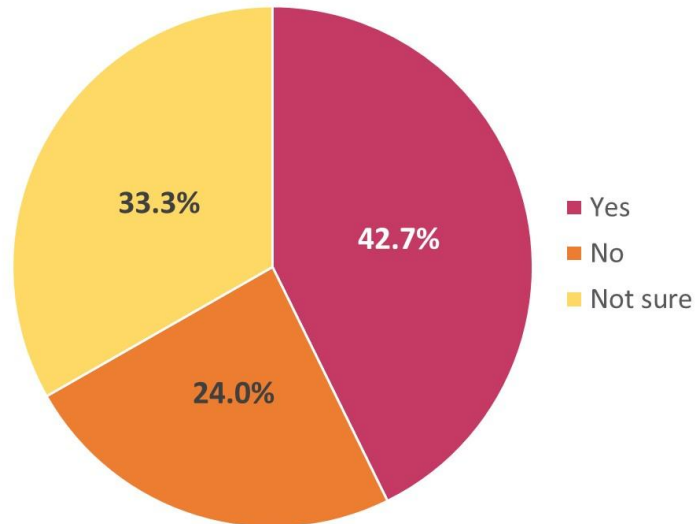
Is there sufficient documentation and description (e.g., variable and field definitions, codebooks, data dictionaries, metadata, scripts to run) for another person outside your research team to:

