blog

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On 12 October 2021, FAIRsFAIR organised a workshop on the "Practical implementation of FAIR-related content in university curricula and teaching". The event focused on presenting and gathering feedback on the draft adoption handbook ""How to be FAIR with your Data – A teaching and training handbook for higher education institutions", which had been created by a group of about 40 collaborators during a series of book sprint events in June 2021 and a subsequent editorial process.

The workshop was hosted by the University of Göttingen and the European University Association (EUA) and gathered 92 participants from all over Europe and worldwide.

Claudia Engelhardt (FAIRsFAIR and University of Göttingen) opened the discussion, presenting an overview of the motivation behind and the approach to the development of the draft handbook which will be published in December 2021. The handbook will provide practical support to universities, presenting methodologies, competence profiles, learning outcomes and model lesson plans to integrate RDM and FAIR data-related content in university teaching at the different levels.

Thereafter, Hugh Shanahan (FAIRsFAIR and Royal Holloway University of London), Margareta Hellström (Lund University) and Jolien Scholten (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), all contributing authors, shared their views on potential benefits and use cases for the handbook, reflecting on their universities' experiences and initiatives in fostering RDM and FAIR data skills and practices. The speakers highlighted how the adoption handbook can serve as a reference point for university practitioners, providing practical support and inspiration on how to design and implement new content, curricula and teaching activities for RDM and FAIR data. Moreover, they can also see it as a useful tool to bring forward the policy discussion with institutional leaders, providing points for reflection on the main drivers behind fostering the update of FAIR data skills as well as opportunities for universities that it can bring about.

In the second part of the workshop, participants joined breakout rooms to discuss central themes of and provide feedback on the draft adoption handbook in the light of their teaching and training experiences as well as their institutional background. Participants agreed that there was an ongoing need for universities to provide FAIR data training throughout the bachelor, master and doctoral levels and that a promising and effective approach could be to integrate FAIR-related content into different existing courses and training activities (e.g. statistics, IT courses, information literacy, any hands-on course in which students create and work with their own or reuse others' data).

VIRTUAL
BREAKOUT ROOMS

Overall, the draft handbook received positive feedback and participants confirmed that it would be a useful tool for them. A number of minor suggestions for further improvement will be considered and integrated into the final version to be published in December 2021.

A full overview of the input received in the breakout discussions is available here.

Presentations from and the recording of the workshop are available here.

This event closes a series of three university workshops organised in the context of FAIRsFAIR's activities to support the integration of FAIR-related content in university curricula and teaching. More information about other workshops in the series can be found here and here.

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