



Consortium for the
Social, Behavioural, Educational
and Economic Sciences

NFDI Talk
18.11.2024

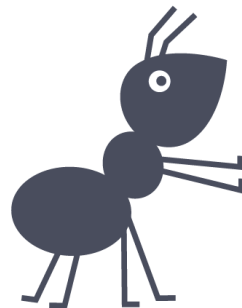


Connecting secure workplaces for researchers

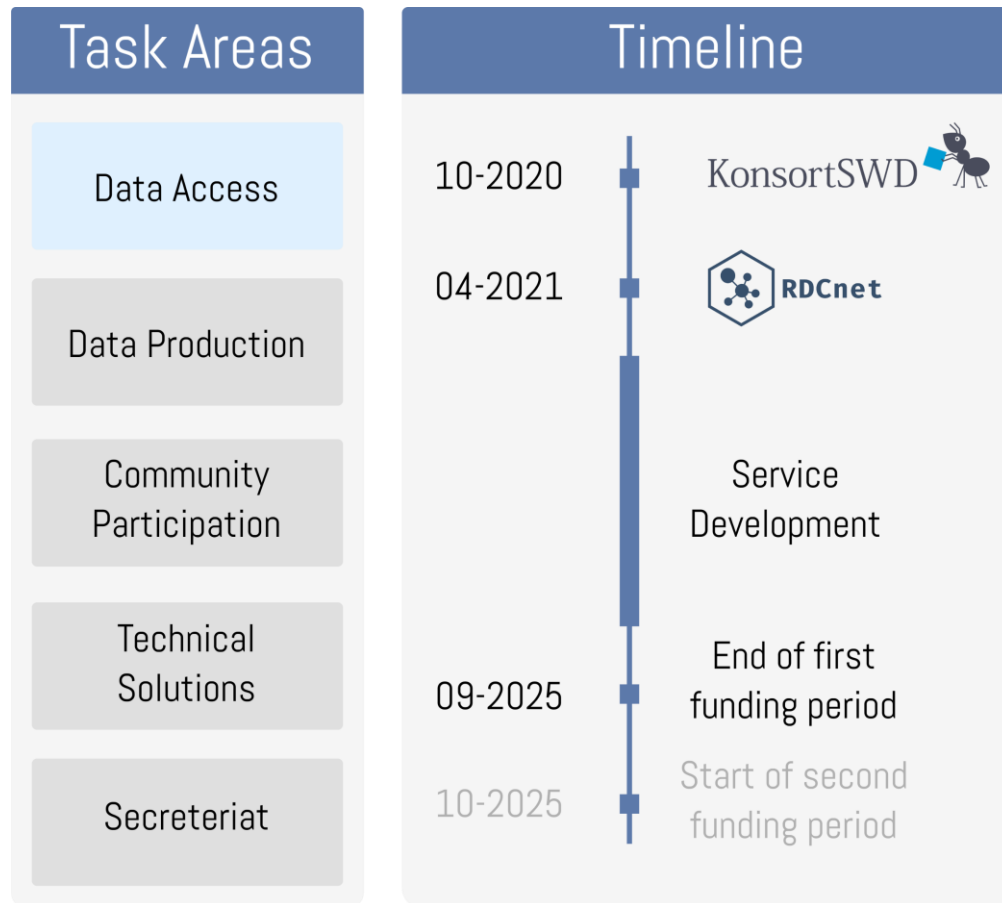
Neil Murray

German Institute for Economic Research (DIW)

Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP)

