

## ***Social Sciences Research Data Interest Group Proposal***

### ***Introduction***

We are proposing a Social Sciences Research Data (SSRD) Interest Group under the auspices of the Research Data Alliance (RDA), to foster diverse professional exchange on issues particular to data originating from the social sciences.

Social Sciences Research Data cover many disciplines, appear in many data types, deal with multiple objects and levels, and are very distributed – coming from various sources. It could be described as a patchwork quilt, lacking a grand design or focus. On the other hand, it is a way to cover the whole spectrum, to be flexible in collecting data.

There is a huge potential reuse of SSRD – for researchers, but also for professionals outside universities, for companies, governments, and for citizens.

As a research data community, we are entering the **implementation phase** of the FAIR principles: we can see first results on Findability – with various catalogues coming available. But for Accessibility, it already complicates as many social data are **too sensitive** to share directly: access to social sciences research data is not dichotomous: open or closed but requires fine-tuning on making data accessible. For better Interoperability, we need alignment on controlled vocabularies and ontologies, as well as semantic techniques to relate data. A barrier for Reuse is **lack of clarity in data policies** – and their implications for researchers: what are conditions and requirements for providing access, and for using the data. For Reuse, new users want information about the **quality and provenance of the data**: where do they come from, how were they collected and curated, etc.

### ***Social Science Research Data Interest Group Focused Initiatives***

This new SSRD interest group will begin by helping to coordinate communications across the various current RDA groups of interest to our disciplines and to provide a place for our members to share solutions and concerns with others in our fields. These groups include the FAIRSharing and others noted by Braukmann in the “RDA Overview for the Social Sciences”<sup>1</sup>. We will also seek input and coordinate with the external SSRD community leaders and organizations such as CESSDA, DDI Alliance, IASSIST, ICPSR, IFDO and WDS. We will be open and inclusive seeking to use this group to connect the various organizations working to promote SSRD data sharing.

We recognize that many of the data formats and methodological approaches our members leverage often intersect with the valuable fields of the Humanities. This

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<sup>1</sup> <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1401105>

is especially the case in the digital humanities and in particular the empirically based digital humanists. While we do not currently plan to directly address the concerns and needs of this community, we also understand that we have much to learn from each other. One of the initial tasks we plan will be to reach out to more groups in this community to explore the need for joint working groups and projects we can build collaborations between the social sciences and humanities groups at RDA.

While the primary goal of this new interest group will certainly be a coordinating group, we also aim to produce new RDA Working Groups to help provide solutions to challenges in our SSRD domains. Given the complexity of SSRD, we feel that the initial focus of our interest group should be very focused on defining working groups of immediate need to our communities. One of the first tasks of this group will be to identify potential areas of interest for the creation of working groups. One such area of immediate potential that has gained traction around the world is the implementation of FAIR principles. Three potential areas that need investigation in order to achieve implementation of FAIR in the Social Science disciplines, and that will require engaging all stakeholders (funders, producers, service providers, users), are as follows:

- **quality of data**  
what does “quality” mean for our community? can we share best practices across our community and collaborate with other groups to increase data quality?
- **data policy**  
how can we share or align – and wherever simplify – data policies and their implications for making data available and for using data.
- **sensitive data**  
estimates are that over 40% of the data in our community is too sensitive to make them openly available without any restrictions or measures. How can we address the challenges of enabling Access to sensitive data in line with FAIR principles, in a way that also addresses privacy requirements?

While these three areas are potential areas to begin working with, they are also only representing the initial conversations for collaboration. Our approach will leverage continued engagement with the social science research community and then coordinate the efforts needed to address concerns brought forth by the community.

Our primary goal is to provide a forum at RDA for users of social science research data to exchange ideas and to help coordinate with other RDA groups to share those ideas as well as develop any required solutions.

## ***Objectives***

The initial objectives of the SSRD interest group will be to bring together major community members seeking to coordinate international social science research data sharing. As noted above several existing groups within RDA are discussing topics of interest to the SSRD disciplines but none focus specifically on the disciplines of social science with the key focus on data sharing. We will bring individuals and communities together to provide this forum and define future working groups to help solve the issues identified.

