



# Rent a Data Steward

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Two Companions for All – a Travelogue from Thuringia

Stefan Kirsch & Kevin Lindt

# Journey

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- The Mission
- Challenges along the way
- Adaptation – Diversity of roles & tasks
- Support from Fellows
- The path ahead



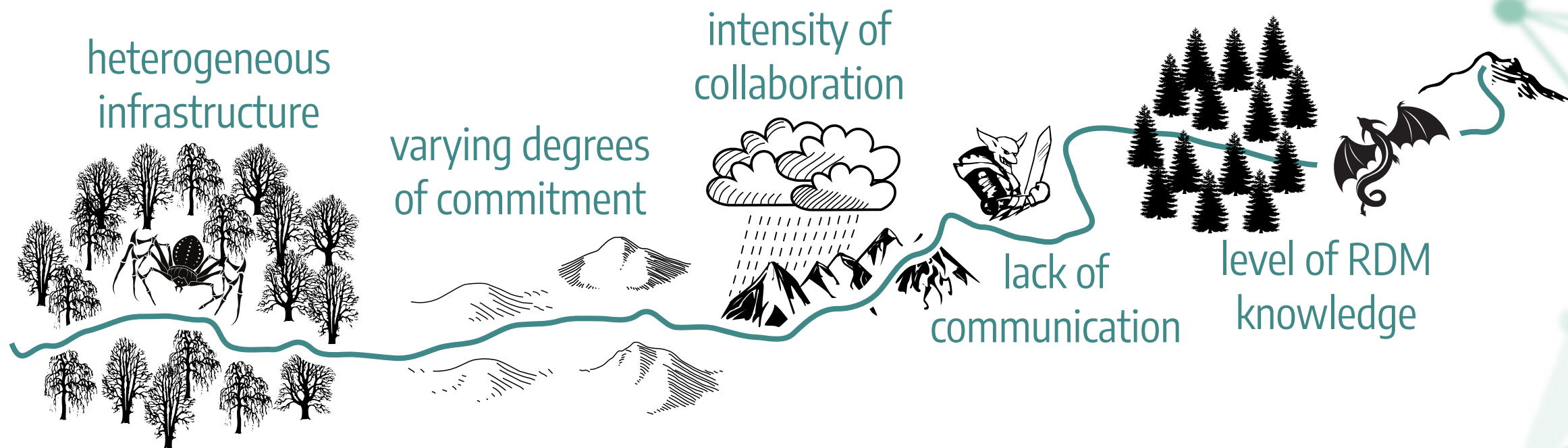
# The Mission

- intensive collaboration on practical solutions for specific challenges
- sustainable improvement on the handling of research data
- centered around the needs of the group & supported by the group leader
- connect the group to existing infrastructures and services

**„temporary team members“**



# Challenges along the way



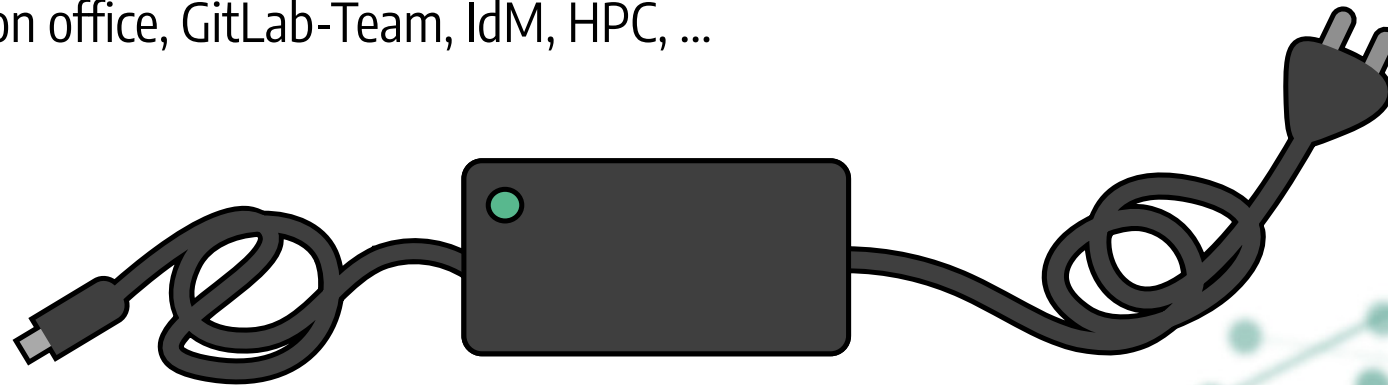
- sparring partners instead of temporary team members
- establish RDM time slots in the researchers' calendars
- advocate for researchers needs towards other stakeholders

