CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

CaSDaR's Data Steward Conference

17th/18th November 2026

The Midland Hotel and Online

Programme agenda and event information

v1, 2026-10-20

The Venue



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We decided to hold this event for CaSDaR (Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research) at The Midland Hotel in Manchester to provide a residential conference for our delegates

The Midland Hotel was opened in 1903 to serve Manchester Central railway station. It is now a grade II listed building, voted one of the most noted in Manchester.

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Agenda - 17th November 2026

Time	Title	Contributor/s	Location
10:30 - 11:00	Registration and coffee		The Trafford Suite
11:00 - 11:10	Welcome and housekeeping	Samantha Pearman-Kanza	The Trafford Suite
11:10 - 11:55	Keynote speech	Mijke Jetten	The Trafford Suite
11:55 - 12:10	Introducing the poster presentations		The Trafford Suite
12:10 - 12:40	Poster sessions and networking		The Trafford Suite
12:40 - 13:25	Lunch and networking		
13:25 - 15:05	Disciplinary examples of Data Stewardship	Slava Tykhonov (CoData) Ramiro Bravo (University of Manchester) Rob Cubey (Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh) Ilkay Holt and Revekka Kefalea (British Library) Ben Thomas (HDR-UK)	The Trafford Suite
15:05 - 15:25	Coffee and networking		The Trafford Suite
15:25 - 15:45	Formalising a network	Nikki Osborne (UK Reproducibility Network)	The Studio
15:45 - 17:00	Lightning talks	Elizabeth Newbold (STFC) Robert Andrews (ELIXIR-UK) Nina Lewin (Oxford Brookes University) Nicki Clarkson (University of Southampton) Vanessa Higgins (University of Manchester) Sarah Trinder (University of Warwick) Stephen Fox (University of Glasgow) Saskia Lawson-Tovey (University of Manchester) Phil Reed (University of Manchester) Jakub Jirka (FAIR Wizard) Nikolaos Voulgaris (University of Osaka) Giulia Caldoni (University of Bologna)	The Trafford Suite
17:00 - 17:15	Wrap-up	Samantha Pearman-Kanza	The Trafford Suite
17:15 - 17:45	Check-in		The Trafford Suite
17:45 - 22:00	Drinks reception and dinner		The Octogon/ Trafford Suite

Agenda - 18th November 2026

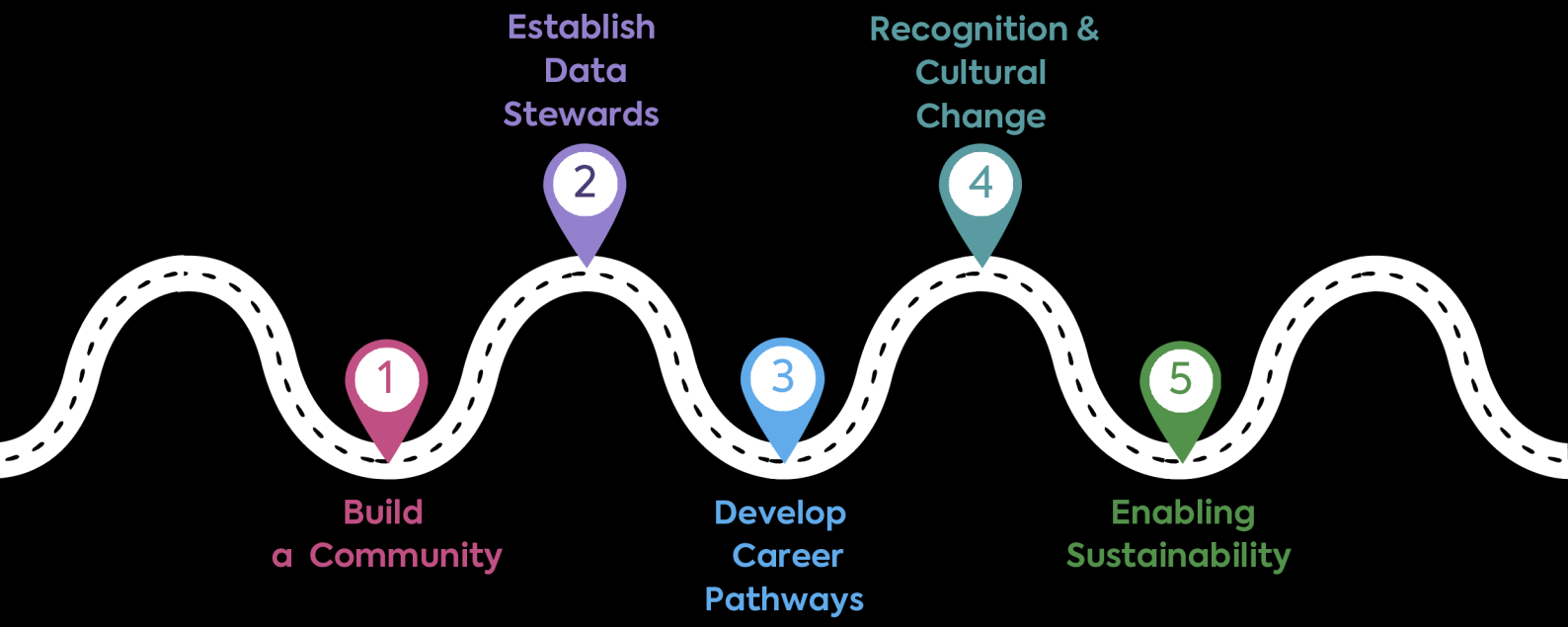
Time	Title	Contributor/s	Location
09:00 - 09:30	Registration and coffee		The Trafford Suite
09:30 - 09:40	Welcome back and housekeeping	Samantha Pearman-Kanza	The Trafford Suite
09:40 - 10:00	Analysis of CaSDaR's first funding call	Louise Saul	The Trafford Suite
10:00 - 11:00	Presentations from CaSDaR's funded projects	Eva Price (UCL), Shona Ferguson (UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology), Linus Chirchir (Research Data Scotland), Noam Tal Perry/Kim Clugston/Clair Castle (University of Cambridge)	The Trafford Suite
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break and networking		The Trafford Suite
11:30 - 12:00	Panel discussion : careers for Data Stewards	Michael O'Connor (Queen's University Belfast) Sarah Trinder (University of Warwick) Qi Wang (University of Cambridge) Adam King (University of Salford)	The Trafford Suite
12:00 - 12:15	Introducing the breakout sessions	Samantha Pearman-Kanza	The Trafford Suite
12:15 - 13:00	Lunch and Networking		
13:00 - 14:30	Breakout session 1: Careers and Personas	Chairs: Isobel Stark and Elizabeth Newbold	The Fairclough Suite
13:00 - 14:30	Breakout session 2: Skills for Data Stewards	Chair: Ben Thomas	The Royce Suite
13:00 - 14:30	Breakout session 3: CaSDaR's Funding Calls	Chair: Louise Saul	The Rolls Suite
13:00 - 14:30	Breakout session 4: Building the Data Steward Association	Chair: Simon Hettrick	The Trafford Suite
13:00 - 14:30	Breakout session 5: Building the Community	Chairs: James Baker and Simon Coles	The Houghton Suite
14:30 - 14:45	Plenary	Samantha Pearman-Kanza	The Trafford Suite

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



Speaker bio: 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.psdi.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 Knowledger 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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Keynote Speaker

Mijke Jetten (Health RI)

The rise of the data steward: How the Netherlands is shaping a new profession
... and what it means for recognition, careers and community beyond our borders

Abstract: Funders and journals expect research data to be well managed and FAIR. Data stewards help researchers with this. But in many places the role is still new. The work is often spread over several departments or it ends up with one person without a clear remit. There are also not yet enough data stewards. The Netherlands has worked on this for about ten years. A first report described the role and its competences in 2019. A national roadmap followed in 2021. In that year, Dutch universities also added a data steward profile to their job classification system, and other institutions followed. A national curriculum is now bringing together existing training into learning paths for data professionals, from entry level onwards. A fellowship programme gives data stewards dedicated time to work on FAIR challenges. And since 2017, the Data Stewards Interest Group (DSIG) has brought data stewards from all disciplines together, in a community run by its members. Step by step, this has helped with recognition, careers and community. Much of this builds on international work. Examples are the ELIXIR Research Data Management (RDM) Community and the Research Data Alliance (RDA) group on professionalising data stewardship. In this talk I share how these and other examples can be adapted to other contexts. Most materials are openly available so data stewards and managers can reuse them in their own organisations.



