



CaSDaR

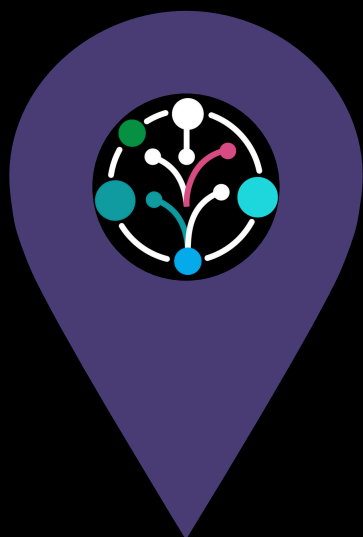
Careers and Skills for
Data-driven Research

CaSDaR

Townhall: hybrid launch event

18th September 2025

The Library of
Birmingham and
Online



Programme agenda and
event information

v1, 29/08/2025

The Venue



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We decided to hold the launch event for CaSDaR (Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research) at the facilities shared between the Birmingham Rep and the Library of Birmingham, because it seemed an excellent way to honour the tradition of knowledge gathering and curation for the betterment of society.

The Library of Birmingham is situated in Birmingham City Centre, on Centenary Square. The Library was renovated and re-opened in 2013 and is the largest public library in the UK, the largest public cultural space in Europe, and the largest regional library in Europe.

The talks will be held in The Studio which is on the ground floor and the poster presentations will be available on the Mezzanine on the first floor,



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The Agenda

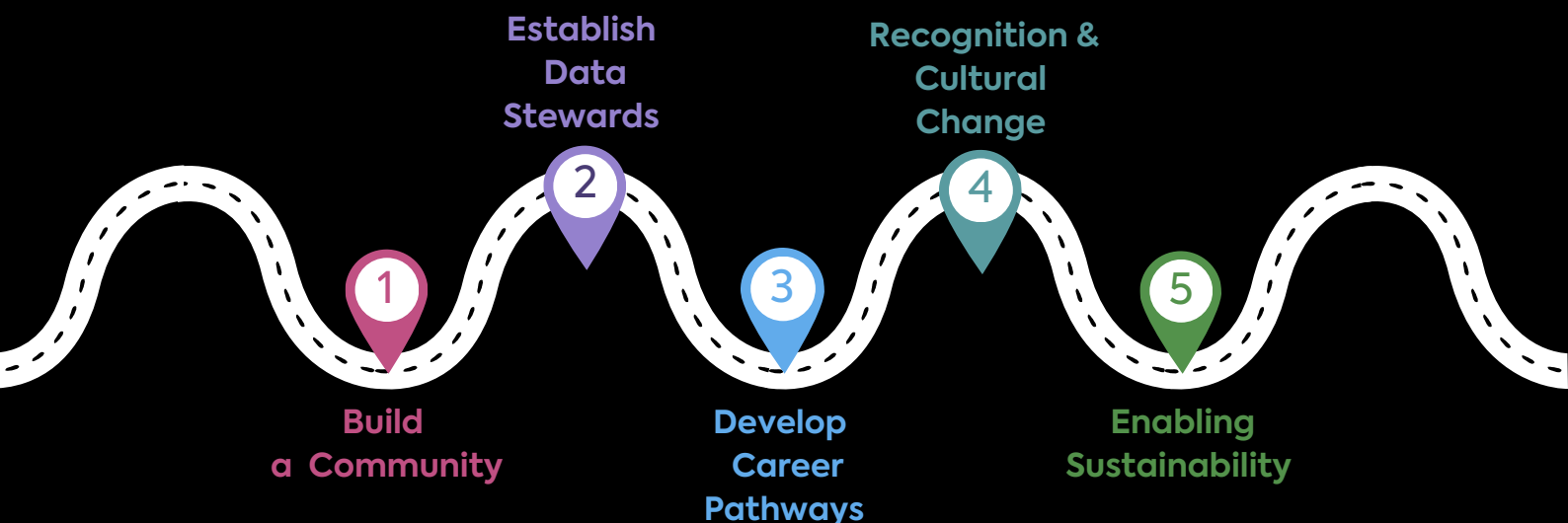
Time	Title	Contributor/s	Location
09.30-10.00	Registration and Coffee		The Mezzanine
10.00-10.30	Introducing CaSDaR and the Importance of Data Stewardship	Samantha Pearman-Kanza	The Studio
10.30-11.30	Data Stewardship Journeys	Evangeline Gowie Angharad Green Robert Darby Anneke Lubben	The Studio
11.30-11.45	Coffee Break		The Mezzanine
11.45-12.15	Introducing our Project Partners	Robert Andrews (ELIXIR-UK) Jamie McQueen (UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN)) Kevin Ashley (Digital Curation Centre (DCC)) Nicola Knight (Physical Sciences Data Infrastructure)	The Studio
12.15-12.25	Introducing the poster presentations		The Studio
12.25-13.15	Lunch, Networking, & Posters [Group Photo at 13:10]		The Mezzanine
13.15-13.45	Community Consultation		The Studio
13.45-15.10	Data Stewardship Initiatives UK and beyond	Jenny O'Neill (Sonra) Emma Karoune (The Turing Way) James Wilson (ARC-UCL) Tristan Martin (The University of Manchester) Michael Bearpark (StepUp/ScaleUp) Kevin Ashley (Other European Initiatives)	The Studio
15.10-15.25	Coffee and networking		The Mezzanine
15.25-15.50	Participant Lightning Talks	Elizabeth Newbold (UKRI-STFC) Catherine Jones (UKRI-STFC) Richard Campbell (University of Sheffield) David Leaver (UKCEH) Phil Reed (The University of Manchester)	The Studio
15.50-16.20	Funding Call Launch	Samantha Pearman-Kanza and Louise Saul	The Studio
16.20-16.30	Next Steps for CaSDaR	Samantha Pearman-Kanza	The Studio

About CaSDaR

As the volume of data continues to grow, so does the critical need for Data Stewards, the professionals who ensure data is shareable, reusable, and FAIR-compliant. Yet in the UK, the role of the Data Steward remains under-defined and often under-recognised.

The Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research (CaSDaR) initiative is a 4-year UKRI funded project which aims to address this gap by helping to define the role of Data Stewards within the UK research landscape and advocating for their recognition and representation across institutions.