# Diversity of Roles & Tasks

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Engage locally as a member of one of the two biggest **university computing centers** in Thuringia ...

- raise awareness for **research data** and **researchers'** needs
- increase the visibility of existing IT services among researchers
- cross-departmental collaboration for user support
  - data protection office, GitLab-Team, IdM, HPC, ...





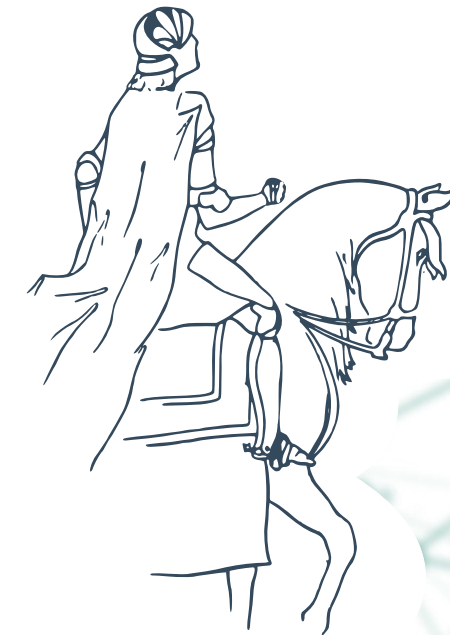
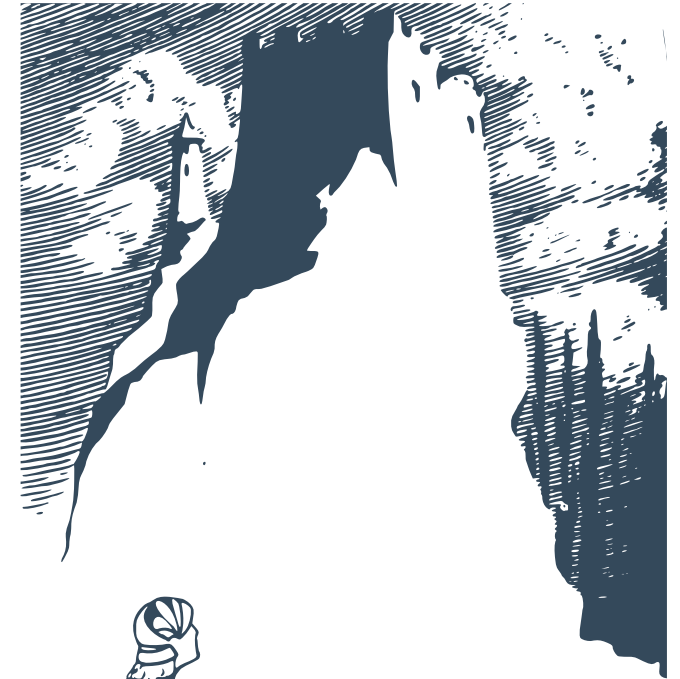
# Diversity of Roles & Tasks

Engage locally at a **university of applied sciences**

- IT services units: slim teams, sometimes „traditional“ service focus on administration & academic teaching
- libraries with mostly non-academic personnel
- profs with 2x amount of teaching hours, research with almost no mid-level faculty staff
- from our side as RDM state initiative: hardly reached before FDM-HAWK