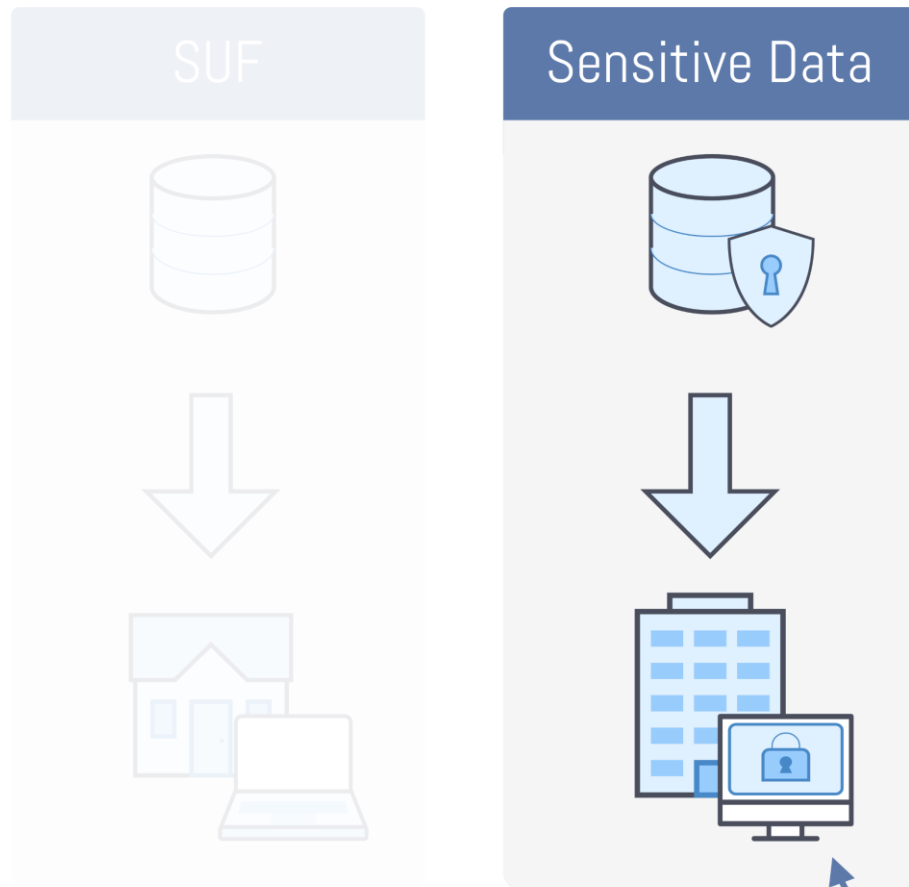


KonsortSWD and RDCnet



- KonsortSWD: focuses on enhancing data accessibility, management, and usability in social, behavioral, educational, and economic research.
- KonsortSWD includes 23 measures within five task areas.

