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In 2021 we mark five years since publication of the FAIR data principles. The concept of FAIR data has been instrumental in bringing open science and research data to the attention of the research community, as well as to the broader group of stakeholders involved in facilitating, managing and disseminating research. In November 2020, we brought together an international cohort of research data professionals to celebrate the real-world impact of the FAIR data principles, and consider what will be next for research data and open science.

The Better Research through Better Data: Shaping the Future of FAIR event took place as a virtual roundtable, with an introductory keynote, smaller group discussions within five breakout sessions, followed by a panel discussion. The event was a truly global affair with attendees dialling in from North America, South America, Europe, Africa and Asia. The diversity of opinions and experiences generously shared by our attendees provided a great opportunity to consider fairness for research data in the widest possible sense. The wide-ranging discussions which took place during the roundtable are summarised in this white paper, alongside further insights, opinions and commentaries contributed by attendees. Topics include: evaluating the impact of the FAIR data principles to date, capacity building to enable good research data management, and considerations on the fullest meaning of fair with regard to research data. As we reach this anniversary of the FAIR data principles, it is a good time to pause and reflect. We look back to ascertain how far we have come, and look forward to where we still have work to do. I hope that the opinions and commentary in this white paper will facilitate further discussion and collaboration, as we collectively aim to move towards a fairer world in which research data play a proper part in the understanding and use of research for the benefit of all.

Full paper here:

https://figshare.com/articles/journal_contribution/Research_Data_The_Future_of_FAIR_White_paper/14393552/1

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