Data Management in the Social Sciences

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Koen Leuveld

- Development Economist
  - PhD at Wageningen University
  - Survey work in Africa: Sierra Leone, DR Congo, Cameroon, Tanzania and Mozambique
- Data Steward at the VU Faculty of Social Sciences

VU

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

- 9 Faculties
- 3.899 employees
- 30.000 Students: 45 bachelor programs, 100 master programs

Faculty of Social Sciences

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VU Faculty of Social Sciences

180 members of Scientific Staff, over five Departments:

- Communication Science
- Organization Science
- Political Science and Public Administration
- Social and Cultural Anthropology
- Sociology

Diverse methods

- Ethnography
- Surveys
- Unstructured interviews
- Big data
- …. All personal data, often sensitive

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RDM Policy at the VU

- FAIR Principles are guiding:
  - Findable
  - Accessible
  - Inter-operable
  - Re-usable
- Data retention: at least 10 years after publication of results
- Policy details worked out by faculties; support from University Library
- Much of the responsibility is with the researcher

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RDM at VU-FSS

- ## Prior to research
  - Ethics self assessment
  - Data Management Plan (including privacy issues)

- ## During research
  - Storage solutions available:
    - University network storage
    - Research Drive (Dropbox-like)
    - Yoda (in development)
  - Responsibility of department heads

- ## After research
  - Archived for 10 years
  - Personal data only archived offline

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Data Stewards at the VU

- ## Faculty level
- ## Consultants, not police
- ## Tasks
  - Supporting researchers
  - Training researchers and students (e.g. how to write a DMP; GDPR)
  - Policy development
  - Infrastructure development
  - Grant writing
  - Participating in the Research Data Network
- ## Often:
  - Secretary of Ethics Committee
  - Privacy Champion

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Conceptual

- Different views on re-use of data for different disciplines
- Conflicts between privacy and Open Science

Organization

- Reaching researchers remotely
- Need for central control versus researcher independence
- Work pressure of academic staff

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Upcoming Developments

- Improving service to qualitative researchers
  - Ready-to-go folder templates
  - Examples of documentation and metadata
  - Archiving strategies
- New archiving infrastructure
  - DataVerseNL, OSF and Yoda
  - Roles and responsibilities for approving archiving/publication

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The end

Questions?