Working with sensitive research data



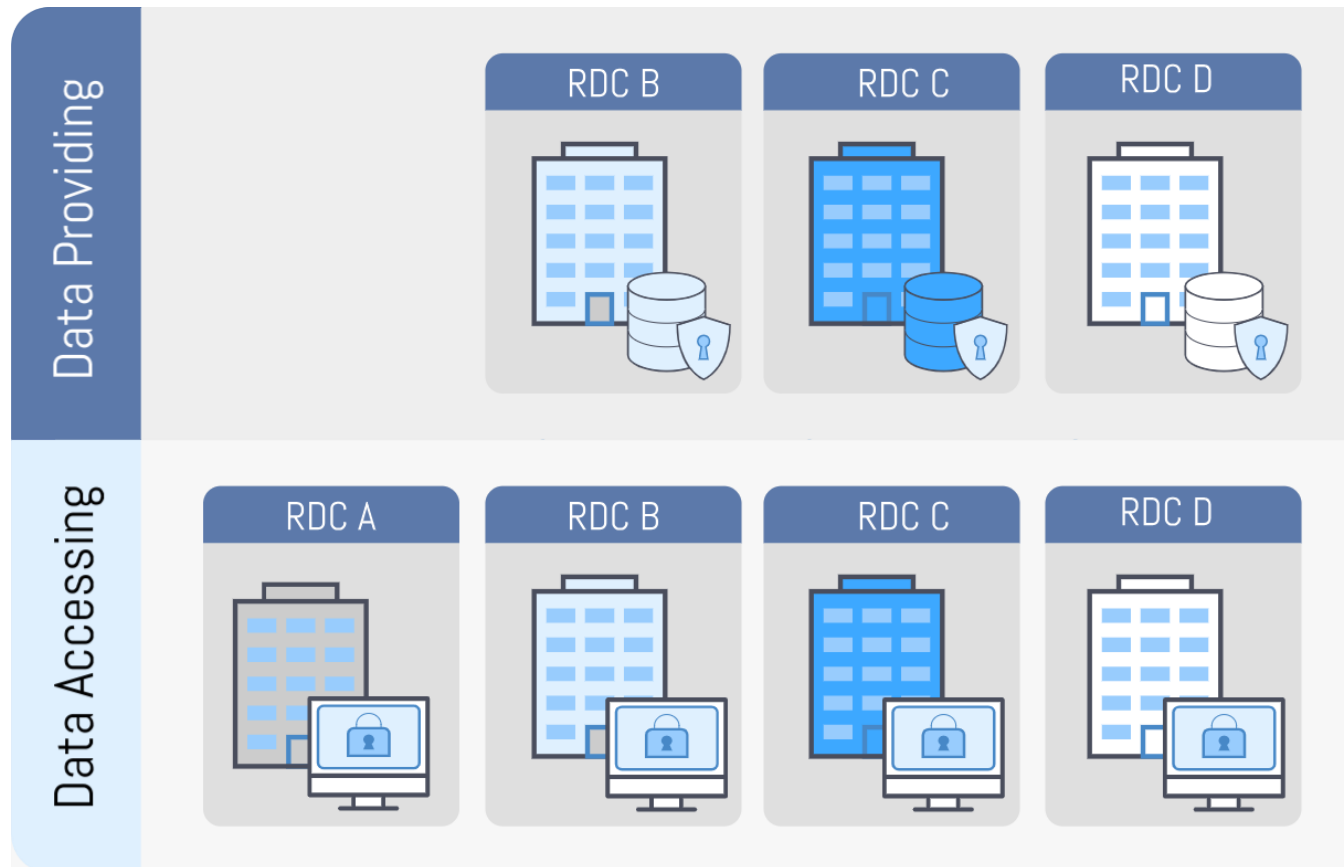
- Research data are often highly sensitive due to legal or ethical restrictions, such as microdata from surveys, experiments, or interviews.
- **Scientific-Use-Files (SUF)** are fully anonymized. Can often be downloaded and analyzed from home.
- **Sensitive Data** often contain indicators that allow re-identification. Can only be accessed at data providing Research Data Center (RDC).
- **Secure Workplace:** Thin client installed in a data security room.

Status quo in Germany

- Most RDCs provide their sensitive data at local secure workspaces. Some with remote access.
- Researchers need to travel to access sensitive data.
- Solution: Connect secure workplaces e.g., access data from **RDC A** from a secure workplace at **RDC B**.
- **The aim of the RDCnet is to provide a framework and necessary services for realizing multilateral remote access connections between RDCs.**



The basic idea



- Each RDC provides at least one secured workspace for the RDCnet.
- From this workplace, researchers can analyze sensitive research from potentially all data providing RDCs via secure remote access connections.
- Researchers have greater flexibility to choose a nearby location, reducing both travel time and costs.
- RDCs can expand their number of potential data users.

On a technical note

Access Data



- Needs to install a thin client within a data security room (secure workplace).
- Configure the thin client restrictively according to security criteria.
- Install remote access client software and define connection parameters.

