

# Research Data Management in Helmholtz – Findings from Data Professionals Survey 2024

## Status quo and opportunities for enhancement

Silke Christine Gerlich<sup>1</sup>, Markus Kubin<sup>2</sup>, Lucas Kulla<sup>3</sup>, Christine Lemster<sup>4</sup>, Andreas Schmidt<sup>5</sup>, Jan Schweikert<sup>5</sup>, Sangeetha Shankar<sup>6</sup>, Karl-Uwe Stucky<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute Materials Data Science and Informatics (IAS-9), Forschungszentrum Jülich; <sup>2</sup> Helmholtz-Zentrum Berlin für Materialien und Energie; <sup>3</sup> German Cancer Research Center Heidelberg; <sup>4</sup> GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel; <sup>5</sup> Karlsruhe Institute of Technology; <sup>6</sup> Institute of Transportation Systems, German Aerospace Center (DLR)

- HMC Data Professionals Survey 2024 investigated the RDM-practices across the Helmholtz Association, focusing on FAIR (meta)data practices, data policies, professional training, RDM-related tools, gaps and needs.
- The survey targeted Helmholtz staff with RDM-related tasks and highlighted challenges, common themes, and needs in managing research data, offering insights into the status quo and areas for improvement.
- Survey data collected from 156 respondents in 16 centers will guide HMC's strategy to develop tailored support and resources, enhancing RDM practices and addressing identified gaps across the Helmholtz Association.

### HMC Data Professionals Survey 2024

Target group: Data Professionals (staff with RDM-related tasks) in the Helmholtz Association

- RDM-related work is done across institutional levels in Helmholtz.

**60 %**  
of respondents  
work on enriching data  
and/or software with  
metadata.  
(n=156)

**56 %**  
of respondents  
work on publishing  
data and/or software  
in a FAIR compliant  
way. (n=156)

- Center policies or guidelines are usually implemented.

**75 %**  
are aware of official  
guidelines or  
policies at their  
center. (n=142)

**70 %**  
of those who are aware  
of their center's  
guidelines tend to or  
fully align their work  
with them. (n=98)

- We identify a clear need for training on RDM-related topics.

**75 %**  
of respondents report  
not to have had  
training for their RDM-  
related tasks. (n=145)

**59 %**  
of respondents  
report to be  
interested in  
training. (n=133)

- RDM-related tools were reported to be used across Helmholtz: Git, RDMO, ORCID, DublinCore, DataCite, schema.org, re3data, ...

**7**  
RDM-related tools were  
reported to be used in  
at least half of all  
Helmholtz centers.

**70**  
RDM-related tools were  
reported to be (co-)de-  
veloped by Helmholtz  
staff.

- Multiple obstacles are expressed related to RDM-related work in Helmholtz.

**82 %**  
of respondents  
report a lack of  
resources (time,  
personnel, funding).  
(n=152)

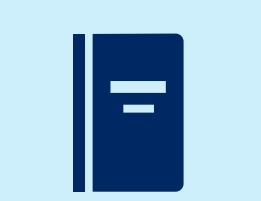
**34 %**  
of respondents  
report a  
lack of technical  
solutions.  
(n=152)

- Alignment with FAIR (meta)data practices was self-assessed using an adoption of the FAIR-Aware questionnaire.<sup>1</sup>

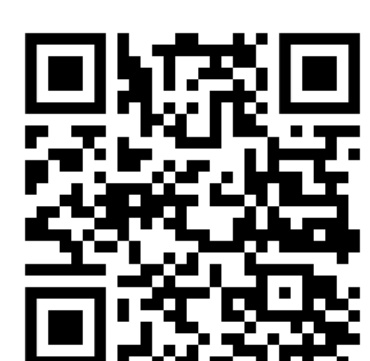
**56 %**  
of respondents report  
that data they process  
or publish, usually or  
always is assigned a  
PID. (n=138)

**35 %**  
of respondents report  
that data they process  
or publish, usually or  
always has metadata  
based on controlled  
vocabularies. (n=141)

#### Outputs



Report



Dataset

An interoperable dataset is planned to be published for reuse.



Code



Dashboard

A dashboard for exploring the survey data is in preparation.

#### Suggested Approach for 2025+

- We suggest to prepare a unified question catalogue to be potentially reused in future surveys.
- We suggest to prepare a sustainable survey pipeline with reusable building blocks.
- We suggest to prepare an annually recurring Community Survey, targeting researchers<sup>2</sup> and research data professionals in Helmholtz.

##### References

<sup>1</sup> Data Archiving and Networked Service. FAIR-Aware: Your first step towards your FAIR dataset (2021). URL: <https://fairaware.dans.knaw.nl/>

<sup>2</sup> Helmholtz Metadata Collaboration (2022). A survey on research data management practices among researchers in the Helmholtz Association. DOI: [10.3289/HMC\\_publ\\_05](https://doi.org/10.3289/HMC_publ_05)