We plan to complete these goals by connecting existing networks that support and elevate Data Stewardship in the UK, coordinate with international networks to ensure that activities for Data Stewards in the UK remains in line with global progress in this area, and to provide funding for case studies that demonstrate the crucial role that Data Stewards play in the continued development of the UK research ecosystem.



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Speaker: Introducing CaSDaR

Samantha Pearman-Kanza

Dr. Samantha Pearman-Kanza is a Principal Enterprise Fellow at the University of Southampton. She is the Principal Investigator for the Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research Network www.casdar.ac.uk, and the Pathfinder Lead on Process Recording for the Physical Sciences Data Infrastructure (PSDI) Initiative – www.psdia.ac.uk. Samantha sits on the Advisory Boards for the Future Labs Live Conference in Basel, London Labs Live in the UK, the Machines Learning Chemistry Project at the University of Nottingham, and the Knowledge Project at the University of North Florida, in addition to being a member of the UK electronic information Group (UKeiG) STRIX Committee. She is also a regular columnist for the Lab Horizons Magazine under the name CompSci Cat, discussing important issues around process recording and FAIR data. Samantha's key research areas are ELNs, process recording, FAIR data, data stewardship and research data management, and semantic web technologies.



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Speakers: Data Steward Stories

Robert Darby (University of Reading)



After completing a PhD in modern languages and an MA in library and information studies, Robert worked as a librarian at STFC for several years before transferring to the University of Reading in 2014 to run the Research Data Management service. Alongside his role in supporting in data management, Robert has made substantial contributions to the University's open research culture, through outputs such as the [Open Research Handbook](#), alongside working with the UK Reproducibility Network on their [OR4 project](#). This talk will give a brief overview of my experience providing a university research data management service over the last 11 years and counting. I will discuss how I entered the world of research data management and came to work at the University of Reading, and will highlight and reflect on some of the things I have done over the years.



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Speakers: Data Steward Stories

Evangeline Gowie (University of Reading)

After an MA in forensic psychology, Evangeline started working in the prison system in forensic mental healthcare. In that role one of her responsibilities was to interview figures of public interest and analyse the qualitative data. When she moved into her role as the University of Reading's Open Research Coordinator and Administrator for the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN), Evangeline decided to start addressing the barriers to making qualitative data open and dedicated her time to her work on the manuscript 'Making interview transcripts open: Preliminary results from a scoping review' <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/pzyvt>

Alongside her research, Evangeline works as a Project Manager for the UKRN Open Research Programme's Sharing and Integrating team as well as maintaining an active role on the UKRN's OR4 team, which supports reward and recognition of Open Research practices.



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Speakers: Data Steward Stories

Angharad Green (ARC-UCL)



After a career as a researcher in the area of bacterial genomics and microbial evolution, Angharad became a senior research data steward at UCL. Her experience in whole genome sequencing, transcriptomics, and metabolomics gave her the necessary skills to provide support in the management of large, complex data sets and to train others to do so as well.

At the CaSDaR launch event Angharad will describe her journey from a research career, addressing the importance of antimicrobial resistance as a global challenge, to working as a data steward as well as present her poster on the work of the ARC-UCL data stewardship team.



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Speakers: Data Steward Stories

Anneke Lubben (University of Bath)

Anneke Lubben is Director of Research Infrastructure and Facilities at the University of Bath, where she leads the development and delivery of the university's research infrastructure strategy. Her work spans everything from capital investment and digital infrastructure to ensuring researchers have access to cutting-edge equipment, expert support, and sustainable, inclusive facilities. She's passionate about making infrastructure genuinely useful to the people who rely on it—whether that's through smarter spending, better resource sharing, or championing the technical staff who keep everything running.

Anneke's journey into research infrastructure began during her PhD, where she spent countless hours processing samples by mass spectrometry and discovered a love for tinkering with instruments and solving problems. That curiosity led her to Bruker Daltonics before returning to academia at Bath, where she built and led research facilities at both Department and Faculty levels. This work eventually evolved into the university-wide Core Research Facility department, which she now oversees.

Over nearly two decades at Bath, Anneke has remained committed to making sure equipment doesn't sit unused after a single project—a frustration that continues to drive her work today. She's also a strong advocate for technical staff and smarter infrastructure investment, and her leadership has earned her seats on strategic advisory boards for GW4, the Royce Institute, and various UKRI research councils. She currently chairs the UKRI Facilities Strategic Advisory Board for the national large-scale multidisciplinary facilities at Harwell, and sits on the UKRI Infrastructure Advisory Board. She's also led successful funding bids for major capital equipment and the X-CITED programme for Research Technical Professional (RTP) development. A personal highlight was being promoted to Professor of Research Infrastructure—despite not being a traditional academic. Outside of work, Anneke is known for her love of gin, well-organised spreadsheets, and being gently banned from touching instruments (her team is convinced she'll break something—and they may be right!). In today's talk, Anneke will share her journey, the lessons she's learned, and why RTPs are so crucial to the future of research.



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About our Project Partners

CaSDaR engaged with our project partners during the original funding application; the partners have continued to lend their support through representation on our management board.

Our partners represent the essential engagement that CaSDaR seeks to have with the research and data communities. If you feel that your community should be represented at the partnership level, then please email casdar@soton.ac.uk to start a discussion



PSDI
PHYSICAL SCIENCES
DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

PSDI accelerates research in the physical sciences, supporting researchers in chemistry, materials sciences and related fields by building on the data systems they already use. We provide access to diverse data sources, services, and tools, along with guidance and training for researchers and those who support them.



RN
UK UK Reproducibility
Network

The UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) is a national peer-led consortium that aims to ensure the UK retains its place as a centre for world-leading research. We do this by investigating the factors that contribute to robust research, promoting training activities, and disseminating best practice.



ELIXIR-UK provides platforms and guidance for research data management, reproducible data analysis, FAIR data and software management, related services, and standards. It offers cross-cutting and domain-specific services and provides data and software-related training, fellowships and workshops.



The Digital Curation Centre (DCC) is a world-leading centre of expertise in digital information curation with a focus on building capacity, capability and skills for research data management. DCC provides expert advice, practical help and resources on how to store, manage, protect and share digital research data.



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Speakers: Project Partners

Robert Andrews

(ELIXIR-UK)



ELIXIR-UK is a pan-European initiative to support development of data practices in the life sciences. Like CaSDaR, ELIXIR-UK is deeply invested in promoting FAIR data (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) across life sciences, and both CaSDaR and ELIXIR-UK contribute to the UK's and Europe's open science and research infrastructure agendas.