to understand and use the research data



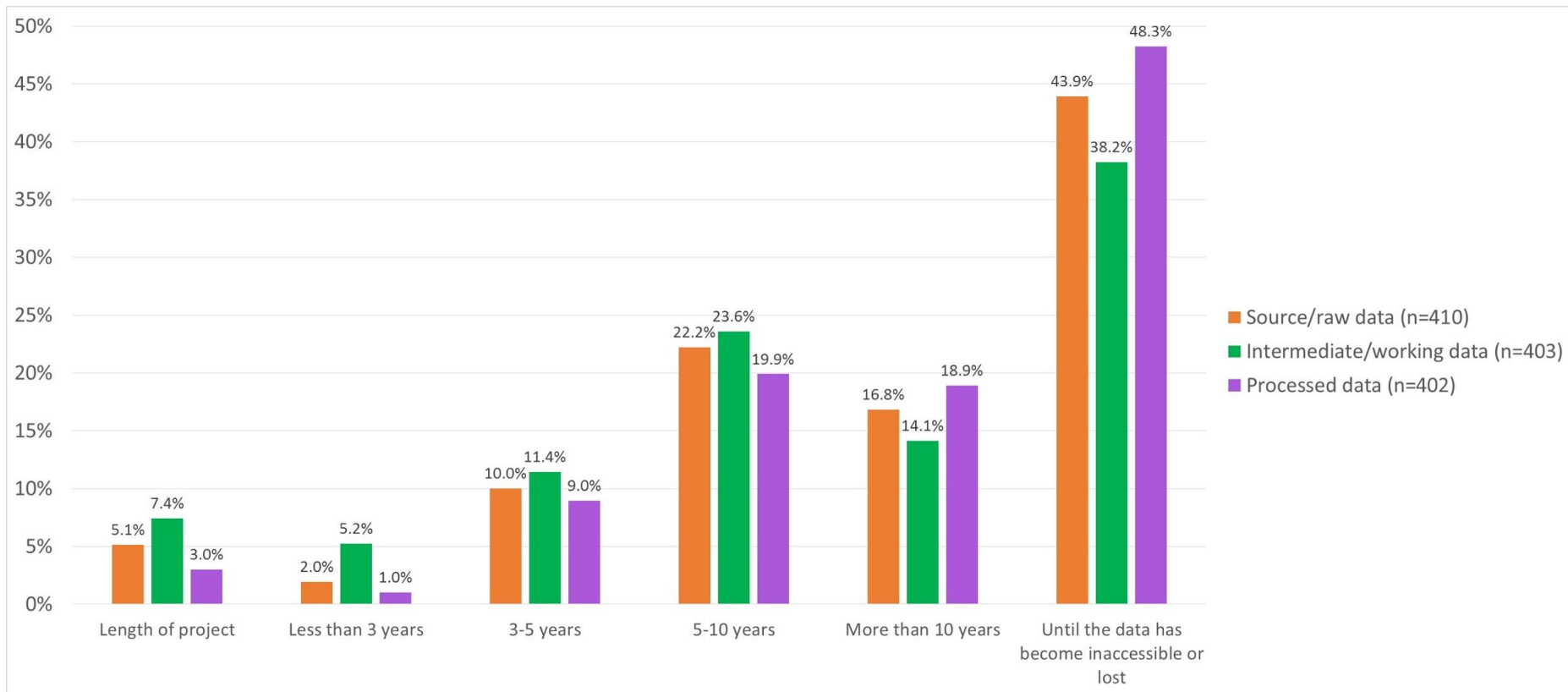
n=413

to replicate the methodologies that produced the data



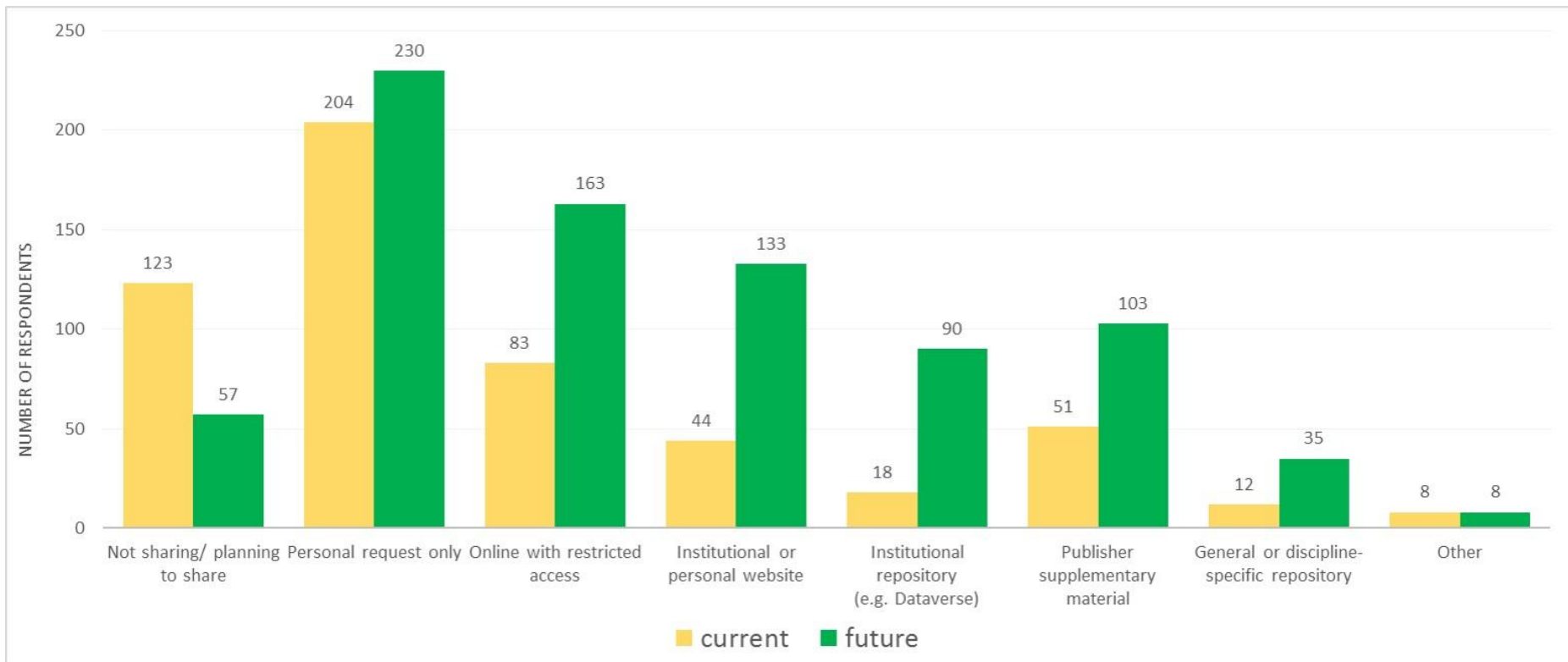
n=412

# How long data is kept?



# Sharing Research Data

# Current sharing methods vs Future