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## **Managing eResearch Data within a Collaborative Research Network**

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# Managing eResearch Data within a Collaborative Research Network

Darren Gibson and Julia Gross

## Background

Edith Cowan University (ECU) is one of twelve Australian universities striving to create world-class research capacity and capability through investment in the Collaborative Research Network (CRN) project. The CRN project at ECU aims to accelerate the growth of research activity in four key areas: Health, Education, ICT, and Environment. These areas align to both the Australian Government's National Research Priorities and ECU's strategic research plan.

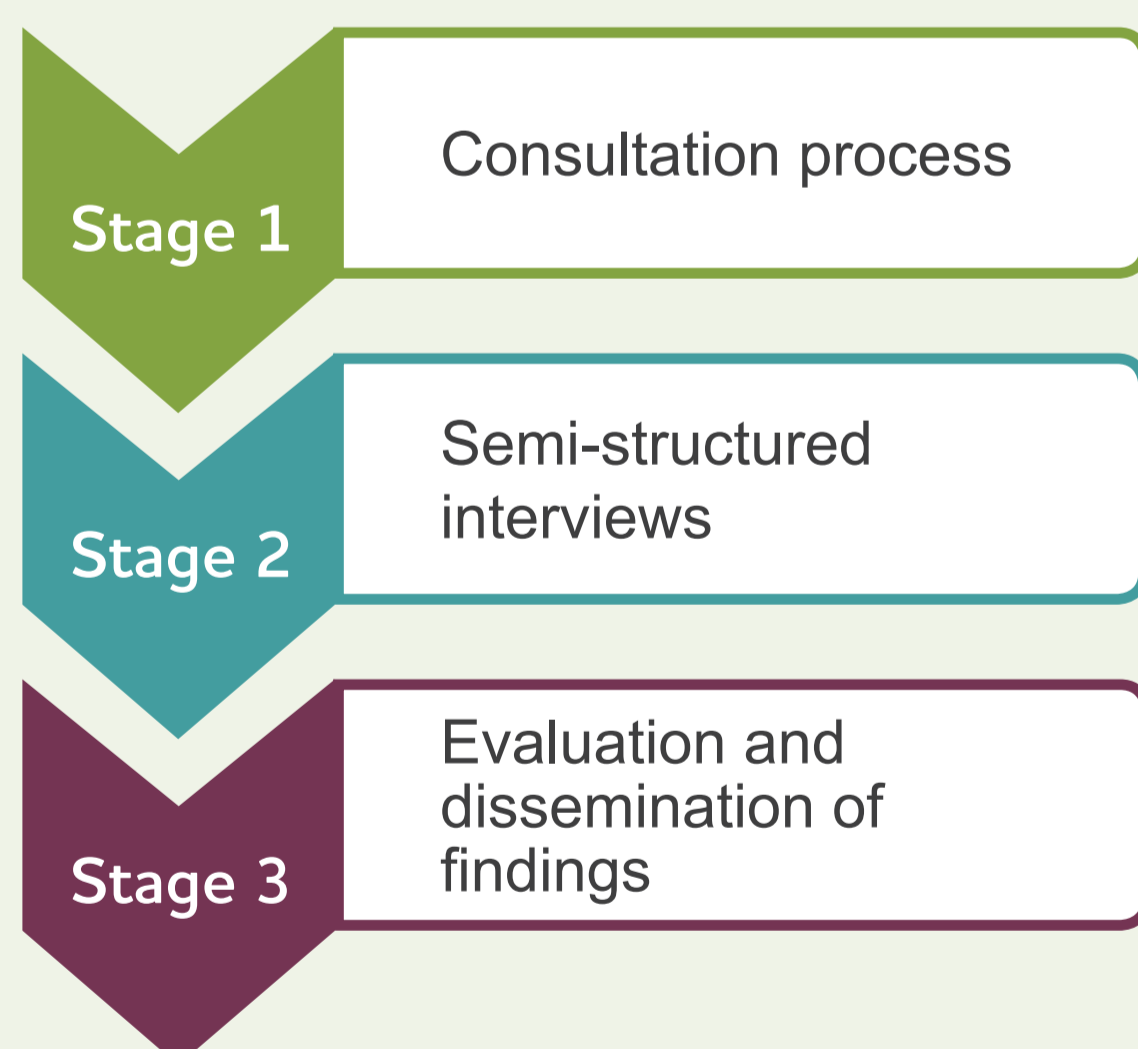
Managing eResearch data is essential, especially within a CRN to ensure the maximum benefit is achieved from the investigations. Currently, there is no set model to follow. Normally an institution will establish its own policy and procedures which are applicable to their researchers and data. However, this causes difficulties for researchers sharing data across a collaborative network as policies and procedures may differ.