Working together provides opportunities for collaborating in areas such as promoting improvement in data quality and provenance, metadata quality to promote interoperability, and to increase stakeholder engagement across disciplines.

Speaker Bio: Robert is a senior lecturer in the school of medicine at the University of Cardiff, and his work addresses the challenges of Data Stewardship and building analysis workflow in the Life Sciences. He leads on training and bioinformatics, with an in-house analysis team, serving research leads within the Division of Infection and Immunity. He is also a board member of [ELIXIR-UK](#), which is the national Node of ELIXIR, where he is the colead for both the data management working group and the [ELIXIR-UK Data Stewardship](#). ELIXIR-UK is a project partner for CaSDaR and provides support in community building and on the management board.



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Speakers: Project Partners

Kevin Ashley

(DCC)

The Digital Curation Centre (DCC) is a UK-based leader in research data management and digital preservation. It supports institutions and researchers by offering expert guidance, tools, and training to ensure data is well-managed, accessible, and reusable. The DCC promotes best practices through models like the Curation Lifecycle and helps shape national and international data policies. The DCC and CaSDaR both advocate for better data management, community building, and capacity development. CaSDaR's push for formal recognition of data stewards complements the DCC's long-standing efforts to embed good data practices in research culture. As a listed project partner, the DCC is well-positioned to contribute its expertise and benefit from CaSDaR's work in shaping the future of data stewardship across disciplines.



Speaker Bio: Kevin Ashley is Director of the Digital Curation Center (<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/>) whose mission is to develop capability and capacity for research data curation worldwide. The DCC provides services for data management planning; advice and guidance; training; analysis and consultancy on all aspects of open science, data management and reuse. Kevin and other DCC staff also participate in international projects such as EOSCPilot, FOSTER+, promoting open research (fosteropenscience.eu), and Skills4EOSC. Amongst other roles, he is also chair of the SSI advisory board. Kevin's career has been spent in supporting research. At the Digital Archives Department at ULCC his team delivered services to organisations including the UK National Archives and the British Library, including the first service of its type in the world for government datasets, as well as the award-winning DPTP. His career began in a medical research unit devoted to innovative uses of IT in the support of clinical research and practice.



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Speakers: Project Partners

Jamie McQueen

(UKRN)



The UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) is dedicated to improving the quality and transparency of research. This is achieved by bringing together grassroots research networks within and across 70 UK institutions, as well as senior institutional leadership (in 45) and key partners, including publishers and funders. UKRN's organisation provides CaSDaR with significant and unique opportunities for collaboration on mutual objectives. This partnership is also crucial for UKRN, as it strengthens a vital area of the UK research sector's human infrastructure essential to its mission.

UKRN's initiatives include: generating evidence of the importance of Data Stewardship, providing a Train-the-Trainer program, and advocating for the recognition of Data Stewards. As the size and complexity of data grow, proper stewardship is critical for maintaining research rigour and transparency—essential for adherence to FAIR principles. These efforts align with CaSDaR's aims to build an inclusive community, develop career pathways, and embed high-quality data practices.

Speaker Bio: After a PhD in neuroscience, Jamie worked as a researcher in the field for several years before switching to work as a research data manager, based in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine at the University of Edinburgh. She recently became one of the University's Local Network Leads for the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) and will act as the UKRN representative for CaSDaR. The UKRN is involved as a project partner with CaSDaR, providing support at the management board level.



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Speakers: Project Partners

Nicola Knight

(PSDI)

PSDI is committed to advancing data-driven research across the physical sciences by fostering collaboration, innovation, and skills development through the best use of technology, best use of data and critically the best use of people. Its interest in the Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research (CaSDaR) network stems from a shared vision to equip researchers, especially early career scientists, with the digital and analytical capabilities needed to thrive in increasingly data-intensive environments. By supporting CaSDaR's activities, PSDI helps build a community that promotes interdisciplinary learning, career development, and the adoption of best practices in data stewardship. This aligns with PSDI's broader goals of enabling sustainable, scalable research infrastructures and empowering researchers to make meaningful contributions to scientific discovery through data.



Speaker Bio: Nicola Knight is a principal enterprise fellow at the University of Southampton and has been the project coordinator for the Physical Sciences Data Infrastructure (PSDI) since its inception in 2021. She coordinates activities across the whole of PSDI with a particular focus on the management activities and communications, engagement and training activities. The PSDI is represented in many levels of CaSDaR and has significant collaborations in place.



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Posters: Presenter

Thareq Barasabha

(University of Oxford)

When Metric Tools and Forms Seem to be Boring, Video Games Collect Cognitive Data



Abstract: Conventional metric tools and forms have low participant engagement and potential bias due to their repetitive and unengaging nature related to the collection of cognitive data. With the advancement of digital technology, mobile games can be powerful tools, not only for entertainment use but also for cognitive and physical rehabilitation training. The immersive experiences of gaming, if they can be aligned with scientific standards while maintaining high levels of player engagement, will enable continuous and passive collection of cognitive data. However, there are some challenges related to maintaining user engagement and the validity of the data acquired.

Method: Three mobile application-based video games were compared: Five Lives, Sea Hero Quest, and Lumosity. The data collected was classified into demographic data, behavioural data, and cognitive data.

Conclusion: Video games can be used to collect demography, cognitive components, and protective/maladaptive daily habits of the users, as an option to the conventional metric tools and forms.

Speaker Bio: Thareq is a digital health and health technology enthusiast holding a Bachelor of Medical Science, Medical Doctor, and Master of Science in Engineering degrees. In Indonesia, he worked as a lecturer at Universitas Brawijaya, Malang and founded several health-tech startups ([DGscope.id](#), [m3Dtools.id](#), [Snepy.id](#)). He is actively involved in various innovative research projects focusing on areas such as disease prevention, telemedicine, and medical device development. He also has experience as a training coordinator in an HIV prevention program at the provincial level, as a chief editor in a couple of journals, and as a public speaker at some events. Thareq works as a researcher at Dementias Platform UK group & Five Lives whilst studying for a D.Phil degree in Psychiatry at The University of Oxford. His research studies are focused on the gamification of cognitive remediation therapy for people with mild cognitive impairment. He is very interested in acquiring data using mobile games and data transfer in the telemedicine system. With a strong passion for leveraging technology to improve mankind's health, Thareq is dedicated to driving innovation, promoting education, and making a positive impact in the field of health technology. He loves to collaborate with people. Feel free to contact him via email: thareq.barasabha@psych.ox.ac.uk.



