eResearch at UNSW

recent developments

Never Stand Still

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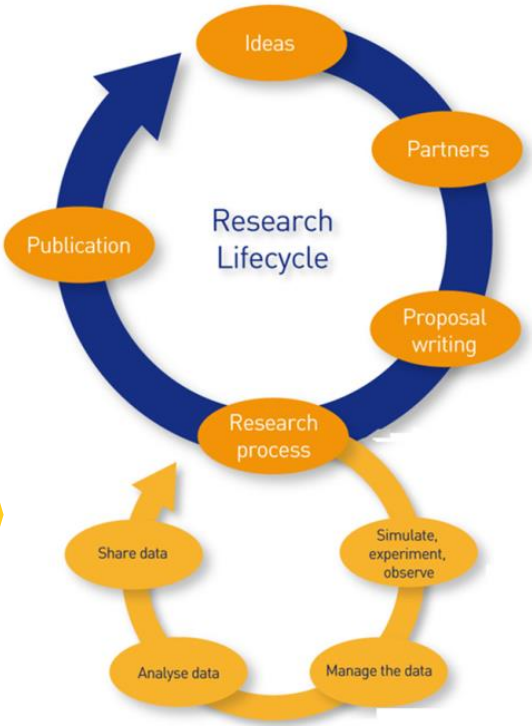
Enhancing Research IT Services Review (2015)

IT Service Improvements inside the Research Process phase of the Research Lifecycle.

- Governance
- Consulting and Engagement
- Applications Services
- Computing
- Data
- Research Specific Device (loan services)
- Hosting
- Network



The JISC 2014 Research lifecycle is used to illustrate the area of focus for this Review.

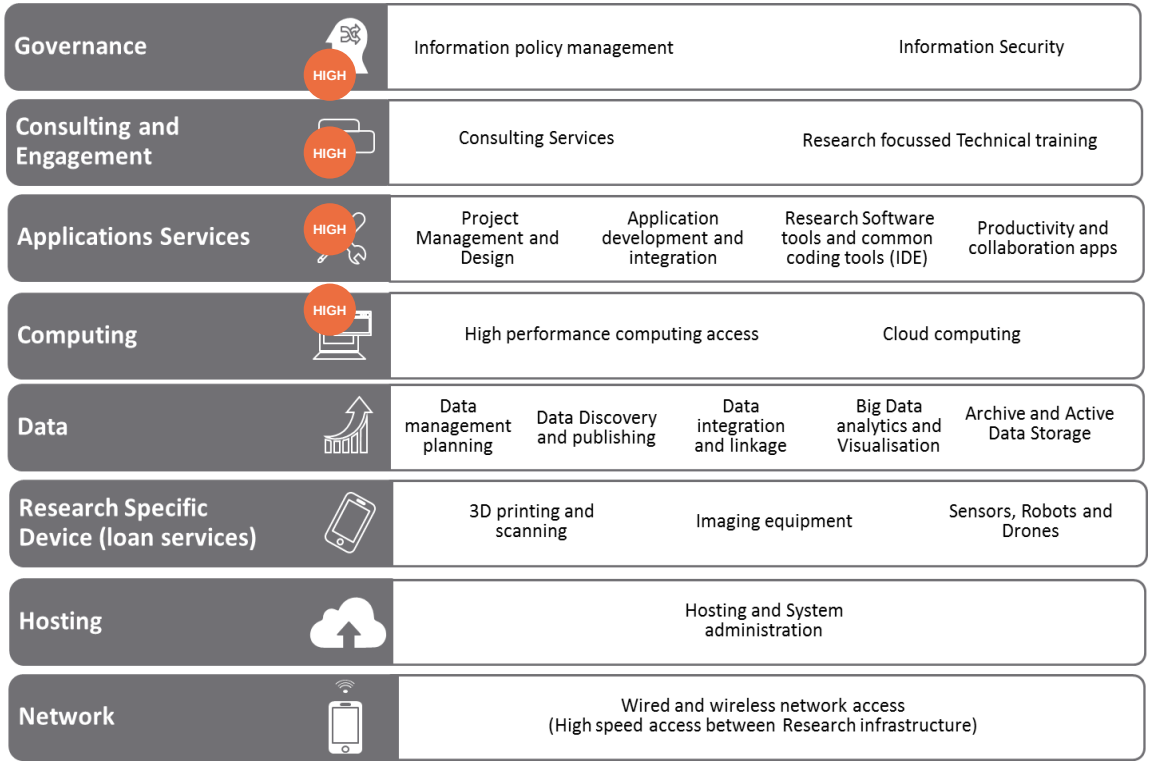
ERS Review was aligned to the UNSW 2025 Strategic Plan and the Digital Campus Masterplan