The CRN project will create a significant amount of new data and it is imperative that this data is managed so that it is secure, accessible and usable. Consequently, research data management policies, procedures and technical solutions are being developed to support this process.

## Method

A consultation process was undertaken with a variety of stakeholders including ECU (IT, Library and the Office of Research and Innovation), ANDs and iVEC to develop a research interview instrument. A series of semi-structured interviews with CRN researchers will probe various eResearch data management issues. Specifically the interviews will provide insight to:

- Develop a model for eResearch data management, ensuring data is collected and consolidated consistently
- Develop a model for data sharing across multiple partners
- Explore possibilities of working in partnership with iVEC for data sharing and storage

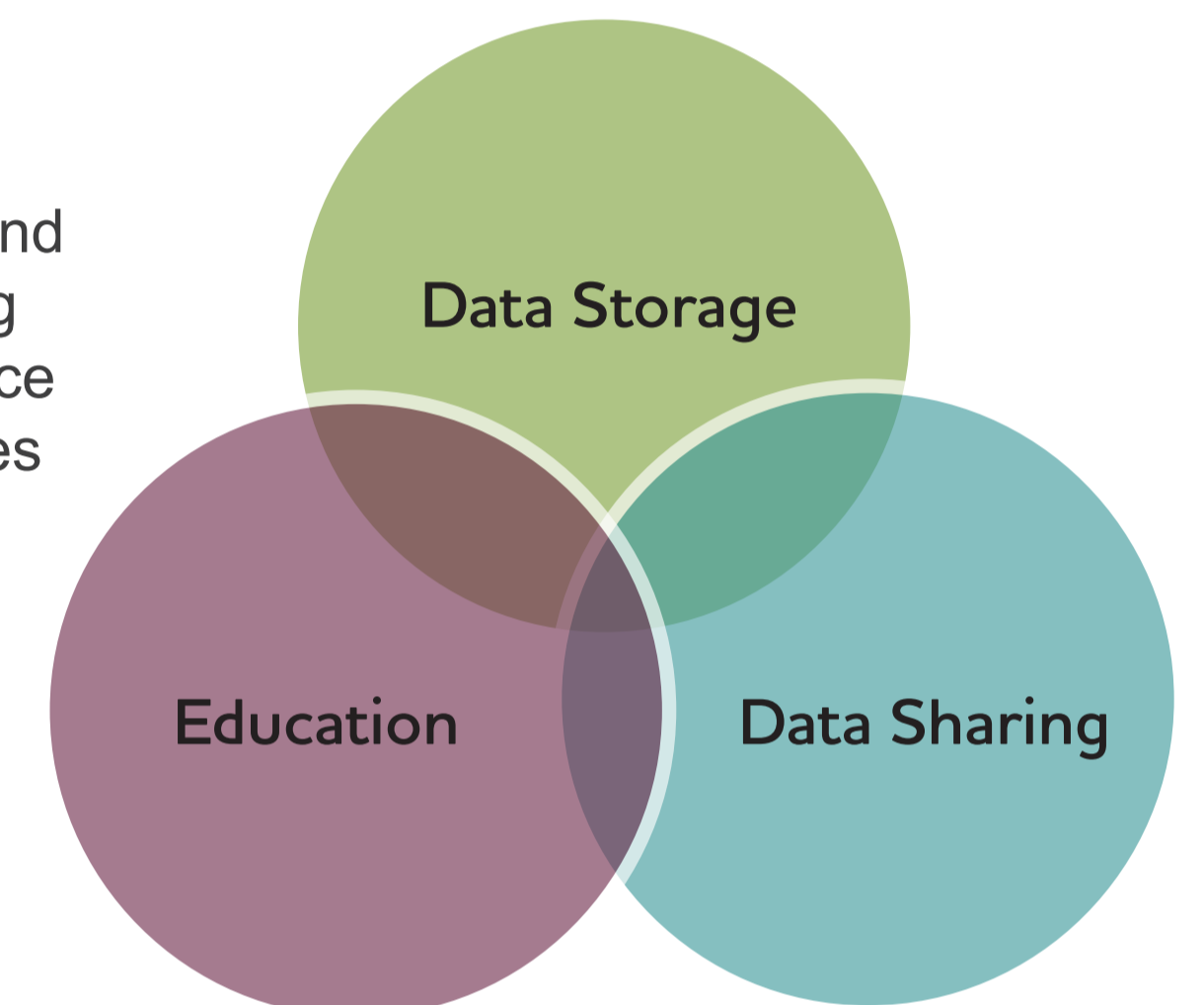
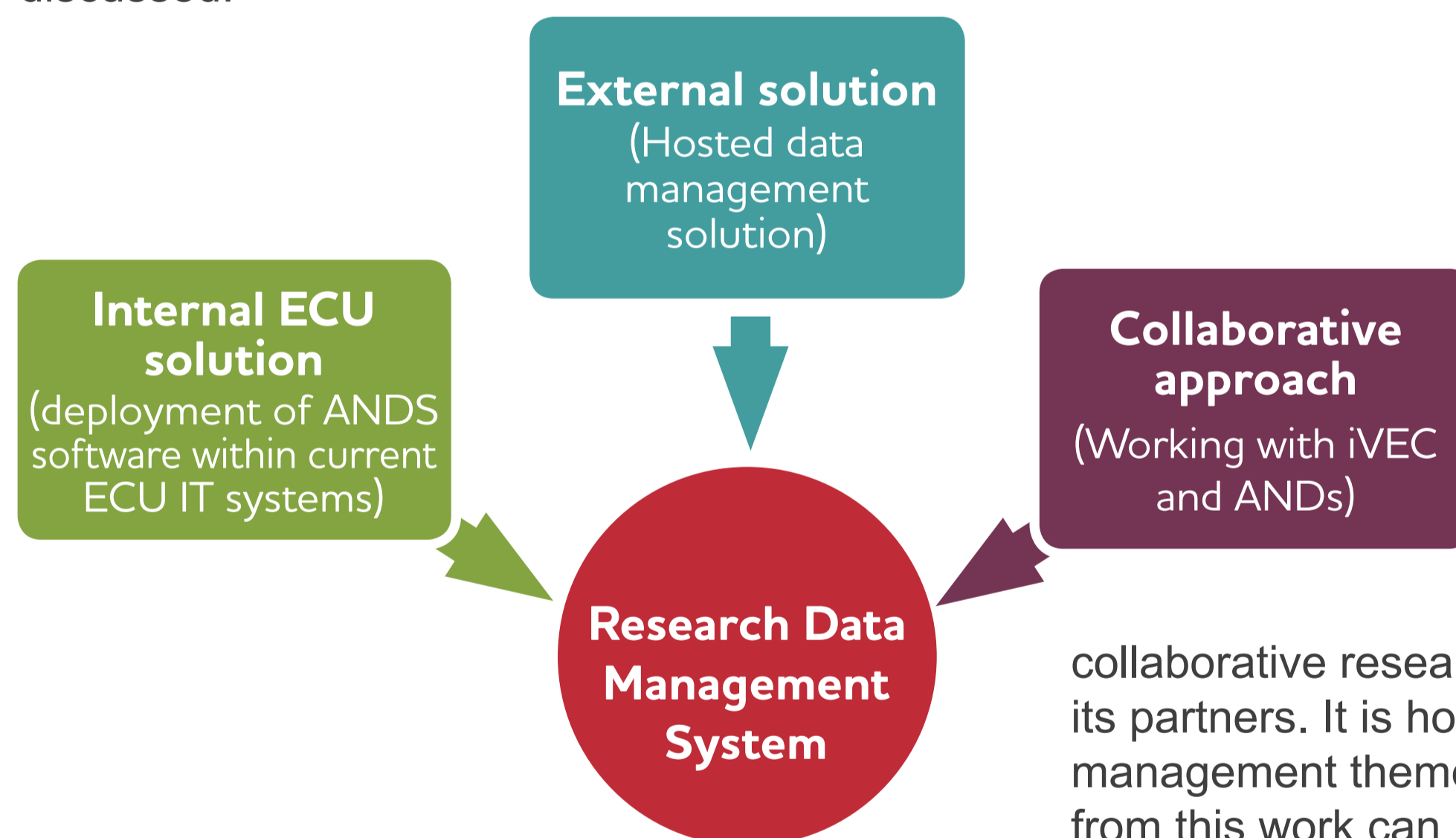


## Current Challenges

Not unexpectedly, the challenges highlighted within the interviews vary, depending on the nature of the project, and the size and scale of the data. The interview data is being subjected to further analysis and will be disseminated once the investigation is complete. However, three main themes have emerged:

## Technical Solutions

In order to support the policies and procedures being implemented, there is a requirement for a software solution - a research data management system. There are a number of options being discussed:



All these models have benefits and risks. However, an effective research data management system will be pivotal for the sustainability of the collaborative research networks within ECU and its partners. It is hoped that the research data management themes highlighted as significant from this work can be developed and integrated into other research streams within ECU's future research activities.

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Visit ECU's CRN webpage at [www.research.ecu.edu.au/ori/crn](http://www.research.ecu.edu.au/ori/crn)