Speaker bio: Mijke Jetten currently is FAIR Expert at the Health-RI, the Mijke Jetten is a FAIR Data Expert at Health-RI, the Dutch national infrastructure for health research data, where she supports FAIR data implementation and metadata interoperability. She contributes to national initiatives including TDCC-LSH and serves as Data Steward Liaison for ELIXIR-NL, part of the European ELIXIR research infrastructure.
Mijke is community manager of the internationally recognised Data Stewards Interest Group (DSIG) and co-leads the ELIXIR Research Data Management Community. She also co-chairs the Research Data Alliance Professionalising Data Stewardship Interest Group and FAIR Supporting Resources Working Group, contributing to reports and resources on data stewardship competencies, professional profiles and careers.
Previously, Mijke coordinated research data management and open science at Radboud University, where she established RDM support within the University Library. She also worked as a data steward at the university's Institute for Management Research, providing practical experience alongside her national and international leadership roles.

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Posters: Presenter Amie Longthorne (Liverpool John Moores)

Data as a Story - Exhibition Evaluation

Abstract: Data as a Story: Exhibition Evaluation explores how at LJMU we used creative approaches to disseminate research data and how that enhanced understanding, accessibility, and engagement with research data. The Data as a Story exhibition brought together contributions from researchers and postgraduate researchers across LJMU, showcasing diverse datasets through narrative, visual, and artistic formats. The exhibition aimed to highlight the creative potential of data and promote open research principles, including FAIR data practices. The poster presents the evaluation of the exhibition, drawing on qualitative and quantitative feedback from contributors and audiences. Findings demonstrate that creative interpretation of data can broaden perceptions of what constitutes research data, particularly in areas such as qualitative, lived-experience, and arts-based research. Evaluation evidence also suggests that participation increased awareness of open research practices and encouraged more inclusive approaches to data sharing and communication.



Speaker bio: Amie is the Open Research Data Specialist , working as part of the Library Open Research Team, Amie leads on research data management support, providing guidance across all faculties on topics such as data management plans, making research data openly available and FAIR data practices. She also manages and develops the university's data repository, delivers researcher skills training, and supports open research initiatives.

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Posters: Presenter Andrew Harrison (Queens University Belfast)

The Springboard Project: A CaSDaR-Funded Data Stewardship Project at Queen's University Belfast



Abstract: The Springboard Project supported the Open Research Team at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) to formalise data stewardship skills development for a newly appointed Senior Library Assistant, delivered over ten weeks (6 July–18 September 2026) and funded by the CaSDaR (Careers and Skills for Data-Related Roles) Network+. The project addressed a timely institutional need: the launch of QUB's new Open Research Repository (ORR, powered by Figshare) for data and theses. This necessitated training materials and documentation for users that did not yet exist, while 100 LawPod podcast records produced by the School of Law sat outside any formal repository infrastructure and were vulnerable to loss. Over the project period, the trainee completed DCC-delivered data curation and stewardship training, produced training videos and a comprehensive user guide for ORR, and curated 100 LawPod records into FAIR-compliant, persistently identified repository entries in Pure and ORR. The project provided structured, on-the-job professional development in metadata practice, FAIR principles, and repository management, and has directly informed QUB's approach to onboarding researchers to its new repository and preserving non-traditional research outputs, strengthening the case for sustained investment in data stewardship capacity

Speaker Bio: Andrew Harrison is a Senior Library Assistant in the Open Research Team in Queen's University Belfast, reporting to the Research Data Librarian. He assists in the curation of dataset records in the Universities institutional repository, in answering researchers queries regarding Research Data Management, in the collation of statistics relating to Research Data Management within the University, in the creation of instructional and training material relating to the use of the institutional repository and in the creation of promotional material for Research Data Management support that is available within the University.

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Posters: Presenter Elizabeth Newbold (STFC)

Developing Data Steward Personas



Abstract: The Research Data Alliance Data Steward Career Tracks Working Group started in April 2025, with the aim of developing a methodology for creating data steward personas and a sample set of personas.The poster will share the results of the working group highlighting the approach taken ranging through desk research and eight co-creation workshops with global data steward communities in Australia, North America and Europe.

Speaker bio: Elizabeth Newbold 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. Elizabeth is active in the international data community including one of the co-chairs of the Data Steward Career Track Working Group. She is also a member of the CaSDaR management Advisory Board.

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Posters: Presenter
Clare Richter
(University of Warwick)

Preserving past plant research: Data stewardship within genebanks



Abstract: Why is careful data stewardship important for genebanks? There is much historic research data on the traits of UK vegetables using seed accessions taken from the UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB) in Warwickshire, the UK's largest vegetable genebank. This data, previously stored in Excel files, needs to be wrangled into the correct format for the platform GRIN-Global, which the genebank adopted a few years ago to store all accession data in a centralised and accessible manner. During a CaSDaR-funded project over the summer, the data from four historic datasets, two on Brassica, one on spinach and one on radish, were successfully transformed into GRIN-Global. After this data had been uploaded, all Brassica accessions on the database were analysed for their resistance to pest and diseases, and accessions showing high resistance were selected. Accessions with critically low stores of viable seed within the UKVGB were highlighted as priority for regeneration by the genebank. The outcome of this project highlights the need for responsible data management, as plant breeders and growers require high-quality data to best inform their decisions. In addition, this transformation of historic datasets mean that the effort, time, energy and money of scientists have not gone to waste..

Speaker Bio: Clare Richter MBio is a University of Warwick Biological Sciences graduate, specialising in Crop Science. She recently completed a Master's project examining a range of commercial lettuce varieties for their ability to fare against the currant-lettuce aphid (Nasonovia ribisnigri), looking for sources of partial resistance. Following this, she completed a summer internship at the UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB) as a Trainee Data Steward, funded by the UKRI Digital Research Infrastructure Programme via CaSDaR. Here, she transformed historic research data on major British vegetables into the correct format for the UKVGB's centralised GRIN-Global database, where it can be used by crop researchers and growers.

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Posters: Presenter

Saskia Lawson-Tovey (University of Manchester)

PeerLadder – a national peer mentoring initiative supporting underrepresented dRTP leaders

Abstract: PeerLadder is a new national peer-mentoring initiative supporting leadership development and empowering underrepresented digital Research Technical Professionals (dRTPs) to progress into leadership roles, while building confidence, community and inclusive leadership across UK research organisations.
dRTPs are critical to data-driven research, yet many face limited progression opportunities and barriers to leadership. PeerLadder addresses this through structured training and peer mentoring that develops leadership capabilities, confidence and professional networks.
The pilot cohort comprises 15 dRTPs: 60% are female, 47% from minority ethnic backgrounds, 33% from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, 27% neurodivergent, 20% carers and 13% LGBTQIA+.
The pilot will demonstrate the potential of this model nationally, informing future approaches to inclusive leadership, mentoring and career development. By sharing learning with international collaborators and the CaSDaR community, PeerLadder aims to inspire similar initiatives and strengthen representation of underrepresented technical professionals across the wider digital research landscape



Speaker bio: Saskia Lawson-Tovey is a research fellow and data steward at the University of Manchester. She is an UoM Open Research Fellow, a Institute for Research Software Fellow and an ELIXIR-UK FAIR Data Stewardship Fellow . Her work revolves around research data management, open science, and researching the cultural aspects of RDM, FAIR, and data sharing with health data. She co-leads the ELIXIR-UK Human Data & Technology Club and the NIHR MSK TRC Real-World Data Harmonisation working group. As the principal investigator of PeerLadder, she leads a national peer-mentoring and leadership development programme to support and empower underrepresented digital Research Technical Professionals (dRTPs)

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Posters: Presenter Lorrayne Smith (University of Southampton)

Open, restricted or non-existent? Data sharing practices by postgraduate researchers at the University of Southampton



Abstract: Data sharing increases research transparency, supports reuse and collaboration, and is increasingly encouraged or required by journals, funders and institutions. UK universities have responded by investing in repository infrastructure, data specialists and research data management (RDM) training. However, data-sharing practices vary considerably between disciplines, and perceived barriers remain.

While sharing data underlying peer-reviewed publications has been widely studied, data associated with doctoral theses has received less attention. This study uses University of Southampton doctoral theses from 2022/23 to 2025/26 as a case study to examine data-sharing practices among doctoral researchers depositing theses in the institutional repository.

We investigate the prevalence of data sharing, whether disciplinary patterns observed in peer-reviewed research are also evident in doctoral research, and whether institutional interventions, including mandatory data management training, influence sharing rates. The study aims to better understand doctoral data-sharing behaviour and identify opportunities for institutions to support and encourage effective research data sharing.

