

New Cyberinfrastructure Website has Cyber Resources for Researchers Campus-wide

The Research Cyberinfrastructure Team has revamped its website, making it easier for researchers to use the team's services to facilitate their research and get help with computing, storage, data transfer and more.

ORLANDO, Nov. 12, 2020 – Anthropology Professor Scott Branting recently discovered one of the best kept secrets at UCF – the Research Cyberinfrastructure team.

Recently, at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the team helped researchers like Branting explore options to make geographic information system ArcGIS remotely available; it was also ensured that performance markers such as handling computationally intense workloads were improved.

ArcGIS is used by many faculty members across campus for both academic and research workloads. Among these faculty members is Branting who teaches anthropology students how to use GIS to conduct research in the field. Despite the pandemic, the shift to remote instruction was seamless for the students and the experience with ArcGIS performance issues considerably improved, Branting said.

“The downloading process had been stealing time from the class, as getting ArcGIS onto each student's laptop came with much troubleshooting,” Branting says. “Had this resource not been readily available I would imagine teaching in the pandemic to be extremely difficult.”

The Research Cyberinfrastructure Team helps students and faculty tap into all kinds of digital and in-person resources to help investigators with their research. The services include everything from providing access to specialized software and collaboration tools to support for advanced cloud computing, data storage and high-performance computing. The group also offers workshops about topics such as high-performance computing, research data transfers, Python, R, bash scripting, and cloud computing.

The team, supported through the Office of Research, recently updated its website (<https://rci.research.ucf.edu>) to make it more user-friendly in hopes more people will take advantage of all the services available.

The website lists a range of research computing and data services, such as computing, storage, data transfer, collaboration and training. Members of the Research Cyberinfrastructure team are also available by appointment to discuss specific project needs and how they may be able to help through direct support or referring the investigator to other resources. The team can help with technical write-ups in proposals regarding particulars of infrastructure or service, facilitate the review of any vendor agreements, get researchers started with their cloud environment, and more.

“Our top priority is to assist investigators so they can do what they do best – conduct research,” says Shafaq Chaudhry, the assistant director of Graduate and Research IT Systems and Operations. “We are here to help.”

The Office of Research is continually looking for ways to improve its operations and support those doing work in the labs and in the field. Research awards have increased 40 percent in the past four years. The Research Cyberinfrastructure team is just one example of the initiatives OR has undertaken in the past three years to help strategic goals for growing research activity.

Branting is happy to have found the group.

“Simply put, the resources are out there,” says Branting. “This is a great space to find them.”

Researchers interested in taking advantage of these tools should explore the team’s website and reach out to them at researchit@ucf.edu

The Research Cyberinfrastructure Team services are made available through a partnership with various groups across UCF, including [ARCC \(IST\)](#), [UCF Libraries](#), [Health IT \(COM\)](#), [UCF IT](#), [OCRM](#) and [Research IT](#).