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Posters: Presenter

Oliver Brough

(STFC)

Supporting FAIR: Experiences in Improving the Scores on the Doors

Abstract: The UK Energy Research Centre (www.ukerc.ac.uk) undertakes “Independent whole systems research for a sustainable energy future”. The Energy Data Centre is a capability of UKERC and provides a discovery portal and data management expertise for researchers funded through UKERC. Ensuring that the content and the service supports the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) principles has been a focus over the last year, working with both the FAIR-IMPACT (1st open call for expert support (Route 1) | FAIR-IMPACT) repository support programme and partnering in the Data Infrastructure for National Infrastructures (DINI) pilot study. This poster will detail our thinking and practice for policy, ontology standards, machine access to our content and FAIR assessment tools.

We have reviewed our policies to ensure that FAIR is at the heart of them, comparing that with the policy approach of the digital preservation community to bring the best of both together.

We have reviewed the energy ontology landscape, which is crucial to the I in FAIR and this poster will summarise the findings of this. Energy is a very multi-disciplinary community and identifying “community” standards is a challenge.

We have defined the requirement for the creation of a FAIR-enabled API, including how a repository can demonstrate trustworthiness. We have reviewed the automated FAIR assessment tools and considered what would be useful to display for our users.

Speaker bio: After completing his Master of Physics at the University of Leicester, Oliver started working as a Graduate Energy Data Steward for the UK Energy Data Centre (EDC) at the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), supporting researchers funded by the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC) to make their outputs FAIR by design.

In his poster presentation, Oliver will describe how the EDC’s work has supported alignment with the FAIR principles through a review of both its policies and the energy ontology landscape, the creation of a FAIR-enabled API, and the use of FAIR assessment tools.



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Posters: Presenter

Hannah Dean

(UKCEH)

Liaison and Lego®: development of a Data Stewardship Team



Abstract: Almost 20 years ago, the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) recognised the need to improve data management practices. This led to the creation of the Informatics Liaison Network, staff connected through discipline-specific data expertise, distributed across all our sites. As UKCEH has developed its ambition to make the world a better place through science addressing climate change, promoting biodiversity and creating sustainable ecosystems, the network has evolved into the Data Stewardship Team. After initially encountering scepticism, we have moved on from being perceived as data management plan enforcers by improving our ways of working, including introducing tools such as the Data Stewardship Wizard for data management planning, augmented by targeted guidance through our Research Data Management (RDM) Portal. We have built a portfolio of well-received RDM training courses, on topics such as Findable, Reusable, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) data and the reproducible transformation of environmental data. However, the core of our work is still very much liaison with researchers at all stages of the data lifecycle, with an overarching aim to make research data and other digital objects increasingly FAIR. And Lego®? It turns out researchers love a bit of practical, informative play in their training!

Speaker Bio: Hannah works as a Senior Data Steward at the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH), combining knowledge of the scientific research process with how things work in the real world to provide advice, guidance and assistance in managing data. Much of Hannah's work revolves around maintaining the security and integrity and publishing of data. Within projects, Hannah provides practical solutions by designing, creating and maintaining data storage systems and databases, improve the quality of data through bespoke electronic recording forms and automated workflows for transfer and checking of data. In this poster presentation today, Hannah will detail how liaison with researchers is at the heart of work in a Data Stewardship Team.



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Posters: Presenter

Anna Korzeniowska

(eLife Publishing Ltd)

Abstract: The potential for replicability and reproducibility of an experiment is vital for trustworthy research and to verify claims made when publishing the research. However, there are increasing reports of cancer study designs not being reproducible. Detailed contents of the methods sections of manuscripts are essential for replicability. This is a moral imperative when considering experimental animal research undertaken in accordance with ASPA and for compliance with the 3Rs initiative (Reduce, Refine, Replace), as researchers should show that they are undertaking animal experimentation with an appropriate level of care and consideration towards the experimental animals. However, there is no established method for assessing the replicability of animal models during peer review, and whilst there exist papers that describe how to embed practices to support making models replicable at the point of experimental design, we propose that promotion of extensive reporting in methods sections may be a way of promoting perceived replicability of animal models to ensure trust in research, with a focus on mouse models of breast and prostate cancer. To support method sharing, we plan to generate a checklist by searching available literature and consulting with researchers to determine the factors that should be included in methods sections to ensure replicability, then determine the representation of those factors in mouse models of breast and prostate cancer described in manuscripts to determine the current level of perceived replicability in these manuscripts.

Speaker Bio: Anna Korzeniowska is Research Culture Manager at eLife Sciences Publications. Anna has a PhD in comparative psychology, focusing on multimodal perception in domestic dogs, from the University of Sussex, UK. She has previously worked in the animal behaviour and welfare sector as an animal welfare assistant for a large UK animal welfare charity and as pet behaviour counsellor and trainer. During her PhD Anna developed a keen interest in open research and in 2022 she joined the University of Surrey as Open Research Coordinator to work on the UKRN Open Research Programme. She has also worked on projects around researcher development and research culture at the University of Southampton. Currently, Anna works at eLife, an innovative non-profit publisher in life and medical sciences, where she looks after several projects around researcher assessment and equity, diversity and inclusion in research.



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Posters: Presenter

Matthew Nicholls

(UKCEH)

Data management planning at UKCEH using the Data Stewardship Wizard



Abstract: Effective data management is essential for addressing complex environmental challenges at UKCEH. The Data Stewardship Wizard (DSW) is a questionnaire-driven tool that helps researchers create comprehensive Data Management Plans (DMPs) aligned with the FAIR principles. Researchers are guided through domain-specific questions supported by bespoke guidance. Responses provide instant feedback in the form of FAIR data metrics, informing good data management practice. DSW automatically converts responses into a variety of prose-style DMPs that meet institutional and funder requirements, saving time for both researchers and data stewards. The DSW highlights a growing skillset for data stewards including tailoring and maintaining community guidance, supporting researchers in understanding requirements, and ensuring consistency and quality across diverse projects. The tool's development also draws on technical expertise that is increasingly valuable for a subset of data stewards, such as working with APIs, templating, and automation. Our recent developments at UKCEH include a reporting tool that aggregates DMP responses across the organisation, providing insights that can highlight data-related trends, inform resource planning and surface new opportunities.

