

Lightning talk
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A community consultation on career tracks for data stewards

Recruitment, profiles, training requirements and incentives

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Content

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- Case studies: Germany and the Netherlands
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Background: data steward career tracks

- **Need for clarification**
 - Data stewardship is not yet recognised as a career
 - In most organisations, responsibilities and tasks of data stewards differ
 - Not many examples of what a career track could look like due to insufficient experience
- **Start:** Dutch-German collaboration on exploring the topic of career tracks for data stewards in our organisations
- **Turned into:** small-scaled community consultation on career tracks for data stewards at International FAIR Convergence Symposium 2020.
 - Online, interactive, World Cafe style session with around 45 participants
- Based on these earlier conference outcomes:
 - Overview of **motivations**, **challenges** and **changes** in the topic of career tracks
 - Focusing on **recruitment**, **profiles**, **training requirements** and **incentives**
- We expect that the outcomes may help local research organisations and national initiatives to raise awareness, and start or further develop their data stewardship programs



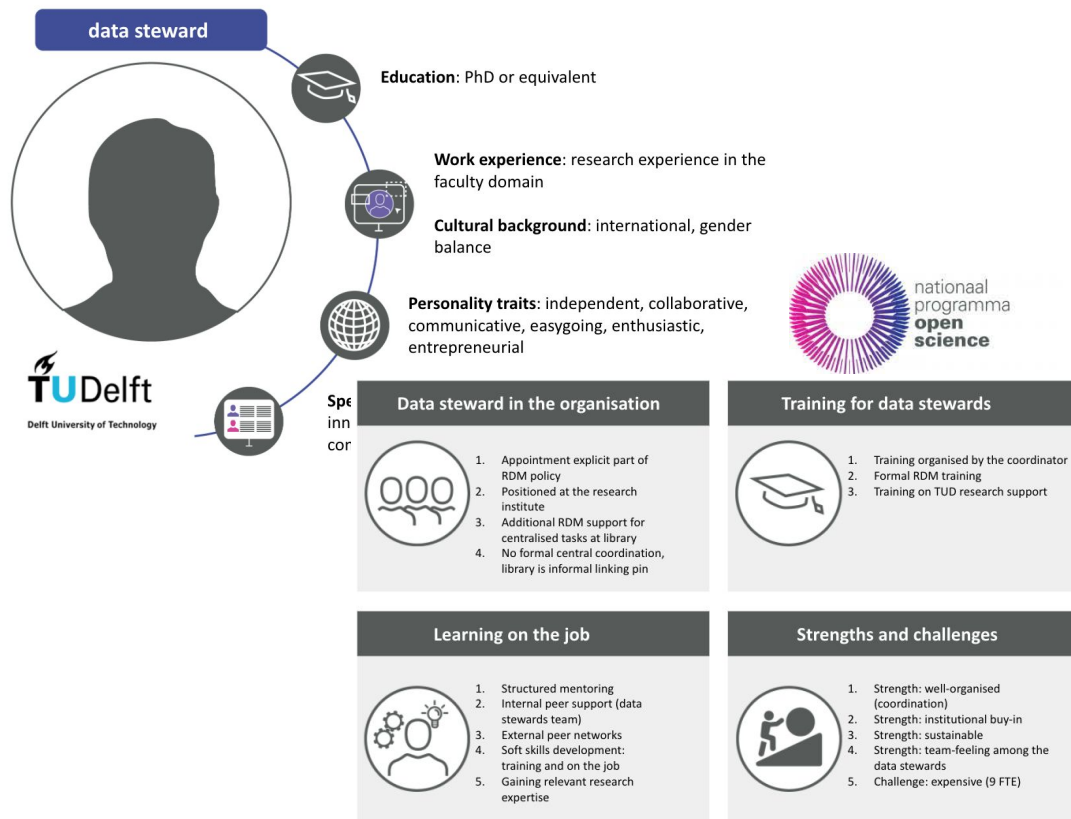
Case studies: the Netherlands

National Programme Open Science (NPOS), the Netherlands

Landscape analysis for professionalising data stewardship

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4320504>

- 2 cases: Universities (Delft, Radboud)
- 3 cases: University Medical Centers (Utrecht, Erasmus, Maastricht)
- 3 cases: Universities of Applied Sciences (Avans, Leiden, HAN)