Speaker Bio: Isobel Stark, Lorrayne Smith and Anna Korzeniowska work in research data and open research at the University of Southampton Library, bringing extensive and varied experience to supporting researchers.

Isobel is Head of Research Data & Intellectual Property, leading services covering research data management, copyright, intellectual property, theses and researcher engagement. She is also a co-investigator on the CaSDaR Network+, supporting the recognition and professional development of data stewards.

Lorrayne is an Engagement Librarian specialising in research data and bibliometrics. Her background spans media librarianship, digital asset management and cataloguing, with a particular interest in research discoverability and good data practice.

Anna is an Engagement Librarian working across Research Data and Open Research & Publication Practice. With a PhD in Comparative Psychology, her varied career includes research culture, open research and project management roles. She also supports open science and data management through the international ManyDogs research collaboration.

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Posters: Presenter

Kate Wright (UK-CEH)

Archive or Storage: A case study of GB soil samples

Abstract: Sustainability of scientific resources is becoming increasingly acknowledged. One concept to aid sustainable decision-making is sufficiency, which focuses on minimising waste by considering how much is 'enough' for the intended use. Drawing on interviews and archive tours, we are exploring this using a case study of soil samples collected as part of a long-established national soil and vegetation survey. Several soil cores are collected from 500 GB locations; one is processed to provide general soil indicators with the resulting digital data disseminated through the Environmental Information Data Centre. Two further cores are archived; one is frozen and the other air-dried. As this is an ongoing survey, enabling study of change over time, samples will continue to be collected over the foreseeable future, making it difficult to predict 'enough'. Alongside this, practical limitations such as storage, and particularly freezer capacity, need to be considered. A sufficiency measure would be to share samples for other research, adding value to the resource, as well as making space for future collections. However, this creates a tension between using the archived samples to answer contemporary questions and storing sufficient material for future unknown research. This poster considers the competing themes of 'enough', 'limits' and 'value' and how they relate to sufficiency.



Speaker bio: Kate Wright is a Data Steward at UKCEH (Centre for Ecology and Hydrology). Part of this work involves providing data management support to UKCEH colleagues and NERC grant holders, and supports ingestion of environmental data into the Environmental Information Data Centre (EIDC). Alongside this, Kate has been working on a NetDrive funded research project 'Data sufficiency: A case study of soil data curation, storage, and usage at UKCEH'. Kate recently completed a PhD in Computer Science from Lancaster University, using qualitative research techniques to understand how different stakeholders within environmental data science navigate the different types of uncertainty.

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Posters: Presenter Peter Briggs (University of Manchester)

What Can We Learn from 15 Years of Sequencing Data Management? A Reflective Case Study from a Bioinformatics Core Facility



Abstract: This poster presents a reflective review of 15 years of the evolution of sequencing data management practices within a university bioinformatics core facility, during which time we have needed to adapt variously to changing technologies, increasing data volumes, new analytical requirements and a changing institutional environment. Based on a historical record reconstructed from operational notebooks and other sources we observed several recurring patterns emerging over a decade and a half, and saw that while reactive practical adaptations repeatedly enabled the facility to respond successfully to new demands, longer term challenges around storage, metadata, retention, ownership, access and data reuse repeatedly resurfaced over time in different forms. Here we ask whether these recurring patterns might be understood as stewardship concerns emerging through operational practice, despite data stewardship not being an explicit organising framework in the past. We explore what could be learned from long-term operational practice and consider what viewing the recurring pattern of reactive adaptation from a stewardship perspective might suggest for the future.

Speaker Bio: Peter Briggs has been a member of the core facilities' genomic bioinformatics team in the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health at the University of Manchester since 2011. His work principally involves developing software and processes to support the processing, storage and management of data generated within the facility..

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Posters: Presenter Emily Anderson (CEDA)

Data Stewardship at the Centre for Environmental Data Analysis

Abstract: The Centre for Environmental Data Analysis (CEDA) is part of the UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) Environmental Data Service (EDS) and provides access to over 27 Petabytes of Earth Observation and Atmospheric data. CEDA delivers the data archive component for the UK National Centre for Earth Observation (NCEO) and the UK National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS). CEDA provides FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable & Reusable) access to environmental data and services. Data Stewardship is a core activity for supporting the management and access to datasets from a wide range of projects and discipline areas. This includes UK research funded data from NERC grants as well as international projects such as the ESA Climate Change Initiative (ESA CCI), the Couple Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP), the IPCC Data Distribution Centre, the provision of an ESA Data Hub Relay (DHR), as well as being a key partner in the UK Earth Observation Data Hub (UK EODH). Data Stewardship at CEDA encompasses a wide variety of operational activities to ensure data is carefully managed and accessible, whilst also continually aiming to adapt with developments in the community. This poster will provide a brief overview of these activities.



Speaker bio: Emily is an environmental data scientist at the Centre for Environmental Data Analysis (CEDA), which is part of the UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) Environmental Data Service (EDS). Data Stewardship activities include the regular archival of Earth Observation and Atmospheric NERC grant data, which sees data from the very beginning of a data management plan through to archival (and everything in between). Acitivites also include work on larger international projects such as the ESA Climate Change Initiative project which aims to archive and promote access to Essential Climate Variables.

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Posters: Presenter

Adam King

University of Salford

Piloting the Role of Data Stewards in FASD within Justice Settings



Abstract: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition caused by prenatal alcohol exposure. It affects memory, reasoning, communication, executive functioning and decision-making, which can increase vulnerability at every point of justice contact, from police interview to probation supervision (Hoyme et al., 2016).

Despite this, UK probation has no standardised screening mechanism, no routine FASD data, or variable staff awareness. Needs often go unidentified, and with them the support that might prevent poorer outcomes.

This project was built on a pilot screening study in Greater Manchester probation, led by the project's Principal Investigator (Gilbert et al., 2026), which provided strong evidence of need.
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Speaker Bio: Dr Adam King is a researcher and academic specialising in media psychology, psycholinguistics, social psychology, and human–AI communication. His research examines how language shapes perceptions of identity, attribution, bias, and social groups, with particular interests in computational approaches to social psychology, interdisciplinary research methods, and the responsible use of data. His current interests include trustworthy human–AI communication, linguistic representations of identity, computational approaches to social psychology, and the development of interdisciplinary methods for understanding how people interpret one another, and increasingly, how people interpret machines. He has experience across academic research, higher education teaching, equality, diversity and inclusion, and applied research, bringing together quantitative and qualitative approaches to address complex research questions..

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Speakers: Disciplinary Examples
Slava Tykhonov (CoData)

Semantic Croissant & CDIF: Making Data AI-Ready

Abstract: This talk explores how metadata gives AI the meaning, context, and relationships behind information. The Cross-Domain Interoperability Framework (CDIF) provides a way to connect data across different systems, domains, and formats. CDIF enables structured and unstructured data to be linked, while Semantic Croissant, integrated with ODRL policies, provides a framework for organizing data so that AI systems can more easily discover, interpret, and use it while preserving provenance information. Demonstration will include the introduction of workflows for data extraction and verification, semantic linking, and knowledge graph creation, showing how these approaches can transform disconnected information into trusted, connected, and AI-ready knowledge



Speaker bio: Vyacheslav (Slava) Tykhonov is the head of Interoperability Artificial Intelligence at CODATA and has a background in information and computer science. Slava has worked for more than 25 years in the area of software development, research and innovation for national, European and international research infrastructures. Most recently, as a Senior R&D Engineer and FAIR data expert, Slava participated in various projects funded by the European Commission. For many years, he has been an active member of the Open-Source community around the Harvard Dataverse platform. As a knowledge engineer and Semantic Web enthusiast, Slava explored and implemented new solutions and data services, from AI and data enrichment to long-term archiving. Slava is co-author of the emerging Croissant for Machine Learning standard.

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Speakers: Disciplinary Examples

Ramiro Bravo (University of Manchester)

From Advocacy to Adoption



Abstract: Data management and stewardship are increasingly moving beyond data storage and end-of-project archiving towards a more embedded role across the entire research lifecycle. As research becomes more collaborative, data-intensive and computational, effective stewardship must consider not only the data itself, but also the documentation, metadata, methods and protocols, traceability, provenance, and contextual information required for others to understand, trust and ultimately build upon research.