We have also incorporated UKCEH's ethics checklist, demonstrating how data stewards can collaborate across teams that support the research process. The DSW has been extended for use by NERC grant holders across multiple disciplines via the NERC Environmental Data Service (EDS). The development of the DSW at UKCEH and NERC EDS illustrates the growing opportunities for data stewards to influence practice at project, institutional, and funder levels

Speaker Bio: Matt is a Data Steward - Technical Specialist in the Digital Research group at Lancaster for the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology. Matt leads the technical development of data management tools for both the Environmental Information Data Centre (EIDC) and the Data Stewardship Team. Matt's work also includes facilitating the ingestion of FAIR environmental data into the EIDC and supporting the centre's day-to-day operations. Matt also contributes to data science and integration projects that improve the discoverability and usability of environmental datasets from UKCEH and other sources.



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Posters: Presenter

Matthew Partridge

(PSDI)

How we are stewarding the Physical Chemistry Properties Data Collection to be the best data collection is can be

Abstract: The Physical Chemistry Properties Data Collection (PChemProp), hosted on the Physical Sciences Data Infrastructure (PSDI), is an evolving data collection designed to curate and share high-quality, machine-readable physical chemistry data. This poster presents the current scope of PChemProp, including datasets covering melting points, solubilities, and other key properties, aggregated from diverse sources. It outlines our systematic auditing processes—focusing on metadata completeness, unit standardisation, provenance tracking, and duplicate reconciliation—to ensure the integrity and FAIRness of every entry. We also highlight new developments, including the transition to a JSON-based MongoDB backend, integration of AI-assisted ingestion workflows, and adoption of tools like ProperSea and M-layer to improve semantic structure and unit handling. Looking ahead, we are expanding community engagement and interoperability through schema alignment with OPTIMADE and future web interfaces. This poster showcases how we are stewarding PChemProp to be a robust, sustainable, and valuable resource for researchers and data-driven modelling.



Speaker Bio: Dr Matthew Partridge is a Senior Enterprise Fellow and the Director of outreach and schools liaison for the School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering at the University of Southampton. His research background spans the interdisciplinary boundaries between chemistry, physics, and biology, with a particular focus on applied and analytical systems. Since the start of 2025, he has been leading the development of the Physical Chemistry Properties Data Collection as part of the Physical Sciences Data Infrastructure (PSDI) initiative. Alongside his research, he is a science communicator known for his outreach work through ErrantScience and other public engagement projects.



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Posters: Presenter

Xenia Perez Sitja

(ELIXIR-UK)

Connecting communities and resources for better RDM and data stewardship: ELIXIR-UK's contribution



Abstract: ELIXIR-UK is at the forefront of research data management (RDM) and data stewardship, with a strong focus on the life sciences but expertise that readily translates across disciplines. Within ELIXIR, we co-lead the RDM Community and coordinate the development of the Data Stewardship Handbook, a collaborative resource that captures good practices and guidance from organisations across Europe. Alongside this, we contribute to flagship ELIXIR resources such as the RDMkit, the FAIR Cookbook, and FAIRsharing, which together provide researchers and stewards with practical solutions, standards, and decision-support tools for making data FAIR. The ELIXIR-UK RDM Club supports this work at the grassroots level by providing a regular, open forum for UK researchers, data stewards, and support professionals to share knowledge and strengthen practice. Meetings highlight real-world experiences, covering topics such as data management planning, metadata standards, repositories, and stewardship workflows. By fostering peer-to-peer learning and community exchange, the RDM Club builds local capacity while feeding into broader European efforts. Through this combination of national coordination, international leadership, and community-driven engagement, ELIXIR-UK is advancing the professionalisation of data stewardship, amplifying UK expertise across Europe and benefiting from collective knowledge, and equipping researchers with the skills and resources to make their data sustainable and reusable

Speaker Bio: With a BSc in Biomedicine and an MSc in Science Communication, Xenia has spent her time diving into outreach and community management for European and national projects, covering areas like aquaculture, bioinformatics and data stewardship. She has also worked for the private sector as a marketing consultant for international life sciences recruitment firms and UK London HealthTech SME and co-hosting a non-profit podcast for alternative careers in STEM. In her poster presentation, Xenia will detail how ELIXIR-UK has paved the way for communities to promote good RDM practices, and led the development of tools, training resources and knowledge.



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Posters: Presenter

Phil Reed

(University of Manchester)

mTeSS-X: Scaling the TeSS for federated training portals across international research infrastructures

Abstract: As researchers increasingly rely on complex, data-driven methods, there is an urgent need for robust, interoperable infrastructure to support the organisation, discovery, and reuse of training resources, which also motivates use of RDM infrastructures. The mTeSS-X Project (Multi-space Training e-Support System with eXchange <https://elixirtess.github.io/mTeSS-X>) overcomes the fragmentation of training resources across Research Infrastructures (RIs) and the European Science Clusters. The project aims to enhance existing TeSS-based training registries or catalogues like ELIXIR TeSS (life sciences) and PaN-Training (photon and neutron) by building an aggregator (TeSSHub) for these and similar platforms. Designed to be flexible and community-driven, mTeSS-X enables institutions and research infrastructures to operate autonomous training registries that can exchange metadata across a shared, standards-compliant ecosystem. The project addresses the challenge to enrich metadata and align with best practices for metadata quality and contributes to the fulfilment of the latest data strategies from our communities.

Each deployed mTeSS-X instance is going to support multiple , self-contained tenants that support local customization while adhering to common interoperability protocols. Tenants are capable of harvesting and enriching metadata from internal or external sources and can share selected content with other instances or aggregators. This federated model supports the FAIR principles by decentralising data stewardship while enabling global findability and reuse.

Speaker Bio: Phil Reed is the Research Community and Training Manager at the eScience Lab, at The University of Manchester, working with European and global partners such as ELIXIR to further facilitate and encourage FAIR and reproducible research practices. He is one of the 2025 cohort of Software Sustainability Institute (SSI) Fellows. Previous roles include Library Carpentry Curriculum Advisory Committee member, Teaching and Learning Librarian, Data Specialist, Research Associate and Software Developer. Qualifications include Senior Fellowship of AdvanceHE, Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education, The Carpentries Instructor and BSc Computer Science (1st Class Honours). In Phil's lightning talk today, Phil will elaborate on the DIRECT Framework, which has been created to support skills development for Digital Research Technical Professionals and in the poster presentation Phil will present the development of the mTeSS-X project including its impact on the training registries of European research infrastructures.



