

Summary Annual report RDM Network 2024

The Research Data Management (RDM) Network finished a busy year 2024! In this report, we highlight the network's diverse activities and achievements, and provide a short outlook into 2025.

First of all, a big thank you to all members of the RDM Network, including all data stewards, service and infrastructure providers, we are very thankful for your expertise, your dedication and your exceptional support!

Highlights from the RDM Coordination Team

The main focus of our work was the data stewardship project funded by swissuniversities, which was in its second year.

Project Extension

Originally set to run from January 2023 to December 2024, the data stewardship project was extended—at no extra cost—until June 2025. Meanwhile, swissuniversities launched a new call for proposals for Open Research Data (ORD) specialists and data stewardship. We submitted a proposal in February 2025, which could further support and expand our efforts.

New Team Members

Loredana Martignetti joined in January 2024 but later transitioned to a role with the University Data Protection Officer team, leaving the Coordination Office in November. After a search for the right successor, we welcomed Stephanie Heinrich in January 2025.

Strengthening the Data Steward Network

The focus of the RDM Network in 2024 was all about effective onboarding and strengthening collaborations across the university. In total, 39 data stewards are now embedded across all seven faculties and cross-disciplinary institutes: <https://researchdata.unibas.ch/en/services/data-stewards/>.

Expanding Training Opportunities for Data Stewards

This year, we ran seven courses as part of our [Train-the-Trainer program](#). In addition, we hosted two semester kick-off events to update the network on ongoing RDM projects and developments. We also introduced “Data Stewardship Conversations”—an informal format combining short topic inputs with discussions, which proved to be a great way to share insights and experiences.

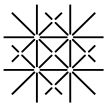
Improving Network Governance

A lot of behind-the-scenes work went into refining the governance of the RDM Network. We revised key processes, developed shared standards for handling support requests, and clarified data stewards' roles both internally and externally. To make their work more visible, we introduced a low-threshold reporting process, ensuring their contributions are recognized. We also created templates for job descriptions and participation confirmations, helping to formalize their role in the university.

Tackling Challenges Together – RDM Sprints

To address university-wide RDM challenges and develop solutions within the network, we organized dedicated ‘sprints’—short, intensive workshops focused on creating practical solutions:

- **Handling Personal Data:** The first sprint produced a checklist for managing personal data in research, now available in the [Wiki](#), on the [RDM Network website](#) and on [Zenodo](#).



- **Clarification of requirements for class III research data:** The second sprint tackled a needs assessment for collaboration tools for class III research data. A final report was submitted to the Vice-President's Office for Research.
- **Data Management at the End of a Project:** The third sprint, planned at the end of 2024, focussed on processes for saving and securely deleting research data after project completion. The sprint itself took place in early 2025. The final document can be found on [Zenodo](#).

Developing Best Practices

Best practices serve as a guide to translate general recommendations for good RDM into subject/department-specific workflows. This year, we worked with the data steward of the Faculty of Psychology to develop a guideline covering the entire RDM lifecycle. The Department of Biomedicine (DBM) created a checklist for integrating RDM into onboarding and offboarding, which is now in the final review stage. Meanwhile, the Department of Biomedical Engineering (DBE) has started developing best practices for processing and storing 'Open Medical Imaging Data' following FAIR principles. To obtain an overview of existing best practices at the university and to stimulate exchange within the RDM Network, we also created an (internal RDM Network) [Wiki page](#) that consolidates links to subject-specific best practices.

Boosting Visibility with Roadshows

To increase awareness of RDM services, we organized four roadshows, highlighting the role of data stewards and the support of the RDM Network within different organizational units.

Embedding RDM in Doctoral Education

Integrating RDM into doctoral training was another key focus this year. We worked with five doctoral programs and three graduate schools to design tailored training concepts. At the Faculty of Medicine, three doctoral programs joined forces to create a shared approach. We piloted six subject-specific RDM courses—two in the spring and four in the fall of 2024. An evaluation is planned for early 2025 to assess their impact and shape future training. This initiative also led to new collaborations with doctoral program coordinators, increasing awareness of RDM services among PhD students.

Keeping the Network Connected

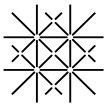
We kept the RDM Network informed through regular RDM Weeklies and semester kick-off events. We also presented our work at various internal and external events, including swissuniversities meetings and information events for library staff.

In November, we celebrated the successful completion of the swissuniversities-funded project with an event for all network members and project partners—only to find out later that the project would be extended! A pleasant development, giving us more time to build on our progress.

Beyond the swissuniversities Project

The Coordination Team contributed to various RDM initiatives beyond the core project, including:

- Active participation in national and international networks such as [Swiss Research Data Support Network \(SRDSN\)](#), [forschungsdaten.info](#), SLiNER's AKORD group, and [re3data](#)'s editorial board.
- Delivering RDM sessions as part of six Information, data and media literacy courses for Bachelor's and Master's students.
- Updating and preparing new RDM resources, including revised Cheat Sheets (due to be published and distributed in early 2025) and two new RDM postcards for outreach.
- Producing an "[Introduction to Research Data Management](#)" video tutorial with an intern's support.
- Leading and advising on two swissuniversities mandates (action line [B5.4](#) and [C2.3](#)) to establish ORD expertise (e.g. data stewardship) as a career path and enhance collaboration between trainers and data stewards.



- As part of Love Data Week, we hosted a webinar on "[Second love: finding and re-using research data](#)".
- Running an RDM course for doctoral students and postdocs in GRACE's transferable skills program.
- Continuously maintaining and expanding the [RDM Network website](#) with new content on [file naming conventions](#), [folder structures](#), [code books](#), [Readme files](#), [repositories](#) and [searching](#) for and [citing datasets](#).

Data Stewards & RDM Community Highlights

[Data stewards](#) at our university played a key role in RDM education and support, organizing and attending workshops, conferences, and consultations. They also contributed to events such as PhD Welcome Days and provided tailored guidance on topics such as handling sensitive data, FAIR/CARE principles, RDM best practices, licensing, research contracts, confidentiality agreements, and grant applications, including crafting Data Management Plans (DMPs).

While there were numerous efforts to promote RDM in all departments, we want to highlight a few here:

- **Department of Clinical Research (DKF):** Engaged researchers at the Clinical Research Day with an interactive info booth, delivered several lectures on sensitive data handling, and developed and implemented a process to manage data access to sensitive research data as a service for researchers at the Medical Faculty.
- **Faculty of Psychology:** Launched a [discipline-specific RDM website](#) and worked with the RDM coordination team on best practice guidelines.
- **Institute of Nursing Science (INS):** Implemented [InvenioRDM](#) for data storage and established a template for a research data contract with the University Hospital Basel, with plans to extend it to other institutions.
- **Swiss National Data and Service Center for the Humanities (DaSCH):** Contributed to several [guidelines and policies](#) available on its platform, co-hosted the [FORS-DaSCH webinar series on RDM](#) and participated in broader initiatives such as SRDSN and the FAIR Metadata Working Group.

Outlook for 2025

Looking ahead, the RDM Network wants to further implement discipline-specific best practices, workflows, and onboarding and offboarding procedures across departments and faculties. Additionally, we want to further anchor RDM in doctoral education, continue to promote RDM on a university-wide level, and continue our training program for data stewards. Steps will be taken to improve the visibility of data stewards' roles and provide more opportunities for collaboration among data stewards.