Provide Data



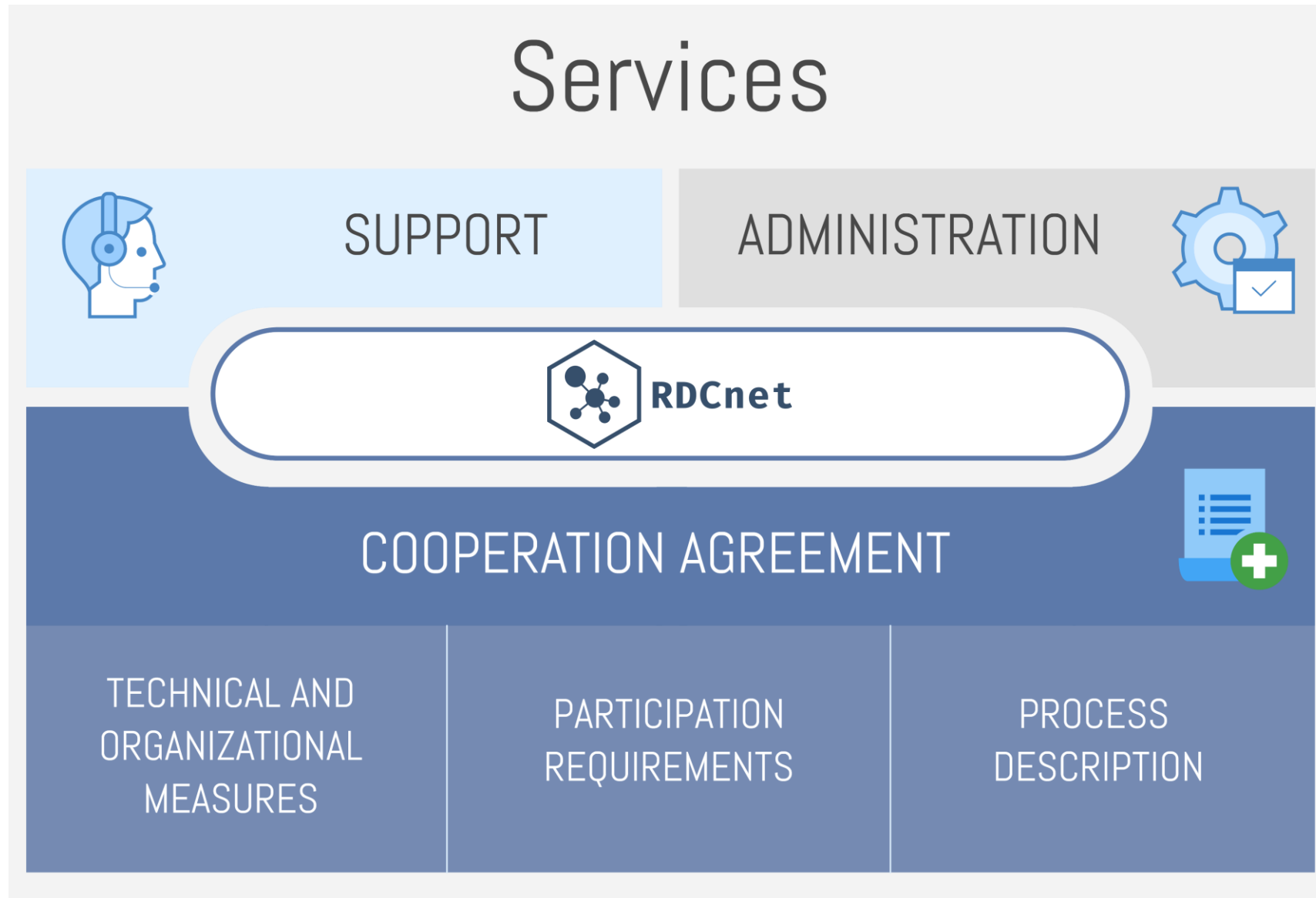
- Implement remote desktop system.
- User management.
- IP-Whitelist.

- Participating RDCs independently implement technical solutions.

- They can build upon existing structures and systems.