Case studies: Germany

TU9 - RDM working Group Position Paper, Germany



- Joint approach for central coordination of data stewards differing in models, local integration and communication structure
- Common ground is the highly qualified personnel which a specialisation in engineering and natural sciences



Career tracks: topics and categories

| Category | Topic: recruitment |
|-------------|--|
| Challenges | From which group should/could data stewards be recruited? How to write and post a job offer that attracts best candidates? |
| Motivations | What is the motivation to hire a data steward from the HR /organisation's perspective? What is the motivation to become a data steward from a data steward perspective? |
| Changes | What is the recruitment process at the moment? How could the recruitment procedure work more effectively? |

| Category | Topic: profile |
|-------------|---|
| Challenges | Which background to bring along? Master or bachelor degree, scientific background, information specialist? Could a team of data stewards work? What are the tasks of teams with different backgrounds? |
| Motivations | Which competences data stewards should add to their background knowledge? If the role of the data steward was more clearly defined, could it help better integrate between data stewards and infrastructure? |
| Changes | What to do to make the job profiles more clear and attractive? Any important aspects missing in current data steward profile? |

World cafe style
Break out sessions

Step 1: participants wrote down their answers to the questions

Step 2: participants voted for the answer someone else gave

Step 3: as group, discuss the top most voted answers

Career tracks: topics and categories

| Category | Topic: training requirements |
|-------------|---|
| Challenges | Which (soft) skills are required? If you are a data steward, do you get proper training? |
| Motivations | How could the data stewards be motivated for trainings (train themselves and train the trainer)? How the university/institute could be motivated to offer structured training for (new) data stewards? |
| Changes | How do we get to know special training needs and how to adapt to those needs? What is missing in current training? Any nice training you recommend? |

| Category | Topic: incentives |
|-------------|---|
| Challenges | What are incentives for a University when establishing data steward jobs? |
| Motivations | Which incentives/advantages could data stewards motivate to become a data steward and keep on working motivated? |
| Changes | What are best practice examples on career tracks for data stewards? What rewards can we offer to make data stewardship more appreciated? |

Data analysis

| Topics | Challenges | Motivation | Changes |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--|---|
| Recruitment | Expertise (~ 74 %) | Organisation (~ 64 %) | Organisation (100 %) |
| Profiles | Skills (~ 56 %) | Expertise (~ 50 %)/ Organisation (~ 34 %) | ../.. |
| Training requirements | Skills (~ 92 %) | Skills (~ 57 %)/ Organisation (~ 43 %) | ../.. |
| Incentives | Skills (~ 56 %) | Skills (~ 62 %)/ Organisation (~ 38 %) | Organisation (~ 77 %)/ Skills (~ 23 %) |

- **Challenges:** difficulties of getting people with adequate skills and expertise are mentioned
- **Motivation:** personally (being skilled makes data stewards and researchers feel more secure) and organisational (it helps if data stewardship is recognised and rewarded)
- **Changes:** organisations have the power to change their structure

Outcome



Useful skills for data stewards

- Data skills (e.g., understanding the FAIR principles)
- Collaboration and coordination skills
- Communication and 'language' skills: translate and mediate between management, researchers, information specialist and IT support
- Networking skills
- Attention for detail



Background expertise of data stewards

- Recruitment from early career stage or PhD candidates
- Recruitment from postdoctoral researchers
- Recruitment from Professionals with RDM experience



Required organisational support for data stewards

- Permanent positions
- Recognition by HR and management
- Sufficient budgets for RDM support services
- Both generic and domain-specific support
- Efficiency of RDM support (instead of an 'additional' task by researchers)
- Grant proposals that include RDM expertise
- Credits for quality of research and research transparency

We need your help!

We like to collect more community insights into the challenges, motivations and changes currently taking place on the topic of career track for data stewards. Therefore, we ask you to complete the follow-up **survey**, which will running until **May 15**.

<http://bit.ly/CareerTrackDS>

More information

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