

CaSDaR's Monthly Newsletter: December 2025

Issue Date: December 9, 2025

In This Issue...

We discuss CaSDaR's [launch](#) event, the exciting launch of our first [Funding Call](#) to provide an evidence base of the effect of Data Stewardship, share information about our [online platform](#) for community discussions, introduce our lovely mascot, [Cassie](#), and let you know about our [future events](#).



CaSDaR's Launch

CaSDaR launched on the 18th September 2025 with a hybrid townhall event, held at The Library of Birmingham and online. The team were extremely pleased with the attendance, with 75 people attending in person and 90 people attending online. We had a packed schedule on the day, including: sessions to introduce CaSDaR, examples of Data Steward Stories, a panel session with our [project partners](#), a community consultation, lightning talks and posters by attendees. We also introduced the aims of our funding call, and, most importantly, introduce our mascot Cassie.

A report of the event, including the event agenda and outcomes of the sessions can be seen [here](#), talk slides and posters are deposited in CaSDaR's zenodo [project page](#), and recordings of the event can be seen in the [Townhall Playlist](#) on CaSDaR's [YouTube Channel](#).



Figure 1: The in-person Townhall attendees

Launching our first Funding Call

We believe that data stewards are the unsung heroes of modern research and need more recognition, as well as defined career pathways, and community support to progress in their roles. Data stewards ensure that data is not just collected, but curated, shared, and reused in ways that accelerate discovery and innovation.

Part of the remit of CaSDaR is to provide an evidence base showing the value of embedding data stewardship into research workflows; we feel that a sustainable way of doing this is to fund data stewards in research organisations. CaSDaR has flexible funds allocated to enable development of projects, forming an evidence base to display the relevance of introducing data stewards in the UK across multiple disciplines and organisations.

We have developed two types of grants that our community can apply for:

- **£5k mini project funds** – these are intended to be short-term projects to provide experience of Data Stewardship for individuals who would like to learn more about it as a career option; and
- **£70 large project funds** – these are intended to be longer term projects for individuals who are established in their careers, and have a project that they are interested in developing to demonstrate the value of their work.

The Funding Call was launched on the 5th November 2025 with an online webinar, which can be viewed on CaSDaR's [YouTube channel](#) and the [slides are also available](#). FAQs about the funding call are [available](#) and more information about our funding call is on our [website](#).

The deadline for grant submissions is the 22nd January 2026. We're really excited about this funding call, and we hope that our community is too.

Launching the Online Platform

We did not expect that one of the most controversial topics of our launch event would be the choice of our online platform, but it turns out that we have a lot to learn! Our community had some feelings about it.



Figure 2: Community input into selection of the online platform

Based on these opinions, we decided to move forward using a Discord server. Discord has a low barrier to entry, is non-proprietary, can be used on different devices, is easy to

moderate, and retains information for long periods of time. We will still use the mailing list for all official communication, as we know that not everyone wants to be connected via routes other than email.

The Discord server is now **live** and we have created some starter channels such as:

- Resources;
- Skills and Training;
- Upcoming events; and
- Pets of CaSDaR.

The Discord server is, of course, Cassie approved! **Come and say hi** - otherwise it's going to look like we made the Discord server just to post pictures of our cats....

Cassie's Corner

We introduced our brilliant mascot, Cassie, at our launch event on the 18th September 2025 and to say that she was popular was an understatement! We've had requests for more stickers, been emailed questions about her, and she has even made fleeting appearances on CaSDaR's **social media**.



Figure 3: Cassie, with the help of PSDI's Sharkcat, trying to warn Dr. Octopus about the dangers of not creating data inventories

We named her Cassie as a shortened version of Cassandra; she's a Data Steward who tries her best to tell people about what will happen in their future if they don't look after their data, however sometimes people don't believe her... She'll continue to make appearances wherever the CaSDaR team are represented, so keep an eye out for her!

Cassie's top Data Stewarding tip for December 2025: keep track of your Persistent Identifiers. They *should* be permanent but sometimes identifiers such as DOIs can break, for all sorts of reasons. Routinely schedule an opportunity to check persistent identifiers associated with your outputs or, even better, **automate it**.

Future Events

We're very excited to announce some upcoming events, from us, project partners, and others that are relevant to the CaSDaR community:

- An item that created a lot of positive feedback at our Townhall event was the Data Steward Stories slot, so we're really excited to announce the first in a series of this event. On the 10th December 2025, 11.00-12.00, **James Steele** will give an overview of how supporting Data Stewardship has shaped his career. Register for this event on [Eventbrite](#);
- We will run a Q&A session for CaSDaR's funding call on the 12th December 2025 at 12.00-13.00, see [here](#) to sign up for this event;
- One of our project partners, the **Physical Sciences Data Infrastructure** is hosting a [webinar](#) on 11th December 2025 at 14.00-15.00 discussing how PSDI makes use of metadata to connect its [resources](#) together and make them available for our users through the PSDI resource catalogue and PSDI [Cross Data Search](#) service;
- The LIBER Europe conference, with the theme 'The Power of Libraries in an Uncertain World', is happening on the 1st-3rd July 2026 in Trondheim. The deadline for submitting [proposals](#) for the conference is the 5th January 2026;
- CrossRef, in collaboration with the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), is hosting a [webinar](#) on the 21st January 2026, 09.00-10.00 to describe how CrossRef supports the COPE guidelines; and
- Every year Durham opens up their HPC to host [HPC days](#). In 2026, the event will be on the 15th-19th June 2026; however, people who are interested can submit an abstract to present and the deadline for this is the 31st January 2026.

Merry Christmas from CaSDaR!

It's been a whirlwind of a year for us and we're so grateful for the support of our community. Keep an eye out for more Christmas-themed Cassie posts on our LinkedIn and other social media channels.

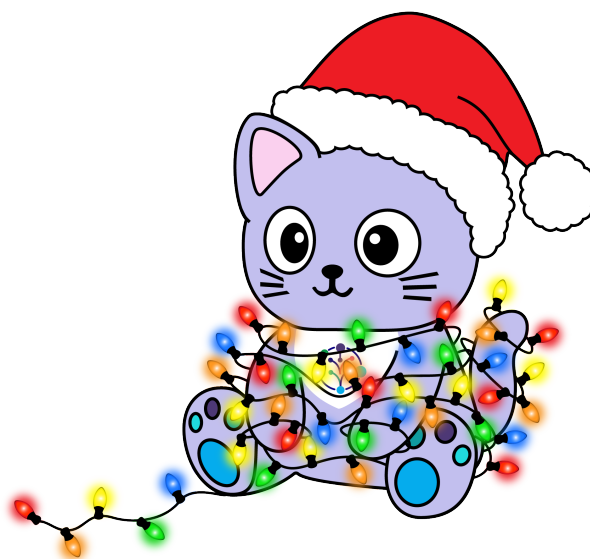


Figure 4: *Cassie had an accident when she tried to decorate the office for Christmas*

About CaSDaR

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.

If you would like to hear more then please check our [website](#) , join the CaSDaR [mailing list](#) to keep up to date, follow us on [LinkedIn](#), and email casdar@soton.ac.uk for more details.

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