1. What led your organisation to set up a repository?

In April 2005, Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) started a repository project which led to the launch of its repository of research publications, e-space in October 2006. This project was led by Library Services as a natural extension of its role of managing information and assisting scholarly communication and followed a paper submitted to the Vice Chancellor in July 2005. This paper concluded:

"The development of the Open Archives Initiative and the creation of the OAI-PMH (Open Archives Initiative - Protocol for Metadata Harvesting) has inspired people to explore the ways in which they can improve scholarly communication and the dissemination of material through the establishment of institutional repositories... MMU will take advantage of and build upon these developments with the creation of its own institutional repository. In doing so MMU will be joining an expanding and exciting community of institutions who, through their institutional repositories, are indicating their commitment to the demonstration and sharing of their societal, scholarly and economic activities, in order to benefit themselves and the wider research and learning community."

2. What attracted you to a hosted repository solution rather than running a repository in-house?

The decision to outsource the repository was based on the fact that MMU did not have the capacity at that time to set-up and maintain the technical side of the service. It was also because a hosted service provides technical support and maintenance, 24/7 availability and nightly back-up of data, training and training materials for users and administrators, plus a range of other essential services.

3. What specific benefits attracted you to Open Repository?

Open Repository was chosen because it offered a customisable product which enabled the repository to be set up with a hierarchy that mirrored the University’s Faculty and Departmental structure.

4. Which departments and/or or individuals have been involved in setting up and running your repository?

The repository project was led by a Steering Group from Library Services with full support from the Vice Chancellor. The ultimate aim was a gradual move towards integration and embedding of the repository into the core library service and functions, including both Reader Services for advocacy and Library Support Services for cataloguing functions. After the initial set-up of the repository, the Library received funding from the JISC under their Repositories & Preservation Programme for a 2-year repository enhancement project focussing on achieving this aim. The repository is now embedded into Library strategy and workflows and is being managed by existing Library staff as part of everyday routines.
5. How easy has it proved to be to populate your repository with content?

Content acquisition has been achieved through a very pro-active approach from the initial e-space team and other key Library staff. Potential depositors were identified by searching databases for MMU authors and each potential depositor was contacted individually by email. Presentations were also given to individual departments as well as briefing papers, publicity materials and articles in both Library and University newsletters. This work is ongoing. The aim was to get some content from all departments, however, there are still some departments with little or no content.

The library offers a mediated deposit service as two of the key barriers for academic staff were a lack of time to engage with the repository and concerns over copyright. This way of working also ensures that metadata is consistent and of good quality. The main focus of advocacy has concentrated on raising the profile of both individual authors and the institution by making research output more visible through deposit in the repository and in turn, potentially increasing citation rates. This approach continues and is being used to promote the repository to support the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework (REF).

6. How has your repository helped you organization?

The repository has provided a mechanism for recording, reporting and auditing MMU’s research output and is being used by several departments to collate and support their submissions for the forthcoming REF. The repository exists as a showcase for MMU’s research output by exposing it to a wider audience.

7. How has your repository been received?

Results of two user surveys, as part of the JISC funded project, showed that the repository is generally seen as a positive development by those who responded. The major concerns were a lack of time to engage with the repository and issues surrounding copyright. These concerns have been addressed through the Library’s mediated deposit service, whereby all copyright checking and metadata creation is done by Library staff.

8. How does your repository fit with your organizations open access initiative?

One outcome of the JISC funded project was the establishment of a University publications policy to support open access. This policy requires academic staff to submit details to the Library of their research output, following publication, for deposit into the repository.

9. How do you see your repository developing in future?

At present the repository contains research output, presentations and working papers from MMU’s academic staff. Following changes to the research degrees regulations and working with the British Library EthOS service, the repository will in future also contain full text of MMU research degrees.