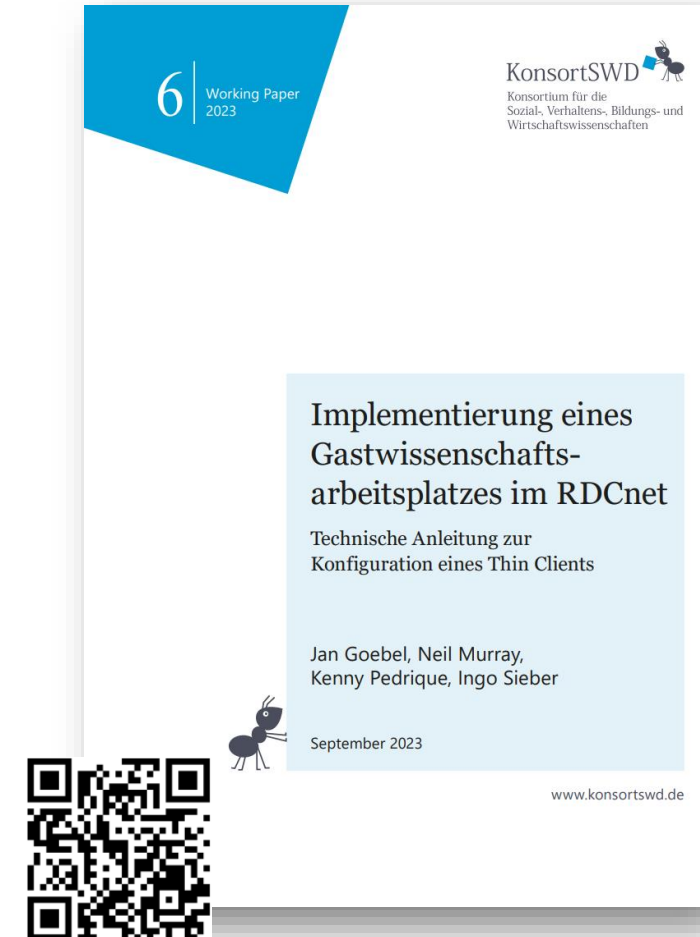
- RDCnet offers support and pools expertise.

- RDCnet defines security and compatibility criteria.



Services: Support

Access Data	Support and guidance on setting up and configuring a thin client for use in a secure workplace (KSWD Working Paper 6).
Connect	Combine expertise from participating RDCs on remote desktop systems, facilitate knowledge exchange among IT staff, and organize workshops.
Providing Data	In progress: Guide for setting up and running a reference remote desktop system based on VMware Horizon.