This presentation explores that transition through practical experience in research data management, Core Research Facilities and an Open Research Fellowship at the University of Manchester. The Fellowship has focused particularly on advocating for research documentation and encouraging research groups to document their work at every stage of the research lifecycle, supported by open platforms such as OSF.io and Protocols.io. Evidence including the creation of new projects and protocols, platform usage, and associated research publications provides a lens through which to explore how advocacy and engagement can translate into visible changes in research practice, contributing to a cultural transformation in how research projects are documented and shared. .

The presentation will consider how data management and stewardship requirements vary across disciplines and organisations, while highlighting shared challenges around documentation, infrastructure, reproducibility and reuse. It will also reflect on the emerging roles of the Data Manager and Data Steward as a connector between researchers, professional services, digital infrastructure and organisational strategy. The presentation asks a simple question at the heart of effective data management and stewardship: can somebody else understand the work, trust it and build upon it?

Speaker Bio: Ramiro Bravo is a Research Data Manager at the University of Manchester, working across Core Research Facilities and the MRC Centre of Research Excellence in Exposome Immunology to strengthen research data management, documentation and stewardship throughout the research lifecycle. His work focuses on promoting open and reproducible research practices and supporting researchers to embed documentation into everyday research workflows. His wider interests include open science, research data infrastructure, AI data readiness, metadata and provenance, data governance, and digital transformation, with a particular interest in developing practical approaches that connect researchers, professional services and institutional infrastructure to improve how research projects are documented and managed..

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Speakers: Disciplinary Examples

Rob Cubey (Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh)

Persistent Identifiers and Linked Open Data: Connecting Collections, Datasets and Research

Abstract: Natural history collections contain billions of specimens that document biodiversity across space and time. However, the full value of these collections is often limited by data silos, inconsistent identifiers, and difficulties in connecting information across institutions and digital platforms. Linked Open Data (LOD), supported by standards such as Darwin Core and persistent identifiers, offers an effective approach to improving interoperability and enhancing the discoverability and reuse of biodiversity data. The presentation also examines the importance of persistent item and dataset-level identifiers, including those generated through GBIF occurrence downloads, in supporting reproducible research, transparent data citation, attribution, and the tracking of data reuse. Examples will show how linked data approaches enable users to explore collecting networks, specimen histories, and connections between datasets and publications.

By transforming isolated collection records into interconnected components of a global biodiversity knowledge graph, Linked Open Data creates new opportunities for research, collaboration, and public engagement. The presentation will highlight practical benefits, implementation challenges, and emerging opportunities for natural history institutions seeking to maximise the scientific and societal value of their collections in an increasingly connected digital environment.



Speaker bio: Rob Cubey is Biodiversity Data & Collections Care Manager at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), leading the management of Living and Herbarium Collections data and systems. He oversees collection stewardship, data accessibility, and online dissemination through platforms such as GBIF, NBN, and Europeana. Rob has led large-scale collection management modernisation projects, including the migration of over one million plant records, and develops digital tools to support collection care and engagement. His interests include biodiversity informatics, digitisation, linked open data, artificial intelligence, and digital preservation. He contributes to international projects and teaches biodiversity, taxonomy, and collections management.

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Speakers: Disciplinary Examples
Ilkay Holt and Revekka Kefalea

From Risks to Skills: Exploring Data Stewardship through Open GLAM Practices



Abstract: Opening up digital cultural heritage collections involves navigating interconnected legal, ethical, technical, financial, policy-related and geopolitical risks. These risks influence decisions about whether, how and under what conditions collections and associated data can be made openly available. Addressing them requires a range of skills, knowledge and institutional capacities, often extending across professional roles and responsibilities.

This presentation introduces the Risk Management Toolkit for Open GLAM, an openly available resource providing guidance, mitigation strategies and practical resources for identifying and managing these risks.

Building on the toolkit, we explore connections between risk management, skills and data stewardship in cultural heritage contexts, considering how the particular characteristics of GLAM collections and practices shape stewardship responsibilities and decisions.

We will share our emerging approach and invite discussion on how a risk-informed perspective can contribute to wider conversations about data stewardship and the skills and capacities needed to support responsible openness.

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Ilkay Holt is Scholarly Communications Lead at the British Library, where she leads work across open access, open research and training. She is a member of the Open Research Competencies Coalition (ORCC) and co-coordinates the Cultural Heritage Open Scholarship Network (CHOSN), a Community of Interest Group within the UK–Ireland Digital Humanities Association. She also serves on RLUK Digital Shift and LIBER Open Access working groups. Her experience includes roles in university libraries and consultancy work with COAR and FAO. She is a founding member of Creative Commons Türkiye and currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Open Repositories Conference Steering Committee for 2026–2027.

Revekka Kefalea is an independent researcher and consultant working at the intersection of cultural policy, digital cultural heritage, and open access. Her work connects research, practice, and advocacy, with a focus on how the digital transformation and the open movement shape access to knowledge and culture, particularly in the cultural heritage sector. She is one of the facilitators of the Creative Commons Certificate course and is a member of the Creative Commons Global Network (CCGN) and the Cultural Heritage Open Scholarship Network (CHOSN).

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Speakers: Disciplinary Examples

Ben Thomas (HDR-UK)

Skills for Sensitive Data Curation

Abstract: Sensitive data are increasingly central to research, healthcare, and public policy, yet the skills required to curate, manage, and provide access to these data remain poorly understood and inconsistently supported. This presentation reports findings from HDR-UK's project, Skills for the Curation of Sensitive Data, a UK-wide study examining skills gaps, training provision, and barriers to workforce development in sensitive data curation. Drawing on surveys, focus groups, and interviews with data curators, Trusted Research Environment (TRE), Secure Data Environment (SDE) and Safe Haven operators, governance specialists, and training providers, the study identifies critical challenges in developing and sustaining expertise across the sector. The findings highlight the need for improved training pathways, greater professional recognition, and stronger support for careers in sensitive data curation.

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Speaker Bio: Ben is a Senior Enterprise Fellow in Policy at the University of Southampton, where he conducts qualitative policy research for the Software Sustainability Institute. His work focuses on digital skills, research software, critical software, research careers, and the wider research and innovation ecosystem. Ben holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Southampton, examining inequalities in the digital and creative industries. Prior to his academic career, he worked as a music teacher for ten years. His research combines interests in work, careers, inclusion, and policy to help shape evidence-based approaches to research practice and infrastructure.

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CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Formalising a Network
Nikki Osborne (UKRN)

Managing the future: transitioning an association to a company



Abstract: This presentation will provide an overview of how the UK Reproducibility Network came into existence and developed into the national peer-led consortium that exists today. I will explore the UKRN model, its strengths, the successes and lessons learnt plus the challenges that remain. These factors provide the context for the sustainability model that UKRN has developed and put into action. To conclude I will share an update on the state of the UK reproducibility network today before sharing the four pillars of the sustainability model developed in consultation with network members. This includes the decision to set-up a community interest company (UKRN Services) and the progress made so far towards creating a sustainable future for UKRN.

Speaker bio: Nikki Osborne is the CEO of UKRN Services, a community interest company (CIC) set up by the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN). The goal of the CIC is to support UKRNs mission by promoting rigorous and transparent research practices through the provision of training and consultancy services by and for the research community and wider research ecosystem. Nikki is also Founder and Director of Responsible Research, a UK-based organisation that provides training and consultancy to support rigorous, reproducible and ethical research. Throughout her career she has worked with researchers, technical professionals and institutions across the UK research sector to improve research quality, integrity and culture by empowering individuals to embed responsible research practices into their everyday work. As a recognised advocate for research improvement and reproducibility, she is actively involved in initiatives that promote transparency, collaboration and excellence across the research ecosystem.

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Elizabeth Newbold (STFC)

Implications of the new UKRI Research Data Policy for Data Stewards and the community



Abstract : The new UKRI research data policy was published in October 2026. The policy will apply to all research funded by the research Councils, UKRI-wide schemes and some activities funded by Innovate UK and Research England. The policy replaces multiple polices and principles into a single updated policy framework. This lightening talk will outline some of key principles and changes with specific relevance to research data stewards and the CaSDaR community.

Speaker Bio: Elizabeth Newbold 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. Elizabeth is active in the international data community including one of the co-chairs of the Data Steward Career Track Working Group. She is also a member of the CaSDaR management Board.

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Robert Andrews (University of Cardiff)

Pathfinder: The FAIR-in-action Bridge



Abstract: The FAIR-in-action Bridge is a BioFAIR Pathfinder project (https:/biofair.uk/biofair-funded-pathfinder-projects/) aiming to accelerate the practical adoption of the FAIR principles across UK life-science research-performing organisations (RPOs). While many organisations have developed FAIR data policies and guidance, research data management (RDM) professionals face the challenge of translating high-level guidance into practical, reusable implementation materials that work in real institutional settings.