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Posters: Presenter

Dorothea Seiler Vellame

(University of Exeter)

Coordinating Data for the UK Human Functional Genomics Initiative



Abstract: The UK Human Functional Genomics Initiative (FGx) serves as a hub of support for trainees and professionals within the UK's functional genomics space. It is a network of academics, clinicians and industry partners structured into thematic research clusters that will together produce an abundance of omics, imaging and clinical data. To coordinate this data and embed core data standards and practices into the wider field of functional genomics, the FGx has established a dedicated Data Coordination Centre (DCC). The DCC is a highly collaborative endeavour. As well as working with FGx research clusters, the DCC will also work with other external partners such as EMBL-EBI, BioFAIR and the UKRI National Mouse Genetics Network. The DCC aims to improve metadata standards, develop research workflows for standardised data cleaning and analysis, improve ease of data linkage, and upskill the community in data stewardship and FAIR. We remain in our infancy and are working to uncover current data standards across FGx clusters and identify common needs across the functional genomics community. We have the opportunity to establish and enact best practice, and welcome thoughts and examples from other aligned data steward efforts.

Speaker Bio: Dorothea is a newly appointed Research Data Steward based at the University of Exeter in the Data Coordination Centre (DCC) within the UKRI/MRC funded UK Human Functional Genomics Initiative. The DCC aims to enable scientists to find, use, and share data generated by the Initiative, increasing the speed of scientific breakthroughs. Prior to joining the DCC, she worked as a Data Scientist for 3 years across a wide range of projects, spanning health, engineering, water management, finance and others, and became familiar with a wide range of data types. Dorothea received a PhD in Bioinformatics with Associate Prof. Eilis Hannon and Prof. Jon Mill from the University of Exeter, funded by the BBSRC and Eli Lilly, which focused on improving reproducibility of DNA methylation studies through the development of novel tools. She was an active member of the Exeter branch of UK Reproducibility Network and has a strong interest in FAIR and reproducible science. Dorothea also had a BSc in Mathematics from the University of Exeter.



CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for
Data-driven Research

Posters: Presenter

Cerys Willoughby

(PSDI)

Designing support strategies for enabling cultural change in data practices for the physical sciences

Abstract: Support strategies, such as training and resource provision, are essential in the process of improving the uptake of practices aligned with research excellence. This poster describes how the Physical Sciences Data Infrastructure (PSDI), an initiative developed in response to a disciplinary need, has developed resources and infrastructure to promote a cultural shift towards implementing sustainable data practices. This poster shows how PSDI has sought input from key stakeholders and worked with different partners to identify community needs for in-person and self-paced training, guidance resources, webinars, and workshops that provide the opportunity for peer discussion and learning. (This is a handmade poster and will also be displayed at the PSDI Showcase)



Speaker Bio: Dr. Cerys Willoughby is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Southampton. Cerys has been collaborating with the School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering at Southampton for nearly 20 years after working as a usability expert for IBM. She has had involvement in various projects focusing on how technology can be used to support researchers in the physical sciences. Her research interests include record-keeping and process recording in science, digital notebooks and ELNs, data management and curation, metadata capture, researcher behaviour, and storytelling in science.



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Speakers: Data Steward Initiatives

Jenny O'Neill (Sonraí)



Sonraí (the Irish word for data) is the Irish Data Stewardship Network. Initially developed with support from the 2022 Open Research Fund call from Ireland's National Open Research Forum (NORF), Sonraí has continued to evolve and develop. Our mission is to foster, enable and advocate for the development of research data stewardship and data stewards nationally. We have established network governance, developed our "Am I a data steward?" quiz, organised our first national conference and our first Masterclass. With support from the NORF 2025 Open Research Fund we are also developing a micro-credential in Data Stewardship, creating a model for how we develop discipline specific curricula and establishing a data champions program nationally.

Speaker Bio: Jenny is a Research Engagement Officer with HEAnet, Ireland's National Research and Education Network and the EOSC Mandated Organisation for Ireland. In this role Jenny has developed relationships with the Irish research community, leveraging the HEAnet service portfolio and fostering innovative collaborations. Jenny previously worked as Data Manager with UCD Library where she was responsible for management and service delivery of Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA) and she provided researchers in UCD with guidance, training and support in all aspects of research data management. Jenny been involved in various national initiatives, including membership of the National Open Research Forum (NORF) Working Group on enabling FAIR research data and contributed to the National Open Research Landscape Report. She is also a project partner of the Sonraí - Irish Data Stewardship Network, reflecting her commitment to advancing Open Research and promoting Data Stewardship practices.



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Speakers: Data Steward Initiatives Emma Karoune (The Turing Way)

Professionalising data stewards and all the 'others'.

The interdisciplinary nature of the data science workforce extends beyond the traditional notion of a "data scientist" and we should therefore recognise and strive to professionalise all the 'other' roles that are part of the data science workforce. A successful data science team requires a wide range of technical expertise, domain knowledge and leadership capabilities. To strengthen such a team-based approach, we (myself and Malvika Sharan) recommend that institutions, funders and policymakers invest in developing and professionalising a more diverse set of roles, including digital research technical professional roles, such as data stewards, therefore fostering a resilient data science ecosystem for the future.

I will highlight work we have done in this area, including The Turing Way project - Professionalising traditional and infrastructure research roles in data science, in which we documented the different roles and competencies that make up data science teams at Turing and my current project, Advancing Biomedical Data Science Careers, which seeks to understand the current landscape of skills, roles and team approaches in this area.

By recognising and professionalising these diverse specialist roles and how they collaborate within interdisciplinary teams, organisations can leverage deep expertise across multiple skill sets, enhancing responsible decision-making and fostering innovation at all levels. Ultimately, we seek to shift the perception of data science professionals from the conventional view of individual data scientists to a competency-based model of specialist roles within a team, each essential to the success of data science initiatives. See policy briefing note here: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14946850>

Speaker Bio: After completing her PhD in Paleoecology, Emma worked in the education sector before moving back into academia to work as a Principal Investigator on the FAIR Phytoliths project at Historic England. Whilst in this role, Emma was also working part-time as a Research Associate at The Alan Turing Institute; she worked on various open science and community building projects including The Turing Way, DECOVID and the Turing-RSS Health Data Lab. She now works full time at Turing as a Principal Researcher, leading the Research Community Management Team and the Advancing Biomedical Data Science Careers Project. She promotes embedding open research practices, community building, and ensuring EDI best practice in data science projects.