sharing methods

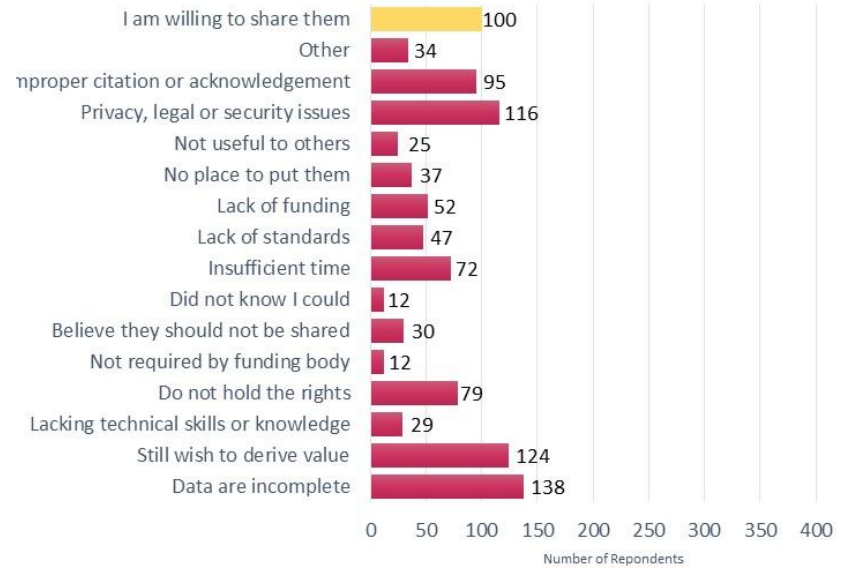




# Sharing restrictions

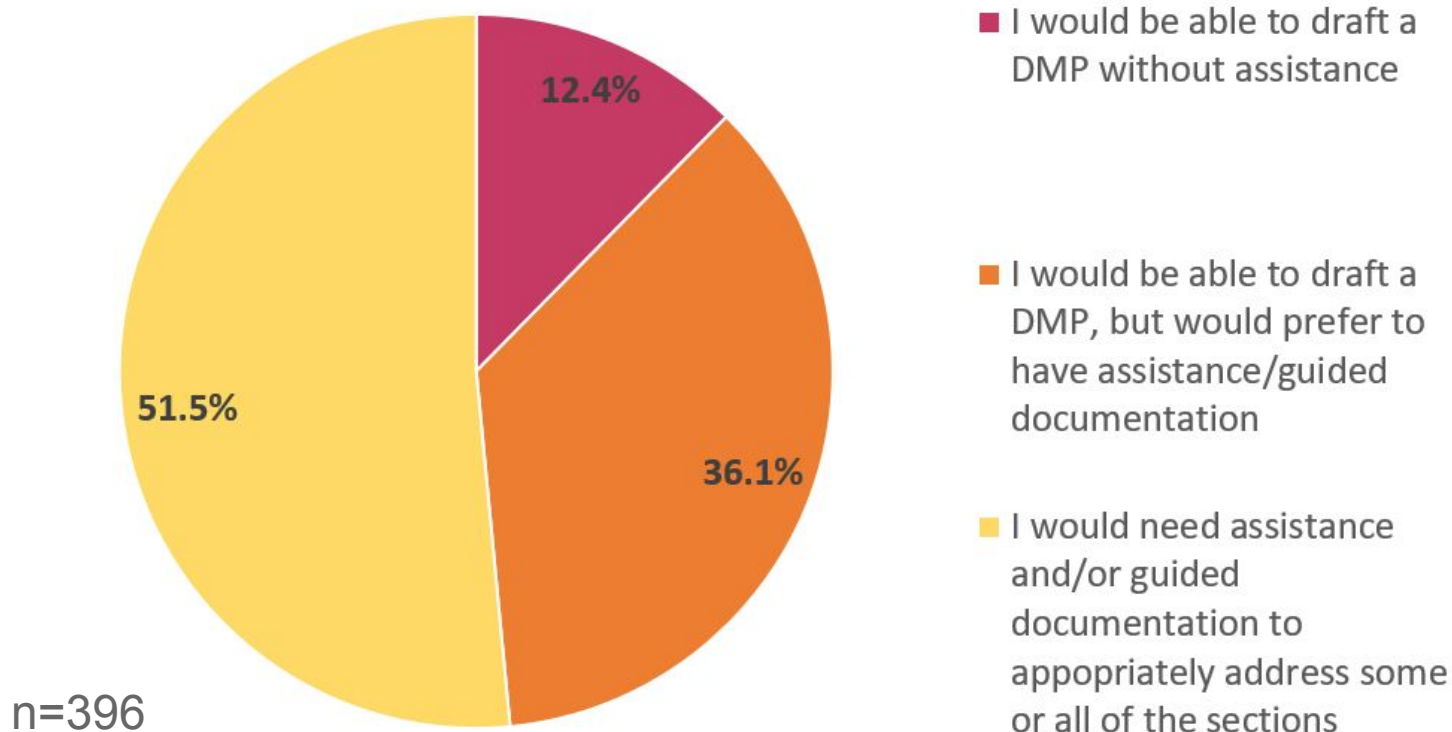
- “Privacy or ethics restrictions” (37.8%) was the most identified restriction
  - *Highest in Education (82.4%) and the Social Sciences (SS) (45.1%)*
- “Needing to apply for a patent” was only selected by one researcher (SS)
- Low number of responses identifying “commercial concerns”
  - *Only Business/Management (15.4%) and Law (6.7%) had higher response rates*
- Low across board for “public safety/sensitive data” (all  $\leq 6\%$ )