This project targets a "middle layer" between policy and everyday research practice by co-creating two FAIR-in-action workshop playbooks. These translate existing resources into facilitator-ready activities, templates and practical examples that can be owned and adapted locally, then reused at scale.

The ELIXIR-UK RDM community has been mobilised to co-create, test and validate the playbooks within host institutions, with six diverse UK RPOs participating in the rollout to prime for national adoption.

Speaker Bio: Robert Andrews is a member of the management board of ELIXIR-UK, a national organisation of 30 UK universities and institutes bringing together life science data and resources from across UK and Europe. He has co-led the ELIXIR-UK Data Steward Fellowship in the life sciences (https:/elixiruknode.org/activities/fellowship/) and co-leads a national, grassroots Data Stewardship Club (https:/elixiruknode.org/activities/uk-rdm-club/). .

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Nina Lewin
(Oxford Brookes University)

Following the Plan: getting data management plans updated

Abstract : This paper presents a local intervention around student data management plans(DMPS) at a UK university. The question being explored is the extent to which these plans have been executed as written. Furthermore, if there are deviations, what are they, why did they occur, and was the plan updated? The project involves an intervention to encourage researchers to treat DMPs as 'living documents', which is defined as best practice by UKRI. The study evaluates differences between DMPs and the project's actual data management practices, with a particular focus on data curation and preservation. It will specifically explore cases where data curation and management did not proceed as planned and ask what percentage of the grant time and funds was spent on data management. The audit would like to test the assumptions derived from an ongoing South African project that deviations from stated plans reflect underestimated time requirements, natural changes in the research process, and increased costs



Speaker Bio: Nina Lewin started in applied research in market research. Moved on to public health, learned to manage data on the job and was pulled into the library. I then moved into the research office at Oxford Brookes and have finally returned to the library. And have been working with researchers on data management plans all across

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Nicki Clarkson (University of Southampton)

Career maps, not career ladders: creating pathways into Data Stewardship



Abstract: Data stewardship is a vital part of the research ecosystem, yet many institutions face challenges in recruiting and developing staff with the right expertise. Academic libraries already contain many transferable skills relevant to data stewardship, including research support, metadata management, skills development, advocacy and culture change.

This lightning talk introduces the University of Southampton Library's Career and Skills Development Map and explores how a skills-based approach can bridge traditional library roles and emerging data stewardship careers. By focusing on competencies and experience rather than job titles or formal qualifications, the framework supports flexible career progression.

Drawing on my progression from Library Assistant to Engagement Librarian with responsibilities in open research, I will show how the framework helps individuals recognise transferable skills, identify development opportunities and build confidence. Mentoring, shadowing, communities of practice and open research networks can further support these pathways, helping institutions recognise existing talent and build sustainable data stewardship capacity.

Speaker Bio: Nicki Clarkson (she/her) is an Engagement Librarian at the University of Southampton, where she works across open research, curriculum engagement, and the exploration of emerging technologies, particularly generative AI. She supports researchers through training and advocacy and line manages colleagues within the Open Research & Publication Practice team. Having begun her career as a Library Assistant in 1998, Nicki is passionate about recognising transferable skills and creating inclusive pathways into research support and data stewardship. She champions career mapping as a practical approach to developing talent and widening access to the profession.

Likes: Lego, coffee, furry creatures, murder mysteries, and terrible puns
Dislikes: Cheesy Wotsits, the price of Freddos, and meetings that could have been emails
Guilty secret: Librarian Nicki turns down page corners instead of using a bookmark

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Vanessa Higgins (University of Manchester)

Building Computational Social Science Capacity in Data Service Professionals

Abstract: As data-intensive research becomes increasingly common, many social science data service professionals are finding that the skills needed to support researchers are changing. Alongside traditional expertise in data management, documentation, user support and training, there is growing demand for computational skills that enable professionals to engage with new methods, tools and forms of data.
This lightning talk presents an ongoing initiative to build computational capacity among social science data service professionals through the development of targeted training, learning resources and communities of practice. Working with colleagues across the data services sector, the project explores how professionals can develop confidence in areas such as computational methods, reproducible research, coding and emerging data technologies, while recognising the varied backgrounds and experiences of those working in support roles. The talk will share early lessons from the project, including challenges in identifying training needs, supporting learners with diverse levels of experience, and creating opportunities for skills development within busy professional roles



Speaker Bio: Vanessa Higgins is Professor of Data Literacy in the Social Sciences at the University of Manchester and Director of Training and User Support for the UK Data Service. With more than 20 years' experience in social science data services, her work has focused on helping researchers discover, access, understand and make effective use of data. Her interests include data literacy, research skills development, data reuse, online learning and the professional development of those who support data-intensive research. She has led numerous national and international initiatives to develop data skills and promote the effective use of research data across the social sciences.

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Speakers: Lightning talks

Sarah Trinder (University of Warwick)

Data stewardship for food security at the UK Vegetable Genebank



Abstract: The UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB) conserves an internationally significant collection of ~14,000 samples of vegetable crop seed. Crops conserved include broccoli, cabbage, carrots and onions. Seed from the collection are sent to plant breeders and researchers around the world, providing them with access to novel genetic variation, vital for crop improvement and global food security.

All the activities of a genebank are underpinned by sound data management. Each of the ~14,000 seed samples in the collection may have many different types of data associated with it, including information on the collection origin, seed stock, viability or genetic sequence data.

Over the past 5 years, the UKVGB has worked to significantly improve the data resources associated with the collection in line with FAIR data principles. This has included incorporating links to more than 300 research papers, and uploading more than 37,000 phenotypic records and 12,000 images into our collection database. Increasing the quantity of high-quality data available to our users, encourages the likelihood of reuse of data, and supports their ability to select material of high potential for crop improvement. It also aids data-driven conservation management decisions, ensuring the collection is safeguarded for the future, for global food security.

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Speaker Bio: Dr Sarah Trinder works at the UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB), a collection of vegetable crop seed which is an important resource for supporting global food security. She manages the highly varied data associated with the UKVGB collections, which include plant collection data, seed stock data, image, characterisation and genetic sequence data. She loves using data to improve management of the collections and document the collections value to the scientific community. She has broad interests in plant evolution and genetics, and a particular interest in the use of long-term collections and experiments as a resource for research.

CaSDaR
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Speakers: Lightning talks

Stephen Fox (University of Glasgow)

Developing a Sustainable Research Data Storage Service

Abstract: Research organisations face growing challenges in managing increasing volumes of research data while meeting expectations for security, sustainability, compliance and reuse. Understanding researcher requirements is therefore essential to developing effective and scalable services.
In 2024, the University of Glasgow surveyed its research community to understand research data needs and inform investment in infrastructure, support and stewardship. Findings revealed substantial variation in data volumes, workflows and practices, alongside needs relating to planning, governance, metadata, collaboration, security and long-term stewardship.
These findings informed the Central Active Research Data Storage (CARDS) service, a centrally managed platform designed to support active research data while promoting sustainable practices through clearer ownership, governance and lifecycle management. By embedding data stewardship into service design, CARDS encourages FAIR practices and positions data as a valuable research asset, demonstrating how infrastructure, stewardship and community engagement can combine to create a more sustainable research data ecosystem.



Speaker Bio: Dr Stephen Fox is Research Data Manager within Research Computing as a Service (RCaaS) at the University of Glasgow. He works with researchers, technical specialists, libraries and professional services teams to improve research data management, FAIR data practices and data stewardship across the institution. His work includes the development of research data services, storage infrastructure, imaging data management platforms and community-led approaches to research data support. Stephen has a particular interest in research data sustainability, embedding stewardship into service design, and developing infrastructure, policy and engagement activities that enable researchers to manage data as a long-term research asset.

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Saskia Lawson-Tovey (University of Manchester)

PeerLadder – a national peer mentoring initiative supporting underrepresented dRTP leaders



Abstract: PeerLadder is a new national peer-mentoring initiative supporting leadership development and empowering underrepresented digital Research Technical Professionals (dRTPs) to progress into leadership roles, while building confidence, community and inclusive leadership across UK research organisations.

dRTPs are critical to data-driven research, yet many face limited progression opportunities and barriers to leadership. PeerLadder addresses this through structured training and peer mentoring that develops leadership capabilities, confidence and professional networks.