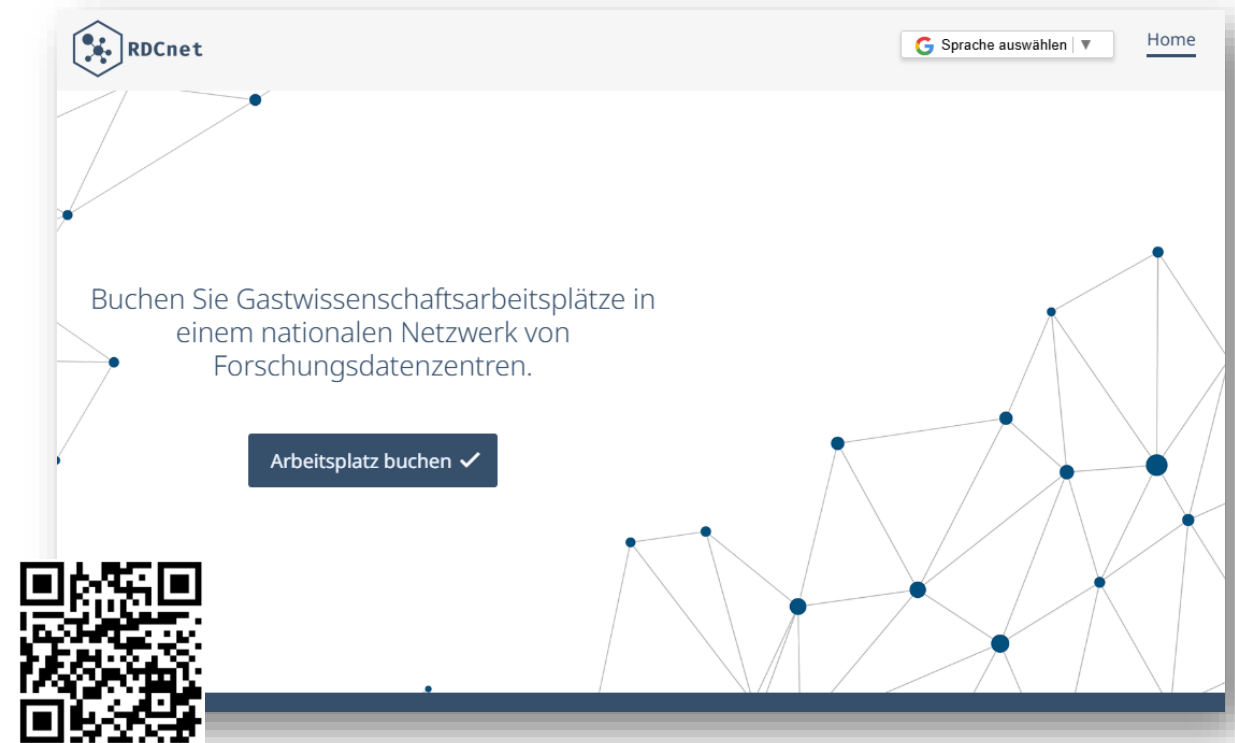
Services: Administration

1

Link between cooperation partners: foster communication and jointly make relevant decisions.

2

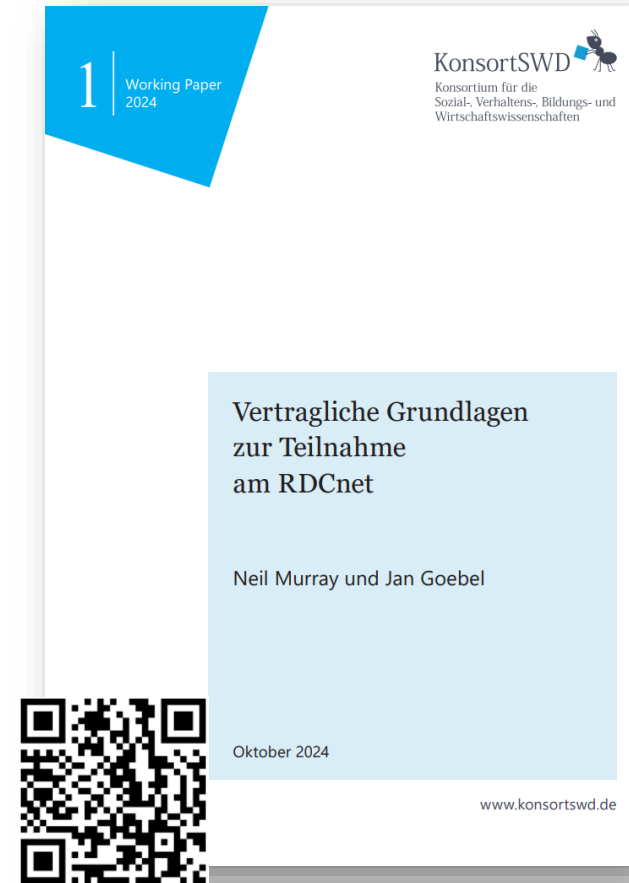
Provision of a joint booking platform for scheduling workplaces for researchers.



