

# Intra-Institutional Partnerships for Research Data Security and Compliance

Greg Madden

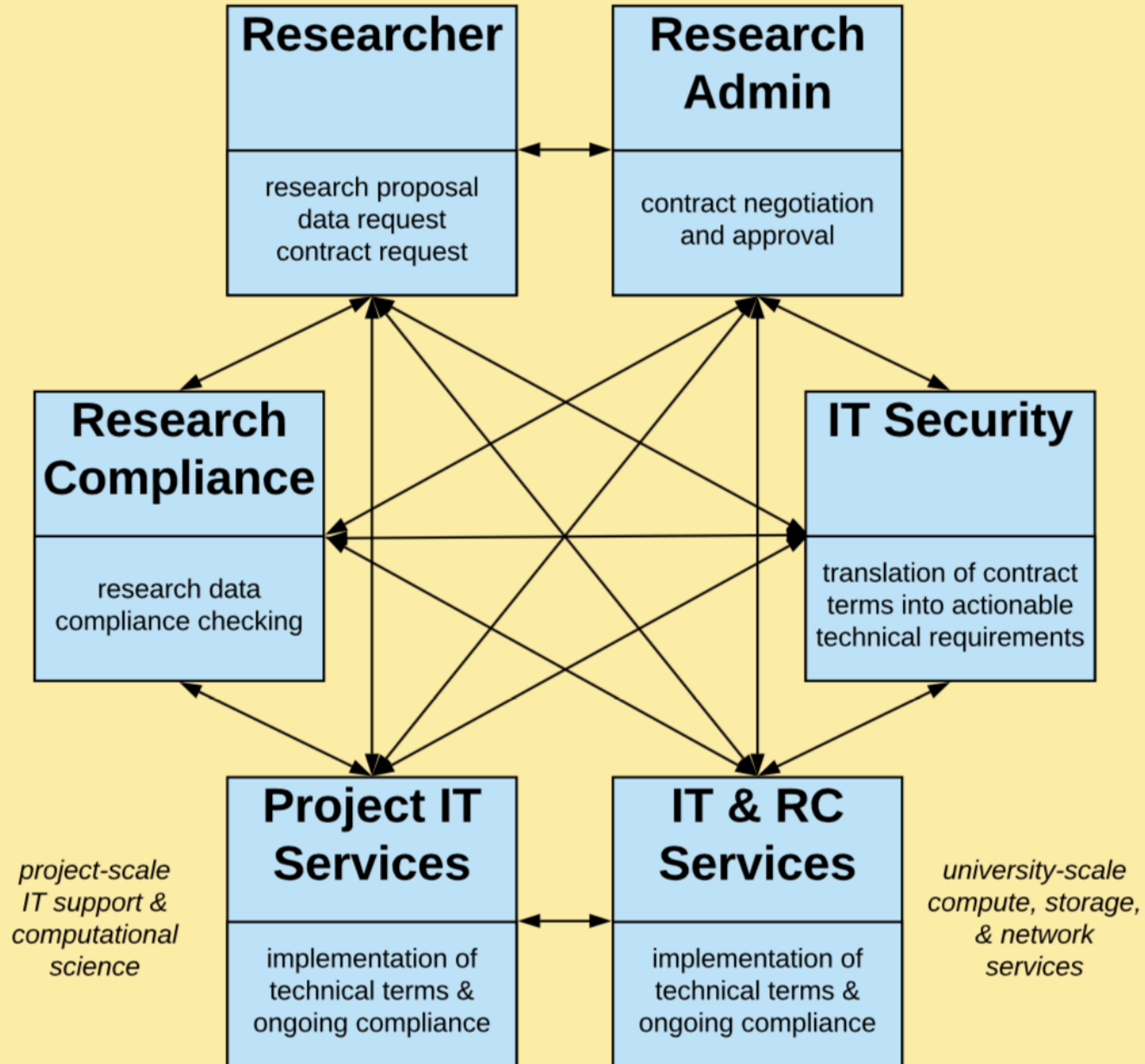
Senior Advisor for Research Computing and Cyberinfrastructure

Penn State University

# Motivating Observation

- RDS&C is a complicated problem
  - not a Researcher problem
  - not a Research Administration problem
  - not an IT Security problem
  - not a Research IT problem
  - not a Local IT problem
  - not a Research Compliance problem
- RDS&C is a partnership of all of the above

# Research Data Security and Compliance Partnership



# What is a partnership?

- Ideally...
  - Shared vision, shared processes, shared workflow tools
- But at least...
  - Know one another exist
  - Know what one another do for a living
  - Tell one another what information you need
  - Understand the implications of your decisions for others
  - Check in with one another regularly
  - Have meetings to improve communications

# Terms and Conditions

- The Terms and Conditions surrounding the data are the starting point for everything
- Research Administrators (Contract Negotiators) are the #1 most critical partner
- Every contractual term can imply a security requirement
- Every security requirement can imply a compliance requirement over time
- Your duty and responsibility is to educate the T&C folks about the practical impacts of their agreements

# Three Years Ago

- Our contract negotiators...
  - had no idea what IT/RC units and services existed
  - had no idea what our IT/RC people could or could not do
  - had no idea what they were practically agreeing to
- Which meant that research compliance...
  - had no idea if we were compliant or not
  - because there was no actual list of technical requirements
  - and if there had been, there was no one qualified to determine if the requirements were being met

## Also Three Years Ago

- Our IT/RC people, on the other hand...
  - had no defined means of working with one another
  - didn't know what one another could do
  - didn't trust one another
  - had no idea that contract negotiators existed
  - had no means of translating Ts&Cs into actionable technical requirements
  - were reactively addressing everything on an ad hoc basis
  - were doing what they thought ought to be done, instead of doing what the contracts called for

# What We Did

- We held meetings
- We introduced ourselves to one another
- We talked about what we do for a living
- We started sending emails back and forth
- We built mutual understanding and trust
- We agreed on minor process improvements
- We agreed to keep talking and improving
- We slowly started formalizing things
- We started sketching plans for a more formal future
- Which led to where we are now...



## Where We Are Now

- Have a formal process for translating Ts&Cs into actionable technical requirements
- Have a formal process for making sure all the partners are aware of the technical requirements
- Have a formal process for making sure the technical requirements are in place prior to data acquisition
- Hired a technically proficient person to work in Research Compliance
- Have a formal process for annual compliance checks

# Questions?

- Greg Madden
- [gregmadden@psu.edu](mailto:gregmadden@psu.edu)