The pilot cohort comprises 15 dRTPs: 60% are female, 47% from minority ethnic backgrounds, 33% from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, 27% neurodivergent, 20% carers and 13% LGBTQIA+. The pilot will demonstrate the potential of this model nationally, informing future approaches to inclusive leadership, mentoring and career development. By sharing learning with international collaborators and the CaSDaR community, PeerLadder aims to inspire similar initiatives and strengthen representation of underrepresented technical professionals across the wider digital research landscape.

Speaker Bio: Saskia Lawson-Tovey is a research fellow and data steward at the University of Manchester. She is an UoM Open Research Fellow, a Institute for Research Software Fellow and an ELIXIR-UK FAIR Data Stewardship Fellow . Her work revolves around research data management, open science, and researching the cultural aspects of RDM, FAIR, and data sharing with health data.

She co-leads the ELIXIR-UK Human Data & Technology Club and the NIHR MSK TRC Real-World Data Harmonisation working group. As the principal investigator of PeerLadder, she leads a national peer-mentoring and leadership development programme to support and empower underrepresented digital Research Technical Professionals (dRTPs).

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Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Phil Reed
(University of Manchester)

DIRECT Framework and data steward career progression

Abstract: As digital tools, infrastructure and data increasingly underpin academic research and education, the role of data stewards has become increasingly vital, facilitating collaboration and innovation. The growing demand for digital research technical professionals (dRTPs) has highlighted the need for clearer definitions of the skills required and career pathways for professional development for all. To address this gap, the 'DIRECT Framework' has launched – a community-driven resource designed to define, visualise and track the progression of essential skills across a number of dRTP roles.

DIRECT was presented at the CaSDaR launch in September 2025. Since then, a workshop was hosted as part of an Open Research Fellowship at The University of Manchester, where participants from Manchester, MMU, Sheffield, Glasgow and ELIXIR-UK discussed approaches to further professionalise the role of the data steward, in consultation with an RDA interest group.

This lightning talk describes the recent efforts and ongoing work between DIRECT and CaSDaR to improve the skills descriptions for RDM in DIRECT, and introduce genuine and realisable career pathways for data stewards.



Speaker Bio: Research Community and Training Manager at the eScience Lab, The University of Manchester,, working with European and global partners such as EOSC and ELIXIR to further facilitate and encourage FAIR and reproducible research practices.

Open Research Fellow 2026 at The University of Manchester, working with dRTPs (digital research technical professionals) to formalise and professionalise roles and careers.

Institute for Research Software (formerly Software Sustainability Institute) Fellow 2025, working on the DIRECT Framework of skills and competencies for dRTPs at a national level. Engagement and Adoption Working Group Lead for the DIRECT Framework.

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Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Jakub Jirka (FAIR Wizard)

Making Data Stewardship Visible: Connecting People, Projects and Institutional Insight



Abstract: At the 27th RDA Plenary Meeting, a workshop on data stewardship highlighted familiar challenges: hidden work, fragmented responsibilities, limited resources and difficulty securing management support. This lightning talk asks how a platform can help institutions address these connected concerns. Using FAIR Wizard as an example, we explore how combining project information, contextual guidance and collaboration in one environment can support researchers and support teams in coordinating decisions. The starting point is the institution's workflow: what information is needed, who needs it and what action should follow?

We show how project-level information, such as anticipated storage needs, can feed into institutional reporting, service planning and stakeholder conversations. Introducing a platform can also create opportunities to resource ownership, configuration, training and ongoing support.

The takeaway is practical: shape platforms around workflows, ask questions whose answers drive action, and use reporting to demonstrate stewardship's contribution and strengthen the case for institutional support and investment.

Speaker Bio: Jakub Jirka began his career as a consultant for major technology companies, working on data warehousing and data governance. He now brings that experience to research institutions, helping them improve research data management through FAIR Wizard. His focus is on embedding data stewardship into institutional workflows so it makes sense for both researchers and the organisation. He also participates in the research community through the OSTrails project, which develops interoperability frameworks connecting data management planning platforms, scientific knowledge graphs, and FAIR assessment tools. Across this work, he focuses on making data management practical, connected, and useful in everyday research activities.

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Nikolaos Voulgaris (University of Osaka)

Building a Data Stewardship Community in Japan & The Kansai RDM Consortium

Abstract: In Japan, research data management (RDM) support, policies and infrastructure are developing rapidly, but dedicated data steward roles and communities remain limited. The University of Osaka is working with other institutions to address this through the Kansai RDM Human Resource Development Consortium, established in 2026.
The consortium connects librarians, researchers, IT staff and other research support professionals who undertake aspects of data stewardship without holding the title. Drawing on European approaches, particularly the University of Vienna's Data Steward programme, it provides training covering RDM foundations, ethical and legal issues, practical skills, disciplinary needs and institutional support. It also develops and shares RDM learning materials.
This talk introduces the consortium, its activities and the challenges of building a community around an emerging professional role. It will also explore opportunities to exchange ideas with the UK data stewardship community around training, collaboration, shared resources and what it means to be a data steward.



Speaker Bio: I am a Specially Appointed Researcher in the Library Research and Development Office at The University of Osaka, the Graduate School of Engineering and Core Facility Organisation. My background is in nuclear engineering and radiation measurements, and currently alongside research I am involved in research data management (RDM), open science, researcher training, and research data infrastructure. I am a core member of the Kansai RDM Human Resource Development Consortium, and am working on developing learning materials, improving laboratory infrastructure, and improving collaboration between researchers and research support staff.

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Lightning talks

Giulia Caldoni (University of Bologna)

"Comunità Italiana Data Steward": from fragmented expertise to collective impact



Abstract: This lightning talk explores how the Comunità Italiana Data Steward (CIDS) is helping shape the national landscape by connecting professionals, documenting existing practices, and building a shared vision for the future.

Although the term "data steward" has only recently gained visibility in Italy, Research Data Management (RDM) support activities have long been carried out across national research institutions, under different job titles. Through a survey, whose results were published in 2026, CIDS provided the first community-driven picture of data stewardship in Italy, highlighting that the community builds on an existing yet fragmented ecosystem.

As a bottom-up initiative, CIDS creates a space for peer learning and knowledge exchange, turning scattered expertise into collective capacity. Members benefit from dedicated webinars and shared workspaces, and participation in thematic working groups, while their institutions gain access to innovative ideas and approaches to support Open Science and RDM.

More broadly, CIDS is fostering a shared identity for data stewards in Italy by creating opportunities for expertise to be shared, consolidated, and recognized.

Hence, the next challenge is clear: moving from community building to profession building, transforming shared know-how into a more formal and recognised professional profile for italian data stewards

Speaker Bio: Giulia Caldoni is the Data Steward supporting researchers working in the medical/scientific domain at the University of Bologna. Biologist by training, now her activity is focused on supporting and promoting Open Science and data management practices according to FAIR principles, also by providing training on these topics. She actively collaborates in the development and organization of the Italian Data Stewards Community and contributes to the work of Task Group 7 'Networking and knowledge exchange' within the Research Data Alliance (RDA) Interest Group 'Professionalising Data Stewardship IG'. .

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: CaSDaR's funding call

Louise Saul (CaSDaR)

Data Steward skills: evidence from CaSDaR's funding call



Abstract: A key deliverable of CaSDaR is to highlight the essential skills needed by Data Stewards and to promote the organisational culture change required for these skills to be formally recognised. To support this, CaSDaR has allocated flexible funding to demonstrate the value of embedding Data Stewardship practices within processes, projects, collections, and organisations through funding two different project types. The first were £5k projects lasting for 8-10 weeks, geared towards upskilling prospective trainee data stewards. These projects were intended to give individuals experience in Data Stewardship, supporting the establishment of the role as a viable career option. The second were £70k Projects lasting 6-9 Months; These projects were geared towards upskilling established individuals interested in enhancing their career progress in roles aligned with Data Stewardship.

CaSDaR completed the first call to distribute these flexible funds in in March 2026. In this talk, we will describe how the funding call enabled the CaSDaR team to identify the skills and needs of individuals working in Data Stewardship and of the organisations that employ them. We will also discuss the areas of Stewardship that applicants believe require further development, how organisations currently support Data Stewards, and the expected outcomes of the funded projects. Finally, we will outline how these insights will inform CaSDaR's ongoing strategy and the delivery of their objectives.

Speaker Bio: After completing her PhD in protein crystallography, Louise worked as technician and a post-doctoral fellow, specialising in the role of interactions of proteins of the immune system in immune priming. Having previously worked as an Open Research Coordinator and Administrator with the UK Reproducibility Network's Open Research Programme and the PSDI, she recently moved to the role of Network+ Coordinator for the CaSDaR network.