### ***Participation***

We want to include all stakeholders and reach as broad an audience as possible. We will initially begin working with existing RDA groups and further discussions between CESSDA, DDI Alliance and IFDO to start the conversations. But we will immediately begin contacting the many other groups ranging from IASSIST to ICPSR that will be valuable in providing input to this interest group. Below is an initial matrix of the groups we feel would have interest in our efforts.

	Social Sciences	All Sciences
Policies (Open Science)	IFDO	OECD, CODATA, ORFG
Infrastructures Repositories Trust/Certification Archiving Sensitive Data	CESSDA, ICPSR, ODUM, ADA  ERAN (EU), RAIRD (NO)	ESFRI, ARDC Figshare, Mendeley, Zenodo/OpenAIRE CoreTrustSeal Dataverse EGI (AAI)
Architecture Digital Objects PID Metadata Kernel Info	DDI	DOI / Handle, DataCite ISO RDA Data Type Registry
Data Production	ESS, SHARE, Wage- Indicator, GGP, EVS, WVS, ...	National Statistics, ILO, World Bank, ...
Researchers	Former SSRN?	YEAR (young researchers EU)

### ***Outcomes***

- Landscape analysis on sensitive data topics/issues, initiatives/activities/tools, best practices (and don'ts)
- Implementation guide on data policies building on ORFG Blueprint, Science Europe DMP
- Landscape analysis on tools for assessing data quality automated and integrated in existing data services tools (e.g. Dataverse, FigShare, Fedora, etc...)

### ***Mechanism***

We will begin by having monthly video conference calls on a rotating time slot basis to help be inclusive for members in various time zones. Initial calls will be coordinated by CESSDA, IFDO, and DDI Alliance but as the group grows, we will be adding more participants and organizational representatives from our matrix above.

### ***Second Six Months Timeline***

Revise Charter	August 2019
Finalize IG meeting agenda for Plenary	August 2019
Contact list of organizations to invite to participate	August 2019
RDA Plenary meeting	October 2019
Suggested Working Group Topics	December 2019
Final Draft of Working Group Suggestions	March 2020

### ***Initial and Potential Group Members***

This group will initially be Co-Chaired by Jonathan Crabtree representing the Odum Institute, the International Federation of Data Organizations and the Global Dataverse Community Consortium, Ron Dekker representing the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) and Steve McEachern representing the DDI Alliance and the Australian Data Archive. We will utilize our existing social science community network connections to increase this list significantly during the first year once we begin advertising our intent to the larger RDA audience.

### **Current Social Science Research Data IG members 8/13/19**

[Aileen O'Carroll](#)  
[Alexis Bortle](#)  
[Amy Pienta](#)  
[Angela Okune](#)  
[anna Egea](#)  
[Ateanna Uriri](#)  
[Birger Jerlehag](#)  
[Colleen Strawhacker](#)  
[Daniel Bangert](#)  
[DUGUE Alexandra](#)  
[Eduardo Braga](#)  
[Ewa Zegler-Poleska](#)  
[Frederic ANDRES](#)

[George Alter](#)  
[Halil Emre Kocalar](#)  
[Helen Porter](#)  
[Helene N. Andreassen](#)  
[Henriette Sens](#)  
[Ingvill Constanze Mochmann](#)  
[Inna Kouper](#)  
[Iris Alfredsson](#)  
[Jamie Lupo-Petta](#)  
[Janete Saldanha Bach Estevao](#)  
[Janez Štebe](#)  
[Jeff Love](#)  
[JOFFRES Adeline](#)  
[Jonathan Crabtree](#)  
[Julia Collins](#)  
[Julian Ausserhofer](#)  
[Laura Morales](#)  
[Maja Dolinar](#)  
[Mareike Buss](#)  
[Mari Kleemola](#)  
[Marieke Willems](#)  
[Mayank Trivedi](#)  
[Miltão Ribeiro](#)  
[Nichola Burton](#)  
[Peter Elias](#)  
[Philipp Konzett](#)  
[René van Horik](#)  
[Ricarda Braukmann](#)  
[Robin Rice](#)  
[Ron Dekker](#)  
[Rorie Edmunds](#)  
[Shawn Ross](#)  
[Simone Sacchi](#)  
[Stephanie Cheviron](#)  
[Steven McEachern](#)  
[Syed Md. Zainul Abedin](#)  
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