

# 2017-06-27 Trip Report -- Open Repositories, Brisbane, Australia

It's a long way to Brisbane.

Open Repositories was held at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Brisbane Australia. About 350 people attended.

Graham and I had a series of productive conversations with Mark Fallu of the University of Melbourne. Mark has many ideas for making VIVO more compelling to more people. In particular, we discussed the idea of having "concept pages". These pages would present the information that people are looking for with respect to the activity of an institution with respect to a particular concept. Imagine searching for climate change. The page would show faculty members whose research is focused on climate change, along with papers of these faculty members, along with events and other items that pertain to climate change. Top items would be shown, with additional items available via a single click. Photographs of the faculty members and figures from the relevant papers would make the concept page more compelling. Because VIVO stores everything as data, content pages could be created for any concept in VIVO.

Amir Ariyani and I presented on the Research Graph / VIVO collaboration to create graphs of scholarship using research graph data and represent them in VIVO. The work is available in figshare and in GitHub.

One conference evening the Dura space attendees had a chance to have dinner together. It was a good opportunity to meet people that we worked with remotely.

The conference opened with the poster session and reception. Posters were presented on vertically oriented LCD screens. This was new for me. It seemed to work well for socialization, there were many posters to be seen and many people were crowded around the screens. Was not particularly good for the presenters, whose material was greatly reduced by the screen size and the resolution of the screens. The crowd also made it difficult for presenters to stand by their posters and answer any questions.

The opening keynote of the conference was by faculty member from the United Kingdom. He's a mathematician. He talked about the need for open access.

I attended many seven minute lightning talks. Many were of the "show and tell" variety, focusing on library needs. I would have preferred more talks focusing on ecosystem and/or faculty needs.

I'm not convinced that Open Repositories is a good conference for VIVO. The VIVO ideas are new and sometimes challenging to the people at Open Repositories. I suppose that's a good thing -- challenging people with new ideas, but it does seem like an uphill struggle. The need to collect a complete record of the academic work of each faculty member seems to be new to many of the participants. They are very focused on preserving particular kinds of works often focusing on particular collections such as children's books, historical antiquities of some kind, event artifacts, or STEM collection. It is difficult and challenging for them to "invert" their thinking to think about the people who have produced these works. Perhaps in the long run people who work on repositories will come to understand the role that the faculty playing in producing the materials that are in the repositories, and the need to represent these people.

Brisbane is a lovely city. My wife and I had several days to walk around the city and take in the river, and cultural activities. And of course we got to see the Koalas.