Interview: Andrew Sallans – University of Virginia

[Note: As of November 2013, Andrew is employed by the Center for Open Science.]

1. Tell me about the product or service that you provide in the roles that you play at your library?

I'm going to talk about the Data management planning tool which is known as the DMP tool. It is a tool that UVa has participated in collaboration with a number of other institutions. We have developed this over the past two years. At this point it has a pretty broad uptake; we have users at over 650 institutions across the country with about a total of 4000 users in total right now. We just received a few grants this year; one from the Alfred P. Sloan foundation and one from UMLS. Both grants are to help with significant new development to expand functionality and service offerings. The IMLS portion is tailored directly to meeting the needs of the DMP tool for librarians in becoming more active and involved in the data management process with researchers.

2. How can other librarians use this product or service?

We like to talk about it in a couple of ways; we have two main goals with the DMP Tool. We try to make it easy for researchers to create a data management plan and help researchers identify resources which will help them produce data management plans that they can actually comply with. In those ways, it is a very helpful facilitation tool where librarians can contribute content to in terms of resources and also help researchers gain access to and understand what the requirements are and ultimately weave that into the framework of an institution.

3. How has your library reached out to your institutional community and how have you earned support for this particular service?

We have always been involved in general information sessions to departments and lab groups and administrative groups but we have also taken on a number of training activities. For example this past January we did a graduate student data management boot camp in which the DMP Tool was a component; we have a series of training workshops scheduled for this year that we will be doing that consist of 1 hour sessions that help students and faculty become more aware of resources that they should be aware of such as the DMP Tool. At this point these courses are largely optional but I expect over time that these courses will be built more into the curriculum. The faculty are on board and strongly encourage their students to attend these sessions.

4. What skills or experience do you think health sciences librarians need to acquire to meet the needs of e-science and data management and can you provide examples of the skills and services that you or your other staff have in this particular area?

One thing we actually have someone from our health sciences library on our team she spends a little more than four hours a week with us, and we call that a residency to model after the medical environment. She actually participates with us to learn the way in which we approach these problems and work with researchers so she is fully embedded with us. The types of skills that are really necessary are: understanding how research works; understanding the grant process; understanding the skills that researchers have or don't have around data management; and knowing

the variety of data management techniques and methods in general ranging from metadata to storage environments to policies and other infrastructure components.