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: £70k Funding call

Eva Price (UCL)

Sustainable Data Stewardship: Building Continuity, Capacity, and Recognition in Temporary Research Environments

Abstract: Research-intensive universities face a persistent challenge: valuable data stewardship expertise is often lost when researchers on fixed-term contracts leave. This project addresses that challenge by developing, piloting and embedding a sustainable data stewardship framework within UCL's Department of Biochemical Engineering. Central to the approach is the integration of Electronic Research Notebooks (ERNs) into researcher onboarding and handover processes, ensuring consistent, secure and reproducible management of experimental, computational and analytical data.

The project will deliver a comprehensive onboarding module, structured handover protocol, reusable training resources, awareness-raising activities, and an online continuing professional development (CPD) module focused on bio- and health-data stewardship. Designed around the specific needs of biochemical engineering research, the framework will support effective knowledge transfer while providing a model that can be adapted across disciplines and institutions.

Aligned with UCL's emerging Research Data Stewardship Community and national priorities around FAIR data, reproducibility and data-intensive research, the project aims to strengthen stewardship culture, improve research continuity, and support the development and recognition of data stewardship skills across the UK research landscape.



Speaker Bio: Eva Price is the Lead Research Data Steward on the CaSDaR-funded project Sustainable Data Stewardship: Building Continuity, Capacity and Recognition in Temporary Research Environments. The project is led by Dr Duygu Dikicioglu in UCL's Department of Biochemical Engineering. Eva has paused her PhD at UCL to take on the role. Her doctoral research applies machine learning and multi-omics integration to improve the cell lines used to manufacture viral vectors for gene therapy. Because this work depends on reusing existing datasets, she became a data steward by necessity, and data quality, discoverability and reuse are now central to her research. She has published in Nucleic Acids Research on the long-term value of omics data and how to secure it. In npj Systems Biology and Applications, she explored the semantics of research: how terminology diverges across fields, and how that divergence can be leveraged to find and reuse data more effectively. Through a competitively funded Digital Good Network research internship, she contributed to the MHRA AI Airlock programme, whose findings informed national guidance on regulating AI as a medical device. Eva is a UCL Digital Research Technical Champion and an AWS Innovation Scholar, and her work has been adopted as an AWS case study.

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Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: £70k funding call

Shona Ferguson (UKCEH)

IMFAIR: Isle of May FAIR and AI-Ready Data Stewardship for Long-Term Seabird Monitoring



Abstract: The Isle of May FAIR and AI-ready Data Management Workflow (IMFAIR) project aims to embed sustainable data stewardship practices within the Isle of May Long-Term Study (IMLOTS), the UK's longest-running and most data-rich seabird monitoring programme. Since 1973, IMLOTS has generated nationally significant evidence used by governments, regulators, industry and conservation organisations to understand the impacts of climate change, fisheries and offshore developments on seabird populations.

IMFAIR will consolidate, curate and preserve a representative subset of IMLOTS datasets covering diet, behaviour, phenology and demography, ensuring they are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR). The project will combine metadata creation, documentation and a novel AI-assisted approach to recovering and standardising historical digital tabular data. Alongside dataset curation, IMFAIR will establish repeatable workflows that embed quality assurance, version control and archiving into routine monitoring activities. Curated datasets will be deposited with the Environmental Information Data Centre (EIDC) for long-term preservation and access. By documenting critical knowledge and reducing reliance on individual expertise, the project strengthens succession planning, supports reproducible ecological research, and provides a transferable model for integrating data stewardship into long-term environmental monitoring programmes.

Speaker Bio: Shona is an Environmental Data Scientist and Data Steward at UKCEH with a background in mathematics and meteorology. Her work focuses on developing tools for the processing, visualisation and quality assurance of environmental datasets, supporting robust and reproducible research. She maintains and updates the Data Stewardship Wizard tool for data management planning in UKCEH and the NERC Environmental Data Service, helping to embed consistent, high-quality data management standards. Shona also curates and preserves historical environmental datasets, ensuring they remain usable and impactful for long-term scientific research and evidence-based decision-making.

Shona holds a BSc (Hons) in Mathematics from the University of Glasgow and an MSc in Applied Meteorology and Climatology from the University of Birmingham.

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Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: £70k Funding call

Linus Chirchir (Research Data Scotland)

FRAME-DS: Framework for Recognising Applied Data Stewardship Within TRE Workforces - A Collaborative, Cross-Organisation Pilot

Abstract: FRAME-DS (Framework for Recognising Applied Data Stewardship Within Two TRE Workforces) is a nine-month collaborative pilot led by Research Data Scotland (RDS) and eDRIS (Public Health Scotland) to co-design a transferable framework for recognising applied data stewardship within Trusted Research Environment (TRE) workforces. Through three work packages and six facilitated workshops involving 8-12 staff from diverse roles, the project will scope stewardship activities, identify competency and recognition needs, develop a shared competency-based framework, and pilot its use within existing objective-setting and professional development processes. The project addresses a recognised gap between conceptual descriptions of data stewardship and the practical recognition of stewardship expertise across TRE roles. By mapping stewardship activities to competencies, career stages, and existing training opportunities, FRAME-DS will help staff evidence their contributions, support career progression, and strengthen professional recognition. Focusing on enhancing and aligning existing training resources rather than creating new materials, the project aims to create a sustainable model that could be adopted across the UK's approximately 40 TREs, extending its impact well beyond the pilot organisations.



Speaker Bio: Linus is a Data Analyst at Research Data Scotland with a strong interest in data-driven research, Trusted Research Environments (TREs), data governance, and the responsible use of data for public benefit. Their work focuses on improving access to, understanding of, and value from complex administrative and health-related datasets and they contribute to the development of data pipelines, metadata standards, synthetic data solutions, research data services, and analytical tools that support researchers, policymakers, and public sector organisations.

They have expertise in data management, statistical analysis, data visualisation, reproducible research, and research data infrastructure. Their technical toolkit includes R, SQL, PostgreSQL, Git, GitHub, Tableau, Power BI, QGIS, SPSS, and advanced Excel, alongside modern reproducible reporting and publishing tools such as Quarto. Their interests span data science, artificial intelligence, machine learning, synthetic data, metadata, and data stewardship. They are particularly passionate about strengthening the research data ecosystem by improving data quality, transparency, accessibility, and trust.

Through their work and research, they aim to help unlock the potential of data to support evidence-informed decision-making, advance scientific discovery, and deliver meaningful societal impact.

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: £70k funding call

Noam Tal Perry (University of Cambridge)

Evidencing the impact of data stewardship roles using administrative and scientometrics data



Abstract: The project: 'Evidencing the impact of data stewardship roles using administrative and scientometrics data ' addresses two growing challenges facing research: the rapid expansion of research data and increasing concerns around research integrity. While data stewardship is widely recognised as important for enabling FAIR, transparent and accountable research, the roles and skills underpinning these activities often remain poorly recognised, under-resourced and difficult to sustain.

The project brings together the Research Data Management and Research on Research teams at the University of Cambridge to investigate the contribution of data stewardship to research quality. It will develop a framework of data stewardship skills and responsibilities, drawing on existing literature and practitioner expertise, before mapping data stewardship roles across the University using historical job description data. By linking these roles to research groups and their outputs, the project will combine institutional records with bibliometric data to examine patterns of research performance. Through comparisons with matched research groups lacking data stewardship support, the study aims to generate robust evidence of the value of data stewardship, providing insights to inform institutional strategy in workforce development and future investment in research infrastructure.

Speaker Bio:

Noam Tal-Perry is a Research Associate at the Research Strategy Office, University of Cambridge, and a member of the Research on Research Group. He is also an Affiliated Researcher at the Bennett Institute for Public Policy and an Official Fellow at Murray Edwards College. His research focuses on meta-science, scientometrics, and research policy. Currently, he contributes to several projects, including Action Research on Research Culture (ARRC), Improving Inclusivity in Grant Funding (I3GF), and Structure 'n' Size (SnS).