UNSW 2025 Strategy

DCMP Final Report

ERS Final Report

A Service classification framework was developed for evaluating the IT services supporting Research at UNSW.



The IT service areas UNSW Researchers consider to be most important:

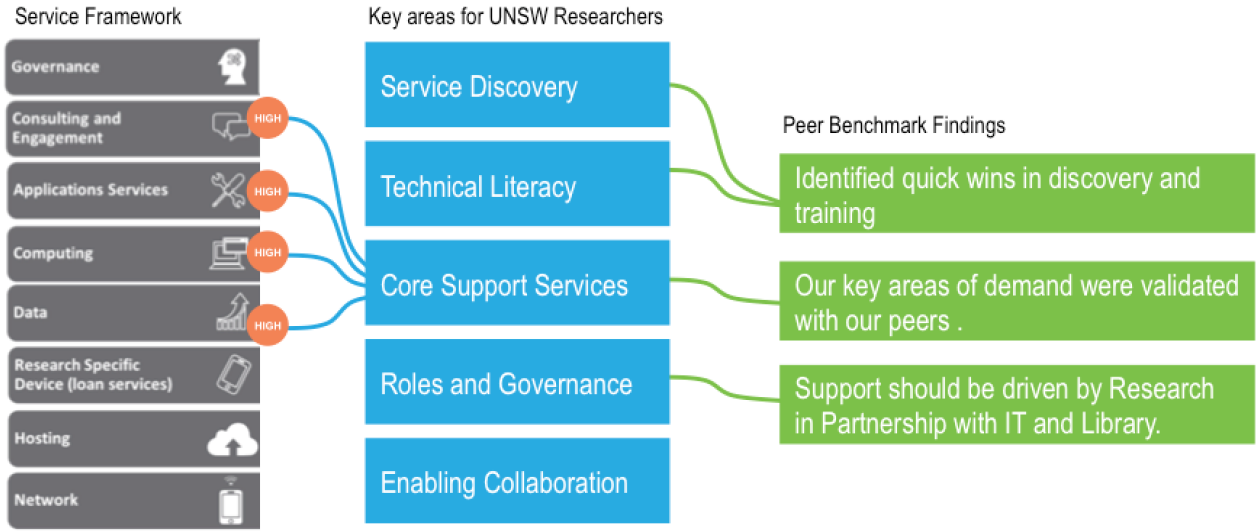
- IT consulting
- Technical Training
- Application development
- High Performance Computing and
- Data support

Device support and help with High Speed Data moves were also seen to be important.

Researchers described challenges with Service Discovery and Service consistency

Local IT Staff and Services were trusted by Researchers but were found to have limited capacity and were not set up to deliver formal Research Services (except in few key areas including HPC and Devices support).

The Benchmarking activity targeted peer organisations with maturity in eResearch service delivery.



Our benchmarking interviews were focused on the key areas we identified in our service review.