# Perceived benefits & Reasons for not sharing

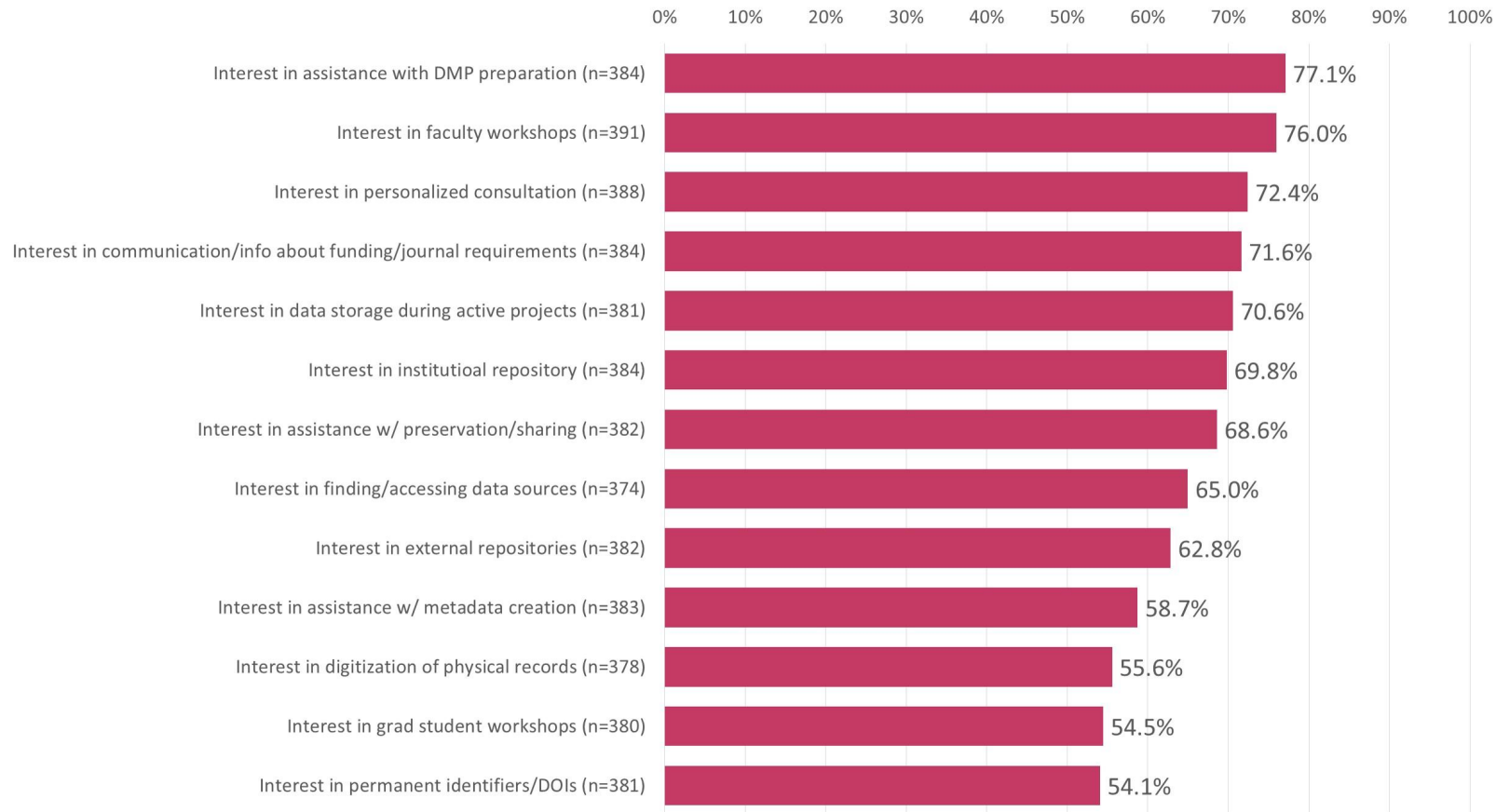


Funding Mandates  
&  
RDM Services

# Drafting a data management plan



# Level of interest in services from libraries



Digital Humanities/  
Digital Scholarship

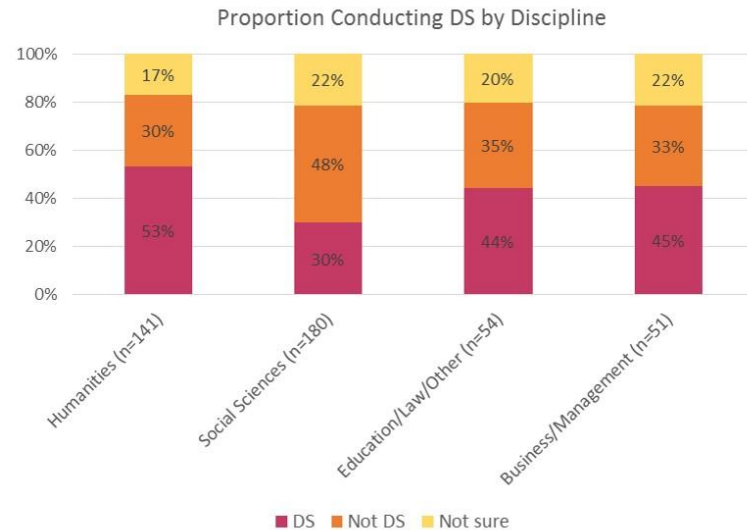
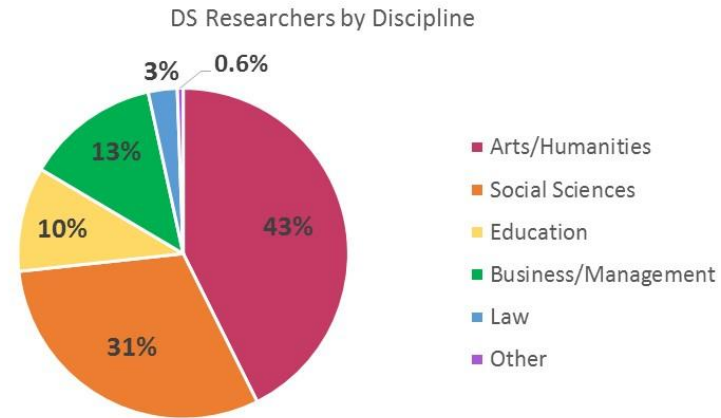
**DIGITAL HUMANITIES OR DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP (DS)**, can be defined as the collection and use of digital research data (either through digitization of print resources, or using born-digital resources) combined with methodologies from traditional Humanities and Social Science scholarship.

