

Data Stewardship Coordinator Node – Concept

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Introduction

As local data stewardship networks are being established at different Swiss HEIs, data stewardship coordinators are taking on the challenging role of establishing these new networks and support data stewards to address research data management issues from a variety of disciplines. The proposed node data stewardship coordination (DSC node) aims to support data stewardship coordinators in their roles, tasks and challenges. It allows data stewardship coordinators to profit from each other's experiences and expertise and offers space for the discussion of relevant topics and the sharing of resources. As such it supports the mission of the greater Swiss Research Data Support Network (SRDSN) in moving forward and improving research data management.

Objectives

The DSC node aims to help define and fulfill the role, tasks and challenges (e.g. sustainability) of the coordinators who need to set up local data stewardship networks and who have to coordinate and meet the demands of various disciplines. Currently there is no place of exchange and support for data stewardship coordinators, so this node will provide a community of practice for them.¹

Specifically, the DSC node aims to be a forum for expert input as well as peer-to-peer advice and discussion of questions like

- the role of data stewards and data stewardship coordinators (job descriptions, services)
- motivating data stewards for their work
- training and onboarding new data stewards
- diversity of profiles and professional backgrounds of data stewards in the local HEI network
- gaining recognition for data stewards within a local HEI
- developing a data stewards network at a local HEI
- integrating the network structurally and financially within a local HEI
- diversity of data stewardship networks and their impact

¹ On the concept of community of practice, cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_of_practice with referenced literature (10.5.2024).

Additionally, it is a place to share resources and provide support (e.g. in the form of best practices, presentation slides or training events) for coordinators.

Community

The DSC node is aimed at data stewardship coordinators and aims to address their needs. However, it is also open to other interested members of the SRDSN community, including data stewards without coordinating roles. Node members need to be part of the larger SRDSN and agree to its Code of Conduct.

The DSC node aims to align and cooperate with other (inter-)national communities of data stewardship coordinators and to coordinate activities with them.

Activities

The DSC node organizes a maximum of three meetings annually for data stewardship coordinators and interested SRDSN members to provide a platform for discussion, readings, and inputs by expert speakers.

Members of the node contribute and share resources (e.g. presentation slides, support protocols, documentation, training resources) that are used (successfully) by local data stewardship coordinators to create and enable the local data stewardship networks. As a knowledge hub, the node also provides an overview of data stewardship activities and practices in Switzerland. All DSC node members have access to these shared resources. The node contributes content to the SRDSN website, is part of the editorial team, and adds content to the SRDSN Zenodo community. In this, the DSC node aligns with the SRDSN communication channels.

Upon request by the coordinators, the DSC node disseminates information about training events for data stewards and interested people on a national level. The node announces events through SRDSN communication channels and SRDSN members will be invited to join. As such, it is able to put the events into the context of the larger SRDSN.

Activities are open to anyone but topics are aimed at data stewardship coordinators.

Operational Mechanisms

The DSC node lead is represented by a chair consisting of a minimum of 1 person and by a support of a minimum of 2-3 people to organize the node. A minimum of 2 institutions (if possible from diverse institution types and/or language areas) need to be represented in the node lead. The node (co-)chair is confirmed yearly (autumn) by the members of the DSC node (online survey with deadline to confirm). Confirmation is based on a majority vote of those who participated in voting. A list of members with the right to vote will be kept

automatically based on profile information of people in the SRDSN (DSC node membership in the SRDSN profile).

The same voting mechanism will be used for confirmation of any changes or revisions to the DSC node concept.

The DSC node lead is responsible for:

- setting deliverables and planning for the year
- organizing node activities listed above
- welcoming new members (sign-up via website) in coordination with the SRDSN operational committee
- managing the list of node members
- organizing yearly vote of lead (by autumn) taking diversity into account
- annual reporting and revision of concept (if necessary) for SRDSN autumn meeting and possibly node leads meeting
- coordinating with the larger SRDSN and other networks (responsibility of chair)
- contributing to the editorial team and the webpage
- archiving of node resources and documents if the node ends
- ensuring code of conduct

The lead meets at least the same amount of time as meetings held for the data steward coordinators. They distribute the roles and responsibilities among themselves.

Timeline

The node is planned to be open-ended. During the annual reporting, any decrease in activity or interest will be evaluated and if necessary the timeline will be adjusted.