... being located at **service center for research & transfer**

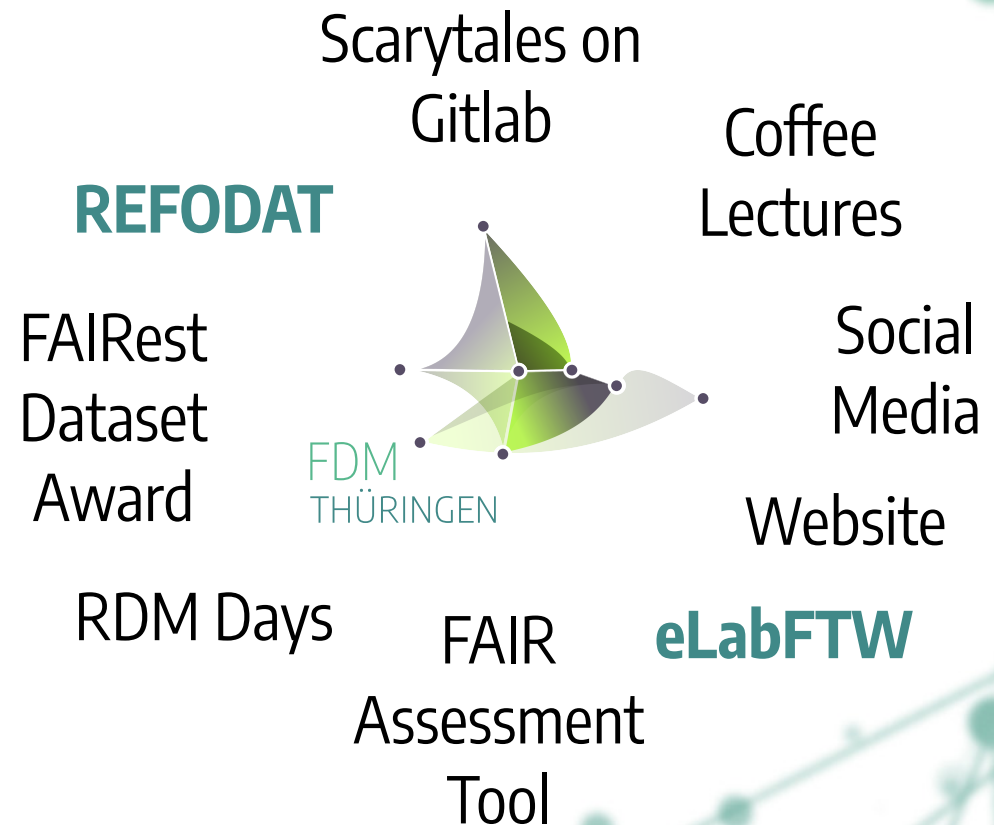
- longer-winded landline to IT service



# Diversity of Roles & Tasks

Engagement in **TKFDM** activities

- coworking on a daily basis, exchange in team chat & in regular meetings
- provide **RDM tools training**
  - e.g. git, Bash, eLabFTW
  - based on materials, e.g. from Carpentries ...
- involvement based on skills & interest
  - especially in **infrastructure projects**



# Diversity of Roles & Tasks

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Engage in **cross-institutional infrastructure projects**

- engage in strategic discussions
- provide the researchers' perspective
- communicate between stakeholders
- develop user guidelines & operating concepts
- support researchers with questions & onboarding