**Do you feel your research falls under this definition?**

**Yes: 41% (n=176)**

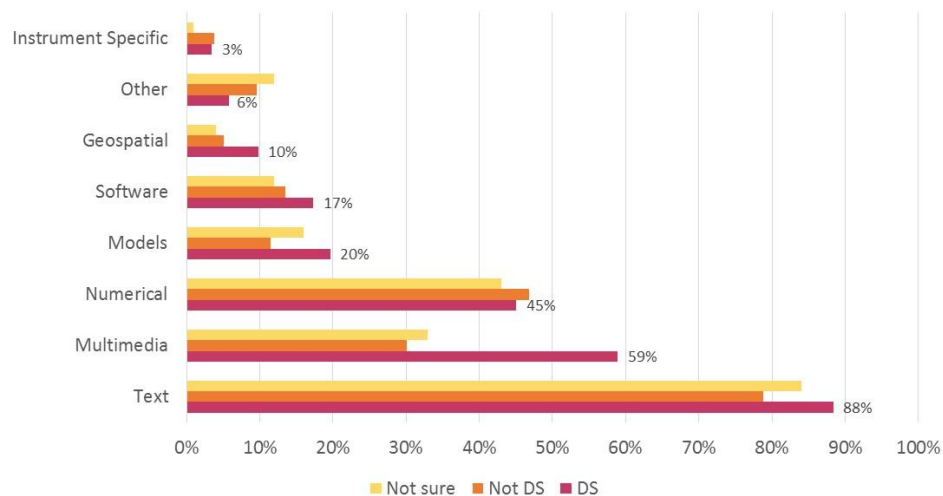
**No: 39% (n=165)**

**Not Sure: 20% (n=85)**

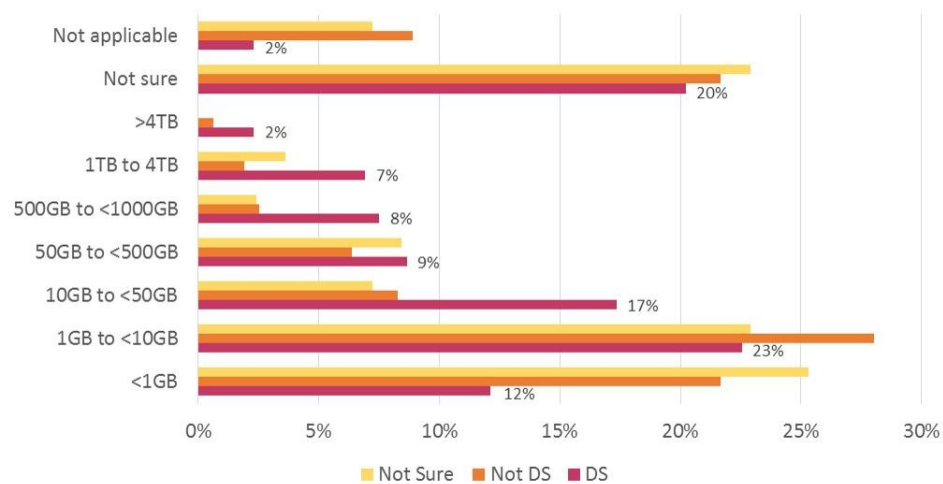


# Nature of Digital Scholars' Data

Type of data generated in a typical research project

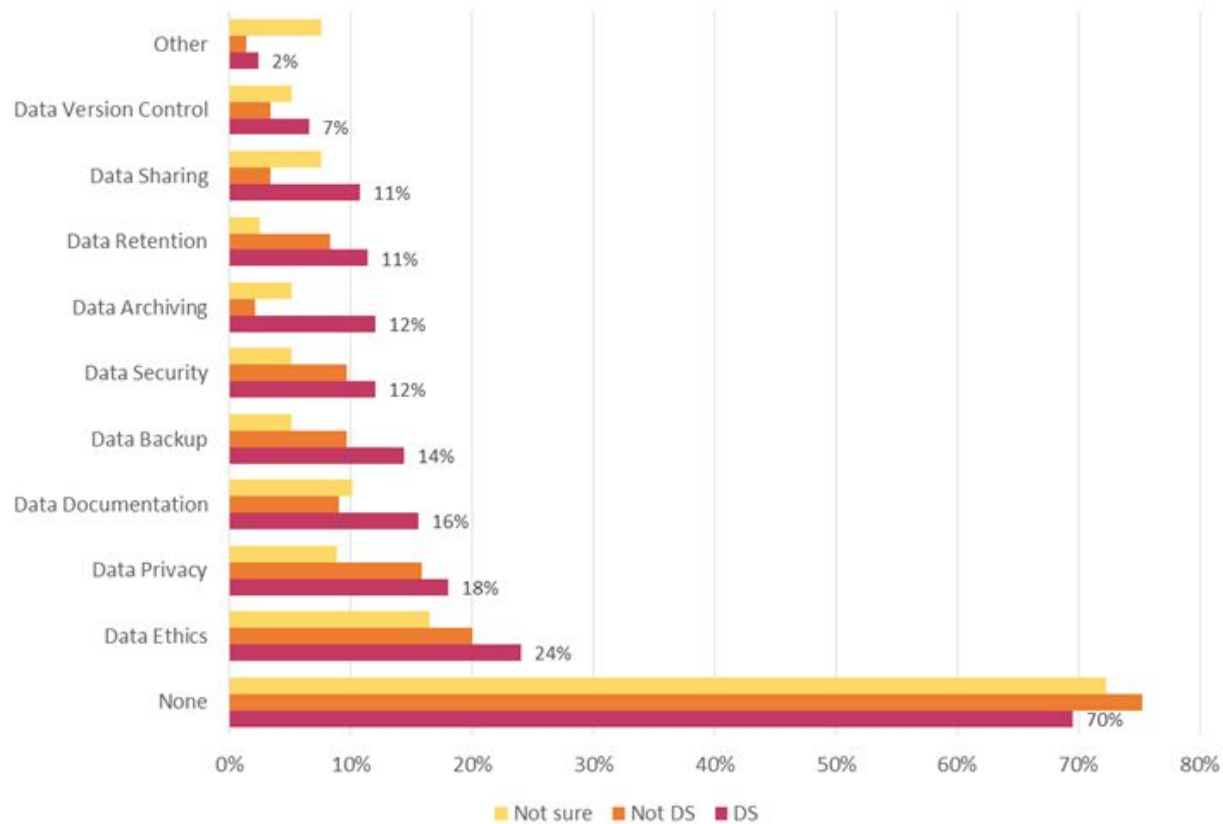


Data storage required for average research project





# Data topics taught in digital scholarship



# Summary: Key findings

- Data being produced:
  - Most commonly text; small storage sizes (i.e. requirements are not complex)
- Knowledge gaps:
  - Data storage: range of non-optimal storage options in use
  - Over half were not confident about the quality of their documentation
- Sharing:
  - Plan to share more in the future than they do now
