# Repository Staff Attitudes about the Value of Trustworthy Digital Repository Certification

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**Abstract**

Trustworthy digital repository (TDR) certification is a relatively new phenomenon in the cultural heritage sector. The earliest repository certifications were issued in 2010 by Data Seal of Approval (DSA), and the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) Trustworthy Digital Repository Audit and Certification (TRAC) processes. DSA merged with the certification process from the World Data System of the International Science Council (WDS) in 2017 to form the CoreTrustSeal (CTS) certification system, which is now the most active TDR certification available with approximately 85 repositories currently certified and 38 repositories whose certification has expired (as of April 2023) (CoreTrustSeal, 2023b, 2023a).

The question of value is particularly relevant given the continued relevance of TDR certification, and the amount of time that has passed since the first certifications were issued. Indeed, recent research has proposed metrics to evaluate the value of CTS certification (e.g., Donaldson & Russell, 2021). My own research has shown that in theTRAC process, standard developers and auditors, and staff members of certified repositories, do not agree about whether repositories that receive certification are indeed trustworthy for long-term digital preservation (e.g., Frank, 2022).

In this presentation I will share preliminary findings from a 2021 survey of CoreTrustSeal certified repositories, focusing on the question which asked: "In your opinion, what is the primary value of trustworthy repository certification?" The survey was sent to all repositories with CTS, DSA, and WDS certification (171 repositories), and we had a response rate of 53.98%. There were 86 responses to the question about the value of certification, which was an open response question. Qualitative analysis of this data is in progress, and common themes that are emerging include: communicating trustworthiness to stakeholders, accountability, improving processes, and differentiation from other (non-certified) repositories.

**About the author:**
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barriers that limit or prevent the preservation, sharing, and reuse of digital information. She has a PhD and an MSI from the University of Michigan School of Information, and a BA in Organizational Studies from the University of Michigan. Her work has been supported by the Deutsche Stiftung Friedensforschung (German Foundation for Peace Research), the Einstein Centre Digital Future, the InfraLab Berlin, the National Science Foundation (United States), and the Australian Academy of Science. (http://rebeccadfrank.com/)

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