Planning for Data Champions at TU Delft

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Purpose of this document: To outline a plan for creating a community of researchers engaged with research data stewardship.

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# Objective

The objective of the Data Champions programme is to create a community of researchers actively engaged with research data stewardship.

# Background

A combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches was identified as the most successful in ensuring institution-wide adoption of good data stewardship practices[[1]](#footnote-1). The Data Stewardship project at TU Delft[[2]](#footnote-2) provides an excellent framework for the development and implementation of discipline-specific policies and workflows for data stewardship. However, in its current framing, the project lacks a defined strategy for researcher engagement.

It is therefore proposed that a Data Champions programme will be created, similar to the programme run by the University of Cambridge[[3]](#footnote-3). Data Champions will be researchers who are enthusiastic about data stewardship and who will volunteer to act as advocates for their local communities.

# Structure of the programme

It is proposed that a local Data Champions community will be created at every TU Delft faculty. Ideally, there would several Data Champion from every department (ideally a representative from every section). The Data Champions community will be led by the local Data Steward. Alignment, networking and good practice exchange between the local communities will be ensured by:

* Yearly Data Champions Symposium, where Champions from all the faculties will meet to exchange good practice, talk about data stewardship and network with international leaders in data stewardship
  + Faculty IT managers and a representative from ICT R&D / Innovation will be invited to come along to these meetings
* Each Data Steward chairing a meeting with local Faculty Data Champions every 2 months
* Data Stewards discussing any arising issues during their weekly catch up meetings

# What we would ask of Data Champions

We would expect the Data Champions to do the following:

* Advisors/mentors to other researchers in their department/section
* Act as an advocate for research data management and sharing at the department / faculty
* Speak to researchers about own experience with data stewardship during departmental and faculty presentations and training events. Data Champions will be able to apply to the dedicated **Data Champions Training Fund** to get financial support to organise these.
* Participate in Data Champions meetings at your faculty once every two months
* Participate in yearly one day event for all TU Delft’s Data Champions

# What will be the rewards offered to Data Champions

Data Champions will volunteer their time to promote good data stewardship and to serve on the Faculty’s data stewardship working group. Therefore, it is essential that their efforts are appropriately rewarded, so that researchers feel incentivised to join the initiative, and motivated to continue volunteering their time.

Data Champions should also seek the approval of their manager to account their time spent on programme as part of their teaching/educational activities.

It is proposed that the following rewards and benefits will be offered to Data Champions to incentivise their participation in the programme:

**Network building**

* Data Champions will be able to connect with and to learn from other people interested in data stewardship from other departments and faculties, including ICT and other service providers
* Opportunities to attend international conferences:
  + Data Champions will be eligible to apply for travel grants from a dedicated **Data Champions Travel and Training Fund** to attend international conferences (discipline-specific or related to data stewardship) and to talk about their experience with data management and sharing
* Other opportunities for international networking:
  + Data Champions will be forwarded information about any interesting conferences and workshops related to data stewardship
  + Data Champions will be offered the possibility to participate in other international activities, for example, [SPARC Europe’s Open Data Champions](http://sparceurope.org/what-we-do/open-data/sparc-europe-open-data-resources/open-data-champions/)

**Inform development of research data services**

* Data Champions will be consulted (optional) about new central initiatives related to research data stewardship and software sustainability
* Opportunity (optional) to become a member of a working group advising on the Faculty’s data stewardship. The working group will be led by the Data Steward:
  + Data Champions will serve as the local Subject Experts, providing:
    - knowledge about data management practice in their local research communities
    - input for specific issues
  + Representatives of this group will be consulted and invited to provide advice on the Faculty’s Data Stewardship policy

**Financial incentives**

* Access to any new data stewardship-related funding opportunities available at TU Delft

**Learn new skills**

* Data Champions will be given opportunities to attend training and workshops to learn more about good data stewardship and data services available at TU Delft
* By presenting to other researchers at departmental and faculty events and training, Data Champions will have opportunity to learn how to communicate effectively, and how to create engaging presentations

**Increased Impact**

* Data Champions will become the local expert on data stewardship, and will be introduced as such to their Heads of Departments and Faculty Deans
* Every Data Champion will have their profile created on a central Data Champions webpage to increase their visibility
* Participation in the Data Champions programme is an excellent extracurricular activity to boost one’s CV
* Opportunity for spotlight stories about datasets published in 4TU.Centre for Research Data
* The increased visibility within the research community and the RDM “expert” status might create more opportunities to participate in (NWO/H2020) projects

# Timeline

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| **Date** | **Objective** |
| March 2017 | Preparatory work for EWI, CiTG and LR completed:   * Initial [list of potential Data Champions](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i6J6Y9xTM1S849hdn7flbxQIdJkO6uFPDKd81rxlIf8/edit?usp=drive_web) compiled * Central webpage and communications for the Data Champions programme prepared * Data Stewards discussed and agreed the local needs and expectations of the Data Champions programme’s with their Faculties   Data Stewards at TBM, 3me and AS appointed |
| 30 April 2018 | Call for Data Champions at EWI, CiTG and LR starts |
| June 2018 | Call for Data Champions at EWI, CiTG and LR closes and Data Champions announced:   * on the Data Champions webpage * on the Open Working blog * In Faculty newsletters * through letters to the Departmental Heads and Faculty Deans |
| June 2018 | Data Stewards at EWI, CiTG and LR create working groups comprising of their Faculty Data Champions:   * Data Champions start supporting the Data Steward through regular working group meetings * Data Champions start advocating for data stewardship in their local research communities |
| September 2018 | Data Stewards from EWI, CiTG and LR share feedback with Stewards from TBM, BK, IDE, 3mE and AS about what worked and what did not in their Data Champions programme launch  Preparatory work for TBM, BK, IDE, 3mE and AS completed:   * Initial [list of potential Data Champions](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i6J6Y9xTM1S849hdn7flbxQIdJkO6uFPDKd81rxlIf8/edit?usp=drive_web) compiled * Communication tools and project plan adjusted to reflect feedback and lessons learned from EWI, CiTG and LR |
| October 2018 | Call for Data Champions at TBM, 3mE and AS |
| November 2018 | Call for Data Champions at TBM, BK, IDE, 3mE and AS closes and Data Champions announced:   * on the Data Champions webpage * on the Open Working blog * In Faculty newsletters * through letters to the Departmental Heads and Faculty Deans |
| November 2018 | Data Stewards at TBM, BK, IDE, 3mE and AS create working groups comprising of their Faculty Data Champions:   * Data Champions start supporting the Data Steward through regular working group meetings * Data Champions start advocating for data stewardship in their local research communities |
| January 2018 | Evaluation exercise of the Data Champions programme |
| April 2019 | Yearly Data Champions Symposium |

# Budget

These are the cost estimates for the programme:

* 10,000 EURO/year for the organisation of the yearly Data Champions Symposium
* 8,000 EURO/year for the Data Champions Travel Fund (1,000 EURO per Faculty)
* 12,000 EURO/year for the Data Champions Training Fund (1,500 EURO per Faculty)

1. <https://doi.org/10.1101/103895> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://openworking.wordpress.com/2017/08/29/data-stewardship-addressing-disciplinary-data-management-needs/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://doi.org/10.1101/104661> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)