



## Ontario Council of University Libraries

### Announcement Toronto, July 3, 2009

#### **New Geospatial Data and Health Informatics Storage and Research Tools**

The Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) is launching a new geospatial data and health informatics storage and research tool project that will be shared, more cost-effective and sustainable, for all researchers, faculty, students and staff in Ontario universities. The project will be completed over the next three years.

The Geospatial Data and Health Informatics Cyberinfrastructure project will expand the OCUL Scholars Portal infrastructure by creating a Geospatial Portal to provide storage capacity for large geospatial and health informatics data, and tools for research, discovery and analysis. Data will be made available via standard metadata practices and sophisticated extraction tools.

The Portal will be further enhanced by online web mapping tools, facilitating a wider range of geospatial and public health research, as well as teaching and learning opportunities.

The Geospatial Portal builds on the success of Ontario Data Documentation, Extraction Service and Infrastructure Initiative (ODESI), a Scholars Portal module that provides web access to numeric data sets, along with tools to extract and analyze data, and the ability to store and archive them for the future.

This initiative will enhance the ability of researchers to interact and collaborate, strengthen research capacity and increase Ontario's competitive advantage in research and innovation.

The Geospatial Portal will be accessible to all Ontario university researchers, leveling the playing field for geospatial data access and supporting expanded literacy in geospatial and health informatics.

"OCUL will be able to provide optimal access to geospatial and health data by using a collaborative procurement process, thus reducing total cost of ownership," said Margaret Grove, OCUL Chair and Brock University Librarian. "Working together, we can put to good use the expertise of specialized staff, freeing them from routine and duplicated data management tasks so that they have more time to address the growing demands of research and learning support. The Portal will also help researchers make more effective use of their research funding."

The project is funded in part by the Government of Ontario through the OntarioBuys initiative.

#### **About OCUL:**

OCUL is a consortium of twenty-one university libraries in the province of Ontario. Its vision is to be a recognized leader in provincial, national and international post-secondary

communities for the collaborative development and delivery of outstanding and innovative library services that are critical to the success of Ontario's universities. Established in 1967, OCUL's twenty-one member institutions continue to enhance their libraries through activities such as resource sharing, collective purchasing, document delivery and joint creation of the digital library Scholars Portal.

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