



ELIXIR Data and Interoperability Platforms 2021 Face-to-Face Event

Summary Report

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Background

The ELIXIR technical activities in the areas of Compute, Data, Interoperability, Tools, and Training are supervised by the Platform Executive Committee and work is carried out by members within these Platforms. Each Platform hosts an annual conference known as the 'Face-to-Face' Platform meeting. This is an opportunity for discussion of the Platform's directions and strategies of both current and future tasks. The Data and Interoperability Platforms held a joint annual meeting on the 23-25th of November 2021 in Padova, Italy. The meeting was co-hosted by the University of Padova (Tosatto's group) in a hybrid format to accommodate attendees in both virtual, and in-person participation. The intention of this meeting was to bring together the two overlapping Platforms and other related groups at ELIXIR to align and foster collaboration on key topics, and to coordinate activities relating to the current and future strategies of the Platforms.

Event format and content

The event was run over three days with the first day dedicated to the Interoperability Platform, the second day for both the Data and Interoperability and the third day dedicated to the Data Platform. Over 100 participants participated in the event with twenty participants attending in person and eighty members joining in remotely. A total of eight plenary discussions and twelve breakout sessions took place over the three days. Key sessions of the event included a panel discussion with FAIR data experts and several highlight presentations providing a diverse mix of content. Topics discussed in these sessions include machine learning, the FAIR data landscape, biocuration, interoperability of ELIXIR data resources, registries, FAIR workflows and future Platform strategic planning. A primary focus during these sessions was on collaborations within the Data and Interoperability Platforms, as well as collaborations between the Data/Interoperability Platforms and the other key strategic topics originating from the Machine Learning Focus Group, Registries Focus Group, Health Data Focus Groups, and the other ELIXIR Technical Platforms.

Significant event outcomes

The event was successful in fostering new connections and collaborations between the two Platforms and other stakeholders such as:

- Hosting a highlight panel discussion highly relevant to global FAIR efforts featuring Mark Wilkinson, Marco Roos, Patrick Ruch, Carole Goble, and Susanna-Assunta Sansone. Panel discussion recording published on the ELIXIR [Youtube channel](#).
- Initiating collaboration between [RDMkit](#) and [FAIR Cookbook](#).
- Initiating collaboration between [RDMkit](#) and the [ELIXIR Health Data Focus Group](#).
- Adoption of the Data Platform Scalable Curation framework by the [ELIXIR Health Data Focus Group](#).
- Answering [DOME recommendations](#) of the [ELIXIR Machine Learning Focus Group](#) within the scope of Data-Interoperability resources.
- Forming the ELIXIR [RIR](#) and [CDR](#) selection criteria and processes revision task forces.

Date: 01/02/2022



- Identifying the steps to establish the ELIXIR Data Management Expert Group to transfer knowledge from [ELIXIR CONVERGE WP1](#), Data Management Expert Network.
- Establishing a framework of discussion for the definition of different ELIXIR data resources such as: Core Data Resource, Deposition Database, Community and Aggregated Database and Registries (in consultation with the [ELIXIR Registries Focus Group](#)).
- Aligning of activities between the Data Platform 2022-23 work plans and the five approved Scalable Curation Implementation Studies.
- Developing methods of assessing [Bioschemas](#) impact with the intention of pioneering building a process of assessing impact of other ELIXIR interoperability resources.

Participant feedback on the event

The hybrid format of the event resulted in two distinct attendee experiences from remote and in-person participants. Feedback was collected immediately after the event from both parties in the subsequent ELIXIR joint Data and Interoperability Platform meeting on the 7th of December 2021. Remote attendees had an overall positive experience for a hybrid event, noting a key benefit of being able to attend without needing to travel while still retaining an equally visible presence at the event via hybrid teleconferencing. However, they flagged issues with in-person audio at the beginning of the event which was improved upon as the event progressed. In-person attendees had an overwhelmingly positive experience noting the benefits of the renewed social aspect at the face-to-face event and having dedicated time to focus on the event. Overall experiences collected indicated a well run hybrid event format with clear benefit gained by both in-person and remote attendees.

Post-event communications

Stories and experiences from the event were collected for the ELIXIR weekly newsletter. Certificates of attendance were sent to each participant of the event from the ELIXIR events team. Videos of the main plenary sessions were recorded via Zoom and made available on Youtube for participants and wider viewing for those unable to attend. Progression of the collaborative activities initiated at the meeting are ongoing with expected outcomes including the revision of CDR and RIR Selection processes and criteria, identification of Data-Interoperability services and resources that complement the tasks in the Machine Learning Focus Group, the Health Data Focus Group, and co-authorship of the white paper on FAIR Health Data.

Conclusion

The ELIXIR Data and Interoperability Platform's event was run successfully and facilitated a positive hybrid experience for over 100 participants over three days. Valuable lessons of agenda setting, technical equipment requirements and logistics were learnt on hosting a hybrid meeting and subsequently shared in discussion at the ELIXIR Hub. The event successfully fostered collaboration among the ELIXIR Data and Interoperability Platforms, and several other ELIXIR groups. The conversation of holding the next joint Platform face-to-face meeting at a similar annual timeframe is an active discussion at the Data and Interoperability Platforms.