

DATA STEWARDSHIP ON THE MAP: A STUDY OF TASK AND ROLES IN DUTCH RESEARCH INSTITUTES



National
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Research Data
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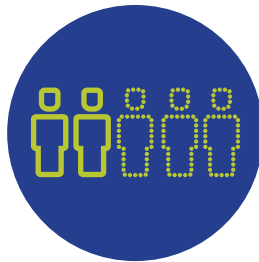
The LCRDM Task Group Data Stewardship has written a report that provides insight in what Dutch institutes currently demand of data stewards and also what has been currently asked for, implemented and developed by and for them. This offers the basis for a clearer job description for data stewardship roles.

FINDINGS



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Data stewardship is high on the agenda. Many institutions are currently professionalizing data stewardship. Everywhere the situation is under construction. It is clear that data stewardship functions are no longer a niche function.



GROWTH

Generally the ambition is to expand the number of data stewards in the near future; especially the number of data stewards with domain data specific knowledge.

Although people in various positions are taking up all kinds of data stewardship tasks, this does not mean that extra resources are no longer necessary to organize data stewardship in a professional way.



PROFESSIONALIZING

Professional data stewardship – close to the researcher - asks for anyone who is taking up data stewardship tasks to have:

- Proper recognition including appropriate career perspectives;
- Suitable training;
- Visibility;
- Good positioning in the organization;
- Focused coordination and institutional policy.



**“THE GENERIC OR
THE OPERATIONAL
DATA STEWARD
DOES NOT EXIST”**

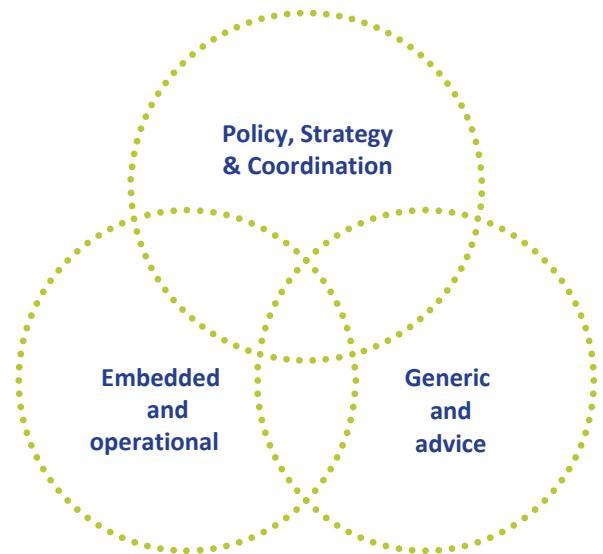
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TASK AREAS

Even though there are major differences between institutions regarding positioning, denomination and definition of the various data stewardship roles, some clear data stewardship tasks can be identified.

In this report the following classification in task areas is made: 'Embedded and operational' 'Generic and advice' and 'Policy, strategy and coordination'. These areas clearly show where the emphasis of a data stewardship function lies, but the generic or the operational data steward does not exist. A certain degree of flexibility in assuming roles is therefore essential.



TRANSLATION INTO PRACTICE



TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Investing in a sound basic training and recurrent vocational schooling (training programmes) is a pre-requisite for professional and sustainable implementation of data stewardship in the Netherlands.



BROAD FUNCTION PROFILES

Greater uniformity in function profiles helps to ensure clearer recognition and accompanying career perspectives for data stewards. It helps to make the role of data steward more appealing and data stewardship tasks better recognizable. When revising function profiles, it is advisable to formulate them loosely. The focus on task areas instead of the provision of definite function profiles can help to create new task descriptions or tailor made vacancy texts.



POOL OF EXPERTS

In the field there is plenty of enthusiasm for establishing a pool of data stewards, each with their own expertise, as a way of offering (domain data specific) support. Therefore proper positioning of data stewardship in the existing organizational structure is very important.

COOPERATION IS ESSENTIAL



Close cooperation is recommended - also cross domain. It is essential for researchers that the available support is easy to find. Staff members should be easily approachable, and strong community building and knowledge exchange are very important.