Author's response to reviews

Title: RMS: A platform for managing cross-disciplinary and multi-institutional research project collaboration

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Dear BMC editor and reviewers:

Thank you very much for taking the time to review our paper, “RMS: A platform for managing cross-disciplinary and multi-institutional research project collaboration”. Your valuable comments and recommendations are greatly appreciated, and have greatly helped us improve our revised manuscript. Please see the following points below for our detailed responses to your suggestions.

The first reviewer has one comment on question #7 in the re-review that should be considered - to see the Team Science Toolkit, highlighted in the software comparison - this should be addressed for completeness. (I do notice that SciVAL are ViVo) are cited in ref. #17 and page #5 -)

---Response: We thank the reviewer and the editor’s comments. We added new citations related to the Team Science Toolkit. In page 5 paragraph 2, we added new content to discuss the relationship between our approach and the Team Science Toolkit.

The second reviewers comments were largely addressed however in some cases the author only answered the question in the response to the reviewers as opposed to also in the text. Below are my comments to the responsiveness to the second reviewer’s critique:

#4 although supported by a conference paper, I suggest revising “deep impact” to “positive impact” to alleviate the some of the subjective nature of the original sentence.

---Response: We agree with the editor’s recommendation and changed the text “deep impact” to “positive impact”.

#5 Ajax is a collection of web technologies but at its core is a programming language. It would be like saying the Ruby technology. Suggest just saying Ajax
(AJAX) and then citing the original article on it
(http://www.adaptivepath.com/ideas/ajax-new-approach-web-applications/)

---Response: We thank the editor's recommendation. The recommended citation is now added.

#6 on page #5, please address what each of the manuals are for and references the notes section.

---Response: We added contents to describe the manuals in the System Architecture section.

#7 suggest including the response “The main goal of RMS is to facilitate investigators to establish collaborative projects and manage the collaboration process. For the CTSC, the target is to create more collaborative projects. In Result section 3, we provide evidence to show the growth of projects in RMS.” That justifies the claim well

---Response: We agree with the editor’s suggestion. To provide more evidence, we incorporated part of the previous response in the Result section 1.

#8 great response but that should be included in Results section 4. or something like it.

---Response: We thank the editor’s recommendation and incorporate the response to the manuscript.

“The total connection (collaborative work) increased 400% from 2009 to 2012. The results show significant increase of collaborative work. As shown in Table 2, the collaboration service can be categorized in 176 different types within 12 research cores, and the collaborative task within each category is summarized. Future efforts will focus on evaluating the quality of collaboration facilitated through RMS.”

---Response: We thank the editor's recommendation and incorporate the evidence to the manuscript.

Editors comments:

1. On page #5 SciVAL and ViVo are the same tool just rebranded, rephrase second sentence of second paragraph to reflect this.

---Response: As far as we know, SciVAL and VIVO have joint efforts for developing expert profiling systems (e.g. Elsevier Pure). However, they are still two different products leaded by two separate teams.
2. Update word count
---Response: The word count is updated from “3813” to “3953”

3. Overall comment: don’t use the word “very” in scientific papers “it is important” is better than “it is very important” if an item is critical then state why so with the reference.
---Response: We thank the editor’s advice. We changed the original text to remove the word.

4. Update title on second page (“cross-disciplinary”)
---Response: The title is updated.

5. Fix abstract “multi-institutional” “CROSS-disciplinary collaboration”? 
---Response: The abstract is updated

6. Abstract “organization”, “organizational”
---Response: We changed the phrase “organization structure” to “organizational structure”.

7. In the response to reviewers you state collaborative projects have increased four times but in the abstract you stated it is 3 times from 2009 to 2012
---Response: We thank the editor pointing out the confusion. In the paper, we show that the collaborative projects increased close to 3 times. In the previous response letter, we want to say the investigators’ connection increased 4 times which is also reported in the paper’s results section 4.

8. Conclusion of abstract- change to cross-disciplinary “multi-institutional” 9. In fact be sure to change ALL of your revisions from multidisciplinary to cross-disciplinary
---Response 8 & 9: We have changed “multidisciplinary” to “cross-disciplinary”, except one place cited a multidisciplinary collaboration paper.

10. Be careful of switching between “informatics infrastructure” and “cyber-infrastructure” just use the same terminology throughout.
---Response: We changed the text “cyber-infrastructure” to “informatics infrastructure”

11. Watch for citations, you need a space after the sentence and before the brackets (authors [1] NOT coauthors[2]).
---Response: We thank the editor for the advice. We added a space before the citation reference.

12. Pg. 3 spell out acronyms first use, even it if is for the national institutes of
health

---Response: We changed the text to spell out the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

13. Pg. 5 “et al.” needs a period

---Response: We added the period mark.

14. Pg. 5 “(See Figure 1)” is hanging. Does it belong with the previous sentence? If so then “(see Figure 1).” If not then you should never start a sentence with a parenthetical.

---Response: The figure reference belongs to the previous sentence. We move it to the end of the sentence.

15. Pg. 5 “MIMO” Informatics should be capitalized.

---Response: We fixed the error.

16. Since you only use RoRs once no need to include it, also the citation should be after the term.

---Response: The abbreviation (RoRs) is removed; the citation is moved after the word “Ruby on Rails”.

17. Page 5. “requests (see Figure 1-B)” capitalization

---Response: We capitalize the first letter.

18. Page 5. “Notes section” Plural

---Response: The text is updated to use plural.

19. Pg. 6 SSL prevents man-in-the-middle attacks or channel surveillance (which is more specific than just “tampering”, SSL doesn’t in and of itself prevent communication tampering)

---Response: We agree with the editor. The text has been changed to “Secured Socket Layer (SSL) that prevents man-in-the-middle attacks.”

20. Pg 6. “password leakage” Isn’t a thing, also are you salting the hash too? If not your system is vulnerable to attack.

---Response: We changed the text “defend against password leakage” to “encrypt password”. Yes, we also salted the password with a random number before hashing.

21. Pg 6. fix space after the word. Also you are looking for the word “provenance” not honesty

---Response: The text is updated. We changed the word “honesty” to “provenance”.
Thank you very much for the comments.

Best regards,

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