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Speakers: Data Steward Initiatives

James Wilson (ARC-UCL)

Research Data Stewardship at UCL



Abstract: A brief overview of how UCL is addressing the challenges of Research Data Stewardship from an institutional perspective, including our approach to professionalising the role, involving the community, and working on both research and services.

Speaker Bio: James has been involved in research data management in university settings for over 15 years, working with researchers from various disciplines and leading projects developing software, services, and infrastructure. He joined UCL as Head of Research Data Services in 2016, initially as part of the university's central Information Services Division, latterly as a member of UCL's Centre for Advanced Research Computing (ARC). During that time, he has led the development of their Research Data Storage Service, implemented their Research Data Repository, and established an institutional Electronic Research Notebook. More recently, he has built a team of professional Research Data Stewards, who collaborate with research teams and academic departments to help ensure data is well managed and as FAIR as possible. His academic background is in 18th-Century English Literature and the history of ideas, although that now seems like a very long time ago..



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Speakers: Data Steward Initiatives

Tristan Martin

(University of Manchester)

Making the Case in Challenging Times: The University of Manchester Data Stewardship Project

Since the launch of the Office for Open Research at the University of Manchester in 2022 the Library has been undertaking a project on research data stewardship, in close partnership with Research IT and the University's Research Lifecycle Programme. It aims to develop and professionalise and enhance the data stewardship support and data steward community at Manchester, aiding researchers in the transition to a FAIR data research culture. This talk will explore the progress we have made so far, the ambitions we have for the future of the project, in addition to reflections on the challenges faced in making the case for data stewards and data stewardship in a higher education environment in which resources and budgets are under intense scrutiny.



Speaker Bio: Tristan's current role is Open Research Librarian, Office for Open Research, University of Manchester Library. He leads on research data stewardship for the Research Data Management team and has been a member of the Open Research team since 2018. Before joining the University of Manchester, he completed a PhD in Politics at Newcastle University, UK. His current focus is leading on developing and expanding the data stewardship infrastructure and community at the University of Manchester via the Research Data Stewardship project, a collaboration between the University's Research Lifecycle Programme and the Library. He is also the Research IT CaDiR (Computation and Data in Research) Community Team Leader for the Research Data Stewardship Community.



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Speakers: Data Steward Initiatives

Michael Bearpark (STEP-UP/SCALE-UP)



The shared purpose of STEP-UP and SCALE-UP is to build support and training networks for digital Research Technical Professionals (dRTPs), starting with the needs and experience of Research Software Engineering in defining itself over the past decade, and extending this to research data and digital research infrastructure / HPC roles.

STEP-UP is a regional project, an EPSRC Strategic Technical Platform focussed on London and surroundings. Its central aim is to help define and establish 'dRTP' and to support those who've chosen these roles. 'Data' was really the starting point for this work, as I'll explain, but 'research data engineer' and 'data steward' aren't the same, presenting challenges in developing training at different levels, and elsewhere.

SCALE-UP - no acronym - is a UKRI / NERC Network Plus, and is designed to share developments from STEP-UP and elsewhere nationally, primarily through managing a flexible fund for targeted dRTP initiatives across research software, data and digital infrastructures. Through scaling and supporting groups of research technical champions there's an opportunity to adapt training for specific research domains, while also raising awareness of the work of digital Research Technical Professionals and how important this is. There will be support available for hosting longer placements e.g. in central research computing teams for software / data / infrastructure, and mini compute clusters to support infrastructure training specifically and to make research computing more visible.

Speaker Bio: Michael Bearpark is a professor of computational chemistry at Imperial College London and Academic Director of Research Computing Services. He's part of the STEP-UP regional and SCALE-UP national initiatives which support the development of communities, skills and career opportunities for "digital Research Technical Professionals (dRTPs)" across software, data and infrastructure.



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Speakers: Data Steward Initiatives

Kevin Ashley (European Initiatives)

European initiatives to support data stewards are increasing their focus on professionalising the role and embedding it within the Open Research and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data landscape. The EOSC Association complements this by offering a roadmap with strategic recommendations to enhance data stewardship training, career paths, and institutional recognition. Organisations collaborate to mainstream Open Science practices, improve research data management, and ensure that data stewards are equipped with the necessary skills and institutional support. Projects such as Skills4EOSC and FAIR-IMPACT have sought to provide resources to maintain research excellence. Ultimately, these coordinated efforts aim to elevate data stewardship as a recognised and essential profession within the European research ecosystem.



Speaker Bio: Kevin Ashley is Director of the Digital Curation Center (<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/>) whose mission is to develop capability and capacity for research data curation worldwide. The DCC provides services for data management planning; advice and guidance; training; analysis and consultancy on all aspects of open science, data management and reuse. Kevin and other DCC staff also participate in international projects such as EOSCPilot, FOSTER+, promoting open research (fosteropenscience.eu), and Skills4EOSC. Amongst other roles, he is also chair of the SSI advisory board. Kevin's career has been spent in supporting research. At the Digital Archives Department at ULCC his team delivered services to organisations including the UK National Archives and the British Library, including the first service of its type in the world for government datasets, as well as the award-winning DPTP. His career began in a medical research unit devoted to innovative uses of IT in the support of clinical research and practice.



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Speakers: Lightning talks

Elizabeth Newbold

(UKRI-STFC)

Career Tracks for Data Stewards

Abstract: “What does a career track for data stewards look like?” If we want to consider career tracks for data stewards, we need to understand what the current situation is and the factors influencing career progression. The RDA Professionalising Data Stewardship IG conducted a survey and published a report “what does a career track for data stewards look like?” that explored the issues in an international context. The report (and accompanying data set) provides an evidence base for understanding how professional fulfilling data stewardship roles, but not necessarily formally identified as data stewards, perceive their career paths. The outputs of the survey led to the formation of the RDA Working Group Data Steward Career tracks which aims to develop a methodology for creating data steward personas and a sample set of personas linked to career tracks. This lightning talk will highlight some of the findings from the initial report and the status of the work from the recently formed working group.



Speaker Bio: Elizabeth is the Open Science Theme Lead at the Science and Technology Facilities Council (UKRI-STFC). The Open Science Theme includes activities related to data stewardship, open repositories and library services. She has a background in scientific information and libraries with a focus on open access, FAIR and open data. She has contributed to European Union funded projects in the areas of FAIR data and was the work package lead for a FAIR Competence Centre for the EC Funded FAIRsFAIR project (2019 – 2022) with a focus on professionalising data stewardship. Elizabeth is active in the international data community and is co-chair of the Research Data Alliance Career Tracks for Data Stewards Working Group. The work of which will be the focus of her talk today.