Services: Cooperation Agreement

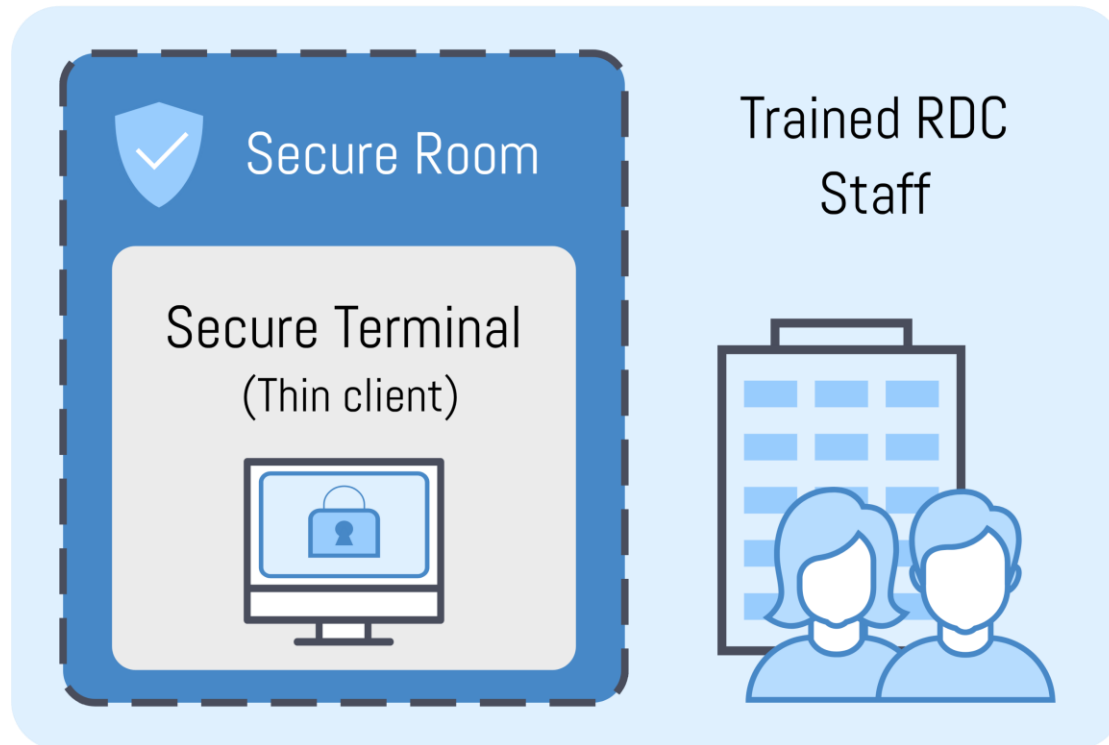
Multilateral agreement – signed by every participating institution

Establishes a foundation of trust by defining standardized minimum security criteria for the workplace, data security room, as well as organizational measures and responsibilities.



Services: Cooperation Agreement

Security Criteria



Secure Terminal	Thin client only able to run remote access client software.
Secure Room	Can only to be accessed by authorised researchers and staff.
Trained Staff	Validates ID of researchers and controls room and terminal.

PARTICIPATION IN RDCNET

DATA ACCESSING PARTY



Mandatory: Each institute (RDC) takes on the role of data accessing party and provides a secure workplace within the RDCnet.

DATA PROVIDING PARTY



Optional: Each institute (RDC) can take on the role of a data provider, making their research data available to all secure workplaces via remote desktop connections.

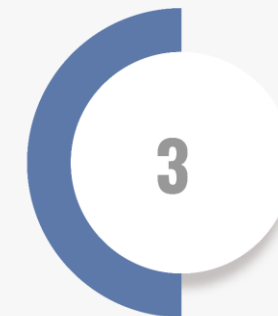
CONNECTION TESTS

As data accessing party and optional data providing party



SETUP SECURE WORKPLACE

Optional:
Implement remote desktop system



CONTRACT

And integration within the booking platform

Where we stand

- Cooperation agreement signed by SOEP, gesis and IZA .
- Second round: rwi, EBDC.
- Partners integrated into the booking platform.
- Remote access connection established and tested between RDCs.
- **Initiate productive operations.**

COOPERATION PARTNERS



Secured Workplace

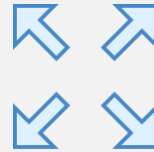


Provides Research Data

Where we want to go

Focus in second funding period:

- Growth and efficient productive operations.
- Extend services.



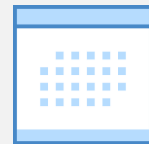
Extend services beyond RDCs within the KonsortSWD network.



Provide pre-configured RDCnet terminals.