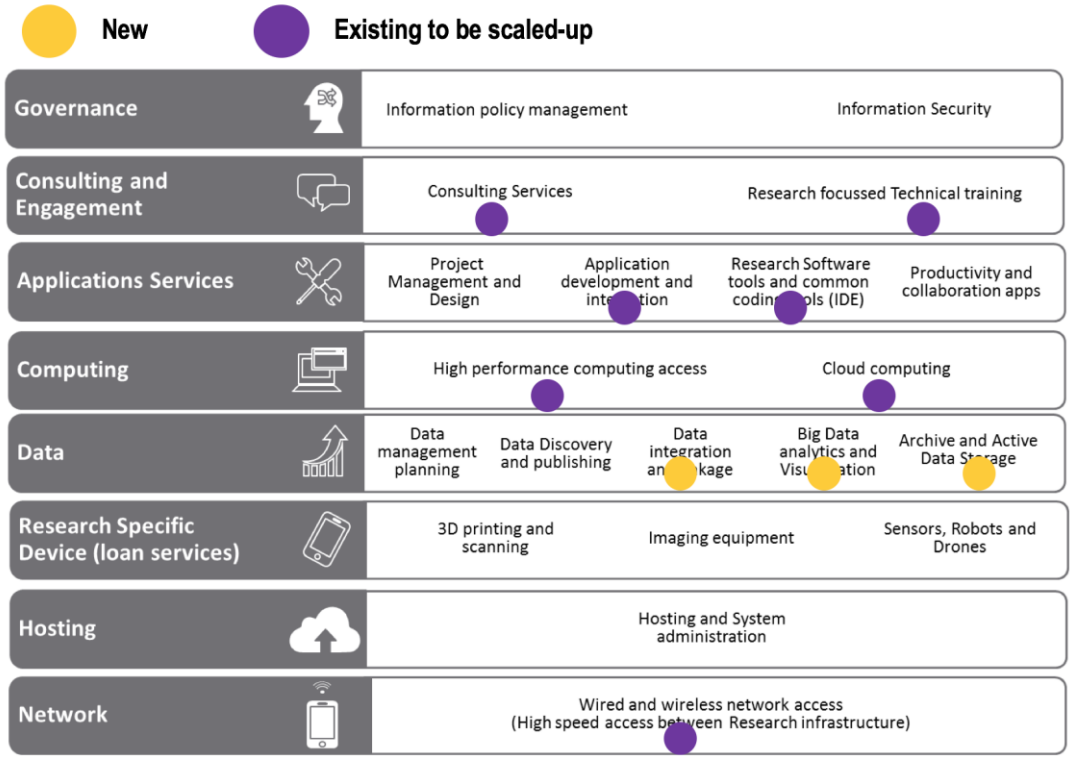
Benchmark Findings…

- Distinctly different approaches to eResearch support exist
- Our key areas of demand were validated with our peers
- Technical training for IT staff and researchers confirmed to be an essential enabler
- Case studies highlighted quick wins in discovery and training
- eResearch is considered to be a strategic infrastructure platform
- eResearch works best when it is driven by Research in partnership with IT and Library.

Peer Organisations interviewed

The ERS Review makes recommendations in five critical areas.

These initiatives recommend “scaling up” support in some existing areas and some new support and infrastructure investments to establish a set of “Core Research Support Services” for UNSW Researchers.



Recommendations. Five Critical Areas for UNSW.

A Research-Led Capability and capacity.
Core Support Services resourced.

B Infrastructure and Systems.
Research Platforms and enablers provided.

C Discovery, Sharing and collaboration tools.
Visibility of services and activities improved.

D Training and On-boarding options.
A Focus on Researcher Technical Literacy.

E Governance and Leadership frameworks.
Sustained investments and Strategic Alignment.

Next steps

eResearch has come into the new PVC (Research Infrastructure) portfolio - as of Feb 2016

eResearch is part of our research infrastructure continuum – we are now setting up organisational structures to integrate it with other centrally managed / centrally supported infrastructure

Existing strong relationship between Research, IT and Library is a good starting point

Decisions on which services to provide internally and which to outsource (and on what timescale) are considered integral to implementing our ERS recommendations

Planning and investment must happen in conjunction with the NCRIS roadmap (not only the eResearch component) and other national and international services accessed by our researchers