  - Privacy/ethics most common reason for not sharing
  - Strong awareness of the benefits of sharing
- Interest in support from libraries:
  - 87% would like/need some support in drafting DMPs
  - Large proportion of respondents expressed interest in services from the library in general
- Some variance in disciplinary responses - useful for targeting services

# Lessons learned

- Conducting a survey with both local and consortial goals can be a challenge
  - Survey design must consider local and group needs
  - Group data management planning
  - Wrangling data from different institutions
  - Communication with partners is key
- Portage clearinghouse aims to improve this process for additional institutions joining the project

## Future steps...

Engineering  
& Science



Humanities  
& Social  
Sciences



Health  
& Medical  
Sciences



Survey templates, data and reports will be made available on the Portage website

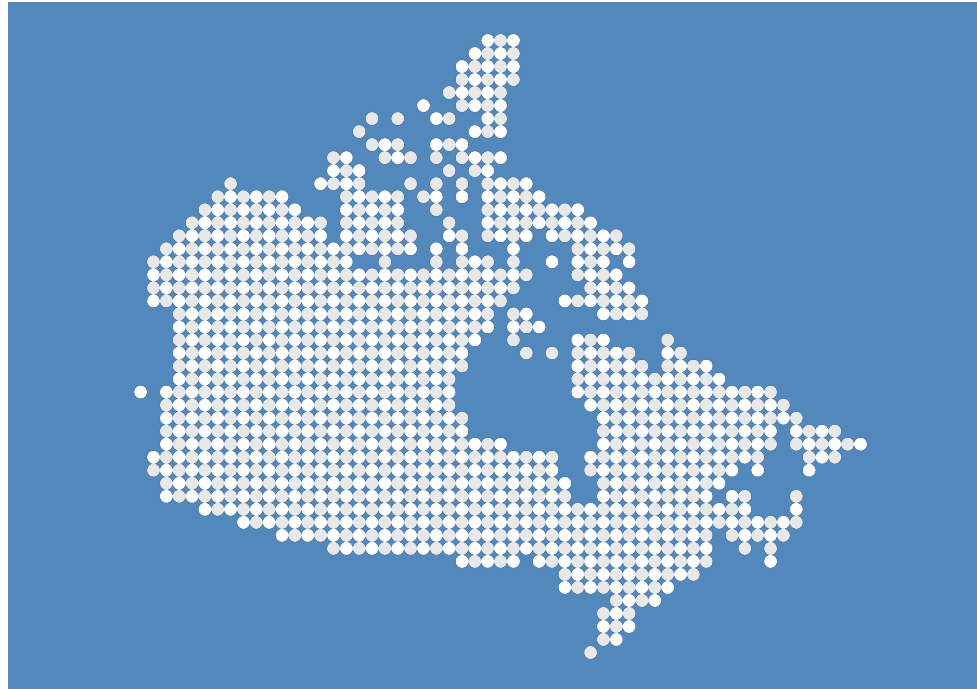
# How the data can be used

- Informing institutional decisions, e.g. shaping services
- Informing national initiatives, e.g. Portage, funding agencies

Data, templates and reports available:

<https://goo.gl/VD5hTY>

Hosted by Portage, <https://portagenetwork.ca/>



# Acknowledgements - data contributors

- Queen's University
  - Alexandra Cooper
- University of British Columbia
  - Sheryl Adam, Megan Meredith-Lobay
- University of Ottawa
  - Jessica McEwan, Patrick Labelle
- University of Toronto
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- University of Waterloo
  - Kathy Szigeti, Sandra Keys

Questions?