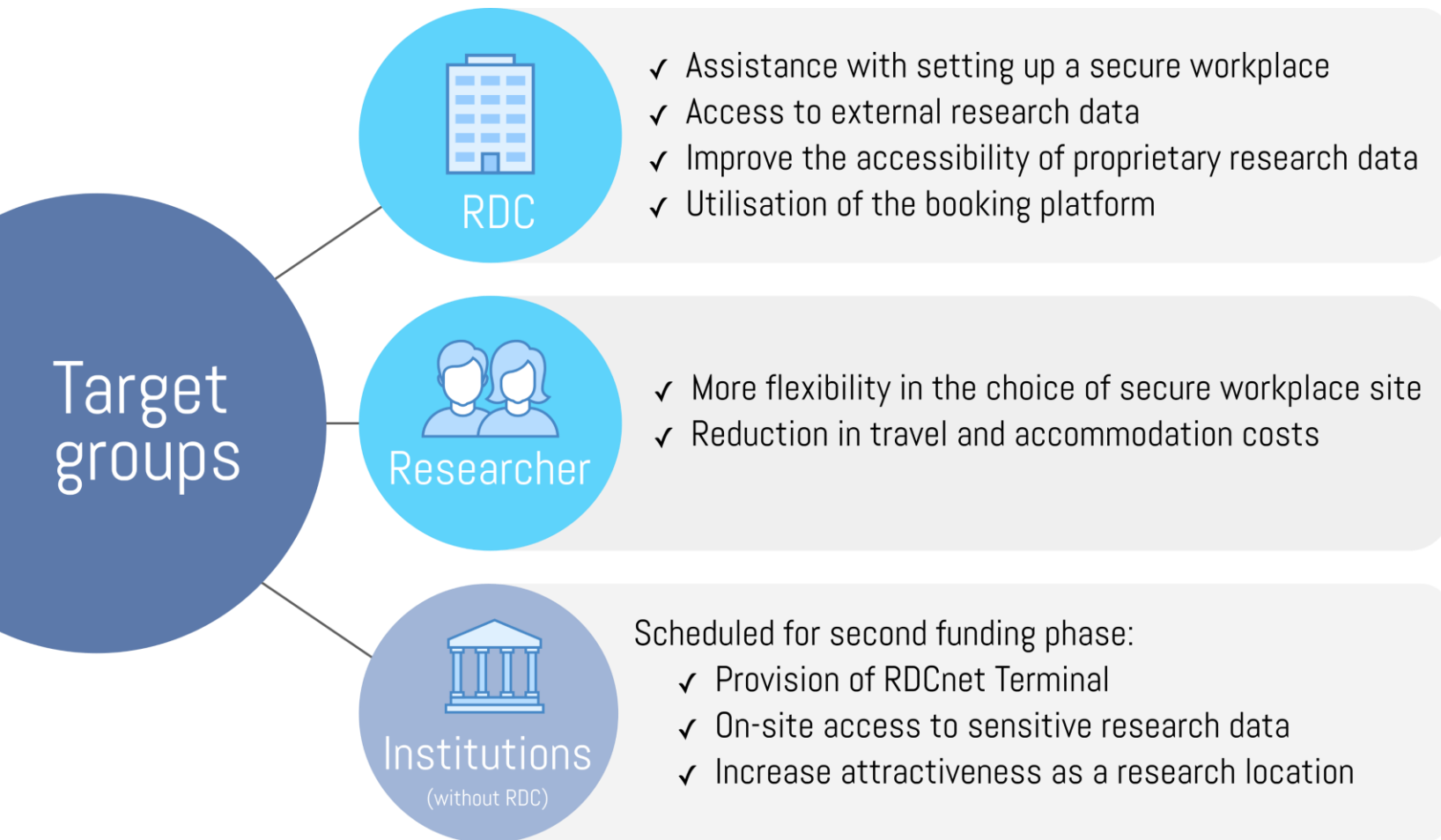


Install RDCnet terminals as secure workplaces at institutions without RDCs, such as universities.



Provide a booking platform as a service for all RDCs within the NFDI.

Conclusion: target groups and benefits



Thank you for
your attention!

Contact

Neil Murray

German Institute for Economic Research (DIW)

Socio-Economic Panel

Business office

nmurray@diw

+49 30 89789 – 326

murrayneil.com



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