

OPEN NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE COMMONS

HCommons has recently partnered with STEM education researchers to develop a new Commons node that expands their disciplinary reach, with funding from the NSE. Included in the grant is a migration of the HCommons repository software to Invenio, which supports a much wider range of deposit types, increases possibilities for interoperability and provides exciting new features to researchers such as versioning and multi-file deposits

HCommons started life in the Humanities – a rarity in the open research space that offers a unique perspective. Hosted at Michigan State University, HCommons facilitates collaboration and sharing across research & education for approx. 50,000 users worldwide. The project aspires to serve as a leader in the development of next generation research infrastructure, created for and with the people it serves.

Most existing research infrastructure is siloed leading to a frustrating experience for researchers. Effective infrastructure requires coordination and cooperation, which is heavily disincentivised in commercial markets.

Academy-developed and -owned infrastructure provides an avenue of possibility where the needs of everyday researchers can be centred, and the very human work of research foregrounded.

A major distinguishing feature of the Commons is that it is a social system, not just a common pool of resources. Tools alone do not a Commons make. A Knowledge Commons, therefore, must center people, facilitate interactions and support collaboration and community-building.

Standards have a critical role to play in the development of an open network of research infrastructure. HCommons is guided by CARE, FAIR and Open standards, and engages in more tech-oriented projects such as COAR Notify.

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