# Support from Fellows

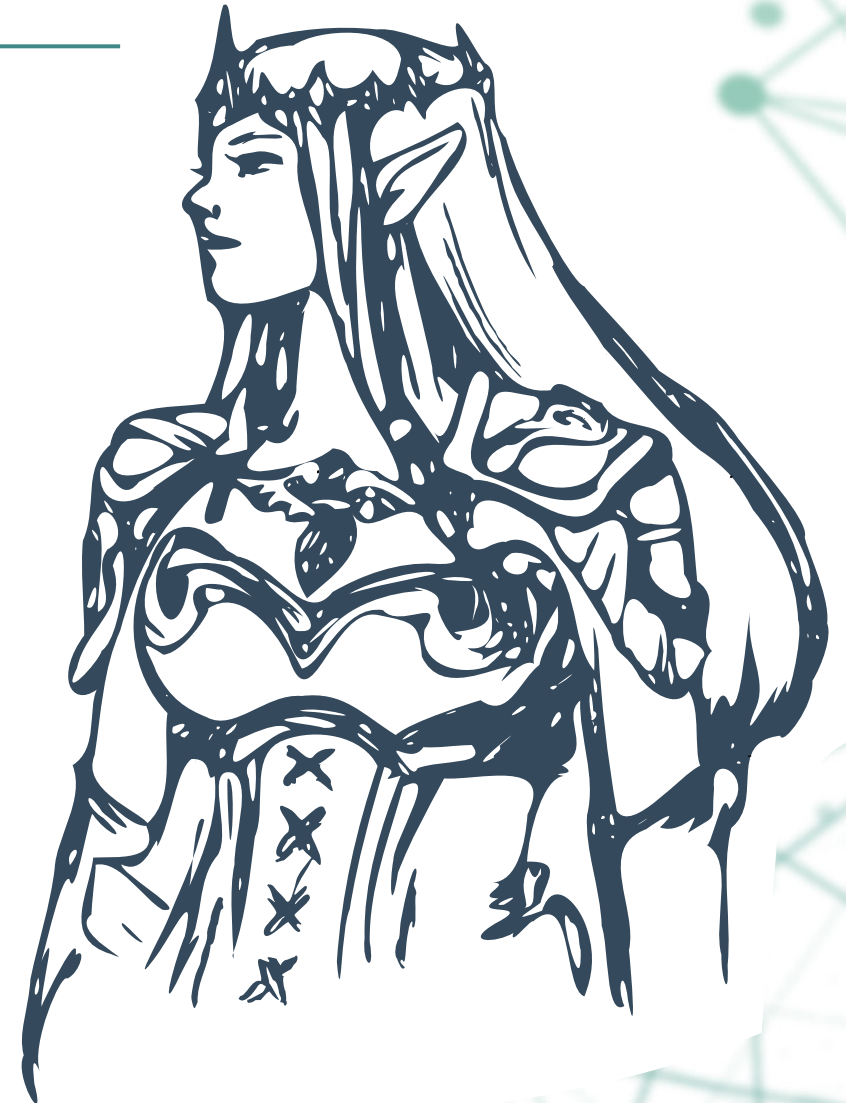
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## Working in a diverse team of RDM professionals ...

- benefit from a variety of professional backgrounds
- assign tasks based on strengths & preferences

## ... distributed across the institutions

- provide local perspective & connections
- often initialize contact between groups & data stewards
- **strategic advancement of RDM in Thuringia**



# Support from Fellows

## Lifted by community exchange:

- especially regarding the hands-on level
- learning from each other & sharing best practices
- safe space to share challenges & exchange experiences

Wednesday, April 2		
10:15 - 11:15	<b>Data Stewards, let's Share:</b> Essential Tasks and How to Overcome Challenges	<b>Initiatives, let's Compare:</b> Projects and Initiatives, an Overview
11:30 - 12:30	<b>Keynote 3: One Does Not Simply Walk Into Research Culture!</b>	
11:30 - 12:15	Antje Manske (GESIS / Base4NFDI, Germany) Be an Agent of Change – How to Support Culture Change in Research Data Management	

- **benefit from networks and similarities & differences among the various flavours of RDM professionals**



# The path ahead

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- project initially funded until 12/2025
- expand engagement in basic tool workshops, e.g. git, Bash, eLabFTW, ...
- foster good relationships and exchange at our institutions & around our workshops
- application of change management concepts



# Conclusion

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- adapt to actual needs and conditions
- diverse team with different backgrounds, perspectives and connections is beneficial!
- we are intermediaries between different stakeholders
- communication is key!





## Questions?

Please hold 'em in RAM 'till after next keynote 🔑 🎵