CaSDaR
Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Career Panel

Sarah Trinder (University of Warwick)

Applying FAIR data principles to unlock the value of historic datasets at the UK Vegetable Genebank

Project abstract: The UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB) conserves a globally significant collection of vegetable crop seed. The collection is managed to provide plant breeders and researchers with access to genetic diversity, vital for crop improvement for food security. Access to high-quality data on plant traits such as pest and disease resistance helps plant breeders and researchers identify the most appropriate material to incorporate into their work. Throughout its history the UKVGB has been involved in research projects collecting high-quality plant trait data. However, much data from these historic projects remains stored in excel files, making it difficult for external users to access, and limiting its value. This project
will curate historic plant trait datasets in line with FAIR data principles. The trainee data steward will learn and apply fundamental data stewardship skills including data cleaning, field mapping, dataset reformatting and variable recoding to enable datasets to be uploaded to the UKVGB database. Through this process trait data will be correctly associated with its seed sample, increasing the overall knowledge on the attributes of that material, building value. Data will be available to users through the UKVGB website where it can be accessed, queried and searched in the context of other data. This work will make these historic plant datasets more accessible, unlocking these valuable resources to the vegetable research community, encourage their reuse, and ensure that the efforts of past researchers are not wasted



Speaker Bio: Dr Sarah Trinder works at the UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB), a collection of vegetable crop seed which is an important resource for supporting global food security. She manages the highly varied data associated with the UKVGB collections, which include plant collection data, seed stock data, image, characterisation and genetic sequence data. She loves using data to improve management of the collections and document the collections value to the scientific community. She has broad interests in plant evolution and genetics, and a particular interest in the use of long-term collections and experiments as a resource for research

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Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Career panels

Michael O'Connor (Queens University Belfast)

The Springboard Project: Data Stewardship & Open Research Repository at Queen's University Belfast



Abstract: The Springboard Project at Queen's University Belfast demonstrates how targeted data stewardship can support institutional transitions in research infrastructure while building staff capability in open research services. During the migration from the Queen's Research Portal (Pure) to the Open Research Repository (ORR), powered by Figshare, a newly appointed Senior Library Assistant will undertake a programme of practical data stewardship training. The project combines workforce development with the creation of sustainable researcher support resources, including repository training videos, user documentation, and guidance materials to facilitate FAIR-compliant deposits. A pilot preservation initiative will also curate and migrate Law podcast records into ORR, assigning rich metadata and persistent identifiers to improve discoverability, accessibility, and long-term preservation of non-traditional research outputs. By supporting researchers expected to use the repository in its first year, the project aims to reduce barriers to open research adoption while embedding data stewardship practices within library services. The outcomes will demonstrate the value of data stewardship in repository management, provide evidence of impact through repository metrics, and establish a scalable model for preserving diverse scholarly outputs in support of institutional open research ambitions.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Michael O'Connor is the University's Research Data Librarian, based in the Open Research Team in the McClay Library. Michael is responsible for advising researchers on all aspects of research data management, from storage to sharing data and advising on sensitive data too; he manages the data repositories in Pure & ORR, attends University Research Ethics Committees and assists researchers in making research data as open as possible, as closed as necessary, as well as advising on the increasingly complex world of funders and data sharing. He will talk at CaSDaR's Data Steward Conference on the Springboard Project for Data Stewardship at Queen's University Belfast, which was the recipient of the £5k small project awards from CaSDaR..

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Speakers: Career Panel

Clare Richter (University of Warwick)

Applying FAIR data principles to unlock the value of historic datasets at the UK Vegetable Genebank

Project abstract: The UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB) conserves a globally significant collection of vegetable crop seed. The collection is managed to provide plant breeders and researchers with access to genetic diversity, vital for crop improvement for food security. Access to high-quality data on plant traits such as pest and disease resistance helps plant breeders and researchers identify the most appropriate material to incorporate into their work. Throughout its history the UKVGB has been involved in research projects collecting high-quality plant trait data. However, much data from these historic projects remains stored in excel files, making it difficult for external users to access, and limiting its value. This project
will curate historic plant trait datasets in line with FAIR data principles. The trainee data steward will learn and apply fundamental data stewardship skills including data cleaning, field mapping, dataset reformatting and variable recoding to enable datasets to be uploaded to the UKVGB database. Through this process trait data will be correctly associated with its seed sample, increasing the overall knowledge on the attributes of that material, building value. Data will be available to users through the UKVGB website where it can be accessed, queried and searched in the context of other data. This work will make these historic plant datasets more accessible, unlocking these valuable resources to the vegetable research community, encourage their reuse, and ensure that the efforts of past researchers are not wasted



Speaker Bio: Clare Richter MBio is a University of Warwick Biological Sciences graduate, specialising in Crop Science. She recently completed a Master's project examining a range of commercial lettuce varieties for their ability to fare against the currant-lettuce aphid (Nasonovia ribisnigri), looking for sources of partial resistance. Following this, she completed a summer internship at the UK Vegetable Genebank (UKVGB) as a Trainee Data Steward, funded by the UKRI Digital Research Infrastructure Programme via CaSDaR. Here, she transformed historic research data on major British vegetables into the correct format for the UKVGB's centralised GRIN-Global database, where it can be used by crop researchers and growers

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Careers and Skills for Data-driven Research

Speakers: Career panels

Adam King (University of Salford)

Piloting the role of Data Stewards in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) within Justice Settings



Project abstract: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition caused by prenatal alcohol exposure and is significantly overrepresented within justice settings. International evidence indicates that individuals with FASD are up to 19 times more likely to encounter the criminal justice system, yet there are currently no UK justice-sector data describing its prevalence or identifying potential indicators. This project will pilot the embedding of a Data Steward within Bury Probation Service to co-design, implement, and evaluate a data-driven approach to identifying individuals potentially at risk of FASD. Working across health, probation, and analytics teams, the Data Steward will improve the quality, governance, interoperability, and responsible use of screening data while ensuring compliance with ethical and legal requirements. The project will generate evidence for how data stewardship can support ethically robust screening initiatives in complex public sector environments and demonstrate the value of data stewardship roles within justice services. The findings will inform future approaches to data stewardship and vulnerable population research within the UK justice system.

Speaker Bio: Dr Adam King is a researcher and academic specialising in media psychology, psycholinguistics, social psychology, and human–AI communication. His research examines how language shapes perceptions of identity, attribution, bias, and social groups, with particular interests in computational approaches to social psychology, interdisciplinary research methods, and the responsible use of data. His current interests include trustworthy human–AI communication, linguistic representations of identity, computational approaches to social psychology, and the development of interdisciplinary methods for understanding how people interpret one another, and increasingly, how people interpret machines. He has experience across academic research, higher education teaching, equality, diversity and inclusion, and applied research, bringing together quantitative and qualitative approaches to address complex research questions..

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Speakers: Career Panel

George Harpum (University of Cambridge)

A Structured Approach to Laboratory Sample Inventory and Metadata Stewardship

Project abstract: Laboratory freezer samples are a valuable but often poorly managed research asset, with records frequently fragmented across spreadsheets, paper notebooks, and individual researchers' files. Staff turnover, inconsistent documentation practices, and weak links between physical samples and experimental data can compromise traceability, reuse, and reproducibility. This project will develop and pilot a metadata pipeline for laboratory sample management, using freezer collections as an initial focus. Working with pilot laboratories, the project will define a practical metadata standard and implement it within eLabFTW, an open-source Electronic Lab Notebook (ELN) and Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). By embedding structured metadata capture at the point of sample registration, the project will improve data quality, searchability, and long-term stewardship while reducing reliance on individual knowledge. The pilot will evaluate usability, traceability, and researcher adoption, supported by targeted training and guidance. Outcomes include a validated metadata standard, improved inventory management workflows, enhanced collaboration, and stronger links between samples and experimental records. More broadly, the project will demonstrate how data stewardship can be embedded within everyday laboratory practice, supporting FAIR principles, reproducible research, and sustainable laboratory data management at institutional scale.



Speaker Bio: George completed a BSc Apprenticeship in Applied Bioscience in 2024, working in an industrial molecular biology lab which manufactured PCR mastermix. There, George investigated additives that improved PCR-inhibitor tolerance on crudely extracted plant samples, helped design and refactor several scripts for the bioinformatics department, and made improvements to the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) for mass exports and improvements to our chemical storage system.
George now works in the Plant-Parasite interactions group under Dr Sebastian Eves-van den Akker, where George looks forward to contributing to the important research and ensuring the group runs efficiently and smoothly.

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Speakers: Career panels
Qi Wang
(University of Cambridge)

A Structured Approach to Laboratory Sample Inventory and Metadata Stewardship



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Speaker Bio: Qi received her PhD at the University of California, Los Angeles, where she developed computational methods to study alternative splicing and the evolution of HIV. Later she joined the UCLA Division of Dermatology to help identify the resistance mechanisms of targeted cancer therapies using computational tools. Qi's research interest is the development and evolution of biological systems. She is interested in using computational tools to conduct and facilitate such studies. Currently, Qi provides bioinformatics support to PhD students and postdoctoral researchers in the lab of Professor Beverley Glover. She also provides support for users of the computing clusters in the department..

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