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Speakers: Lightning talks

Catherine Jones

(UKRI-STFC)

Data Sharing challenges for Energy Modellers: outcomes of a workshop

Abstract: The Energy Data Centre (EDC) is a specialised repository and preservation service for the energy community and supports UK Energy Research Centre's (UKERC) researchers to perform data management planning. The team includes both Data Stewards and Research Software Engineers.

The EDC, in collaboration with the Data Infrastructure for National Infrastructure pilot project, ran a workshop in October 2024 focussed on the data sharing challenges for researchers who create and use energy models. This was a follow-on from a UKERC and the Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions workshop in 2023 on data sharing for Energy consortia which recommended further consideration for energy modelling.

The workshop explored the different dimensions of energy models (scale, complexity, size of developer team, open or closed data), identified what were the main barriers to sharing both input and output data and suggested some recommendations to improve the landscape. Key messages included that working in multi-disciplinary field, such as energy, means that there is not just one community set of expectation or standards and that for some energy researchers using operational data from commercial companies is crucial. These and other important outcomes will be discussed in the lightning talk.



Speaker bio: Catherine leads Energy Data Centre, which is a capability of the UK Energy Research Centre and she is based at the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC). Catherine has a wide experience in providing information systems and services to the academic community, both within and external to STFC, using her software engineering and information management expertise to deliver effective services to user communities. Her personal research interests are the digital curation of software & data, persistent identification of software; linking research outputs (data, publications and software) and career paths for Research Software Engineers and Data Stewards. In her lightning talk today, she will describe the outcomes of a workshop to discuss challenges in data sharing for energy modellers.



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Speakers: Lightning talks

Ric Campbell

(University of Sheffield)

First Sheffield then the North: Creation of Research Data Stewards Networks



Abstract: The increasing need and awareness to make data and software FAIR in order to support the sharing and reuse of non-publication outputs, including the lack of concise and practical guidance on how to achieve this in the context of specific data types and disciplines has led to a various approaches being tried and trialed. This presentation will detail the recent and ongoing work done at both the University of Sheffield level and further afield across the N8 institutions. It will explore both success and failure (often a precursor to success), and ask if a network is a good start or a reasonable end point.

Speaker Bio: Having previously worked as a data steward at the University of Sheffield, to support the adoption of FAIR practices for research data and software, Ric currently works as a data scientist, and as part of this other role as the RDM Theme lead for the N8 CIR has set up a data stewardship network for the N8 research partnership, a collaboration of the eight most research intensive organisation in the North of England. In this lightning talk today, Ric will describe the ongoing creation of a data stewardship network within the N8 institutions.



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Speakers: Lightning talks

David Leaver (UKCEH)

Data Stewardship in an Environmental Research Centre: the UKCEH model



Abstract: The UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) ambition is to make the world a better place through science addressing climate change, promoting biodiversity and creating sustainable ecosystems. Effective data stewardship and management supports research integrity and transparency in tackling these challenges. The UKCEH Data Stewardship Team (DST) provides expert guidance on data management and stewardship, and the use of digital infrastructures.

The DST consists of ten data stewards with discipline-specific expertise, distributed across four sites. A key focus of the team is support to researchers in data management planning using the Data Stewardship Wizard, augmented by targeted guidance through a Research Data Management (RDM) Portal. DST members also work on the curation of datasets for the Environmental Information Data Centre (EIDC), and many are practitioners in their own research field, which enables them to effectively support researchers at all stages of the data lifecycle, with an overarching aim to make research data and other digital objects increasingly Findable, Reusable, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR). The DST has developed a portfolio of RDM training courses, on topics such as FAIR data and the reproducible transformation of environmental data, which are offered to NERC PhD students and external organisations. Data stewards play a vital role in fostering a culture of FAIR data at UKCEH and across the wider environmental science community.

Speaker Bio: David Leaver is co-lead of the UKCEH Data Stewardship Team, where he plays a key role in advancing the development of FAIR data practices in the organisation. He leads the technical development and operation of the Data Stewardship Wizard tool for data management planning within UKCEH and the NERC Environmental Data Service. With a background in Chemistry and Atmospheric Sciences, David works across science, data, and software teams to improve data workflows, QA/QC processes, and integration-ready datasets. He also develops interactive tools for data dissemination and manages dataset ingestions into the NERC Environmental Information Data Centre (EIDC).



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Speakers: Lightning talks

Phil Reed

(University of Manchester)

DIRECT Framework: UK Community Development of a Research Technical Professionals Skills Framework



Abstract: As digital research becomes more integrated into the arts and humanities sectors, the role of digital Research Professionals has become increasingly vital, facilitating collaboration and innovation.

This term Digital Research Technical Professional (dRTP) is broader than Research Software Engineer (RSE) and data stewards, roles well-defined at many institutions in the UK. The growing demand for such roles has highlighted the need for clearer definitions of the skills and pathways for professional development. To address this gap, a new national 'Digital Research Competencies Framework (DIRECT Framework)' is proposed – a community-driven resource designed to define, visualise and track the progression of skills. The Toolkit offers a structured collection of skills, accompanied by visualisations. It provides value to individuals, allowing them to periodically assess their skills and identify opportunities for progression. Managers will benefit from a clear and transparent view of their team, aiding in task allocation. The Toolkit also covers non-technical skills, including management and interpersonal skills. This presentation briefly describes the latest Toolkit work, and looks at how an open tool can be built and applied if there is appropriate initiative and commitment from the community. We will continue to collaboratively review the framework to enhance our collective understanding, ensure alignment with wider community goals, and identify any gaps, inconsistencies, or overlooked aspects of the framework that may need further consideration or improvement.

Speaker Bio: Phil Reed is the Research Community and Training Manager at the eScience Lab, at The University of Manchester, working with European and global partners such as ELIXIR to further facilitate and encourage FAIR and reproducible research practices. He is one of the 2025 cohort of Software Sustainability Institute (SSI) Fellows.

Previous roles include Library Carpentry Curriculum Advisory Committee member, Teaching and Learning Librarian, Data Specialist, Research Associate and Software Developer. Qualifications include Senior Fellowship of AdvanceHE, Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education, The Carpentries Instructor and BSc Computer Science (1st Class Honours). In Phil's lightning talk today, Phil will elaborate on the DIRECT Framework, which has been created to support skills development for Digital Research Technical Professionals.



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