

# Strengthening Open Science Expertise:

## National RDM Training Network of Finland

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# Challenge: Why was the RDM Training Network established?

## Need for collaboration and peer support

- Growing demand for RDM experts driven by open science requirements and digital transformation
- Rapidly evolving field where continuous learning and knowledge exchange are essential
- In most Finnish research organisations, RDM staff are small in number – often working alone or in small teams, responsible for several areas of data management.
- Lack of formal education and training among RDM professionals



Photo: Linda Tammisto / Source: University of Helsinki

The network **brings RDM professionals together nationally** to share expertise and strengthen competence.

# Solution: National RDM training network

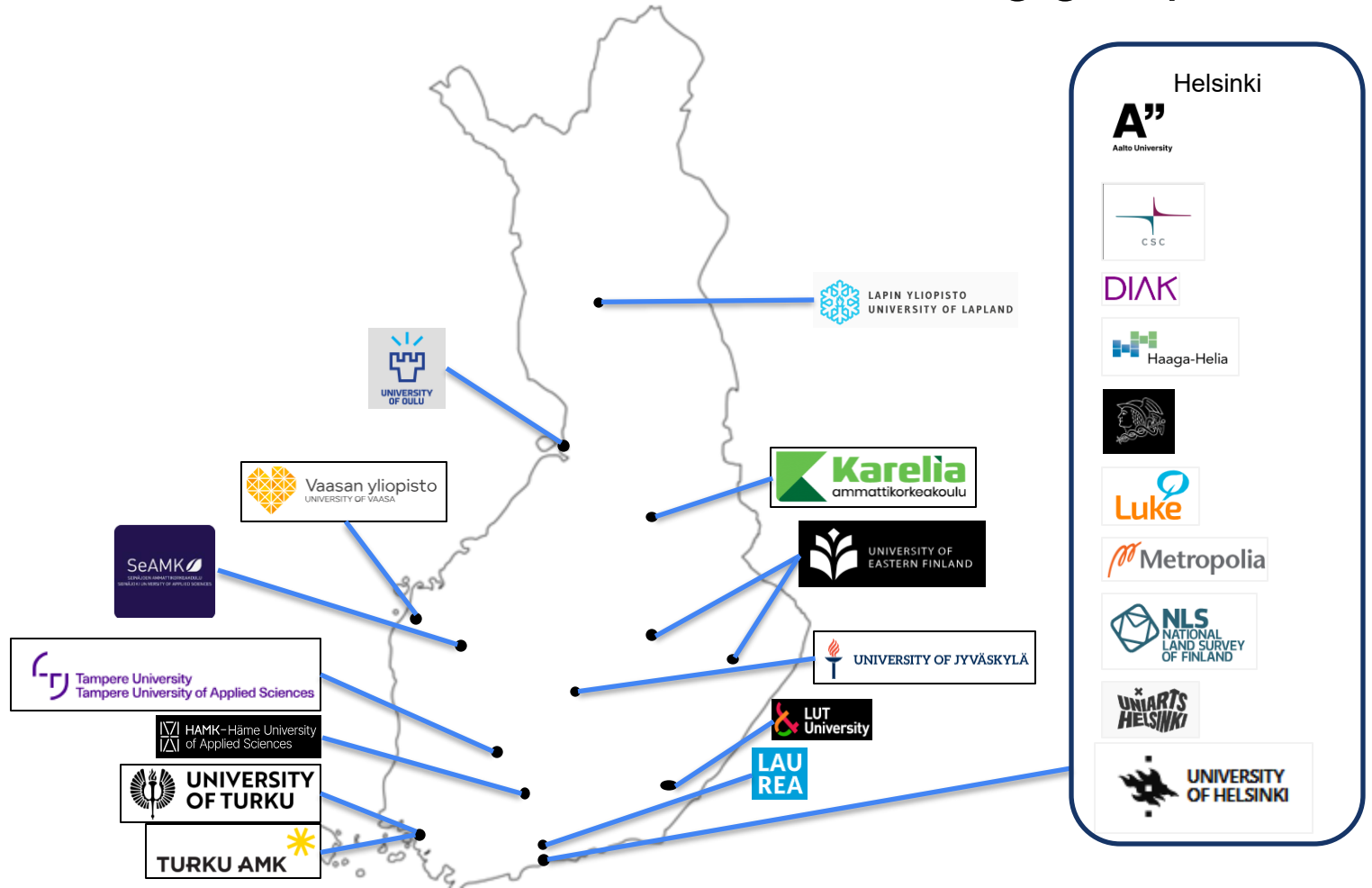
- Established 2019
- Approx. 60 members representing a total of 26 HE organisations
- The group operates on a **volunteer basis, with each participant's employer allowing them to use their working time** to support the group's activities.
- A chairperson and secretary are elected from among the members of the group every two years.



Photo: Mostphoto  
Source: University of Helsinki

# Home organisations of the members of the working group

(September 2025)



# Network goals

- Forum for collaboration and peer support
- Training materials and sessions for Finnish research organisations
- Train-to-trainer model
- Knowledge exchange



Photo: Mostphoto  
Source: University of Helsinki

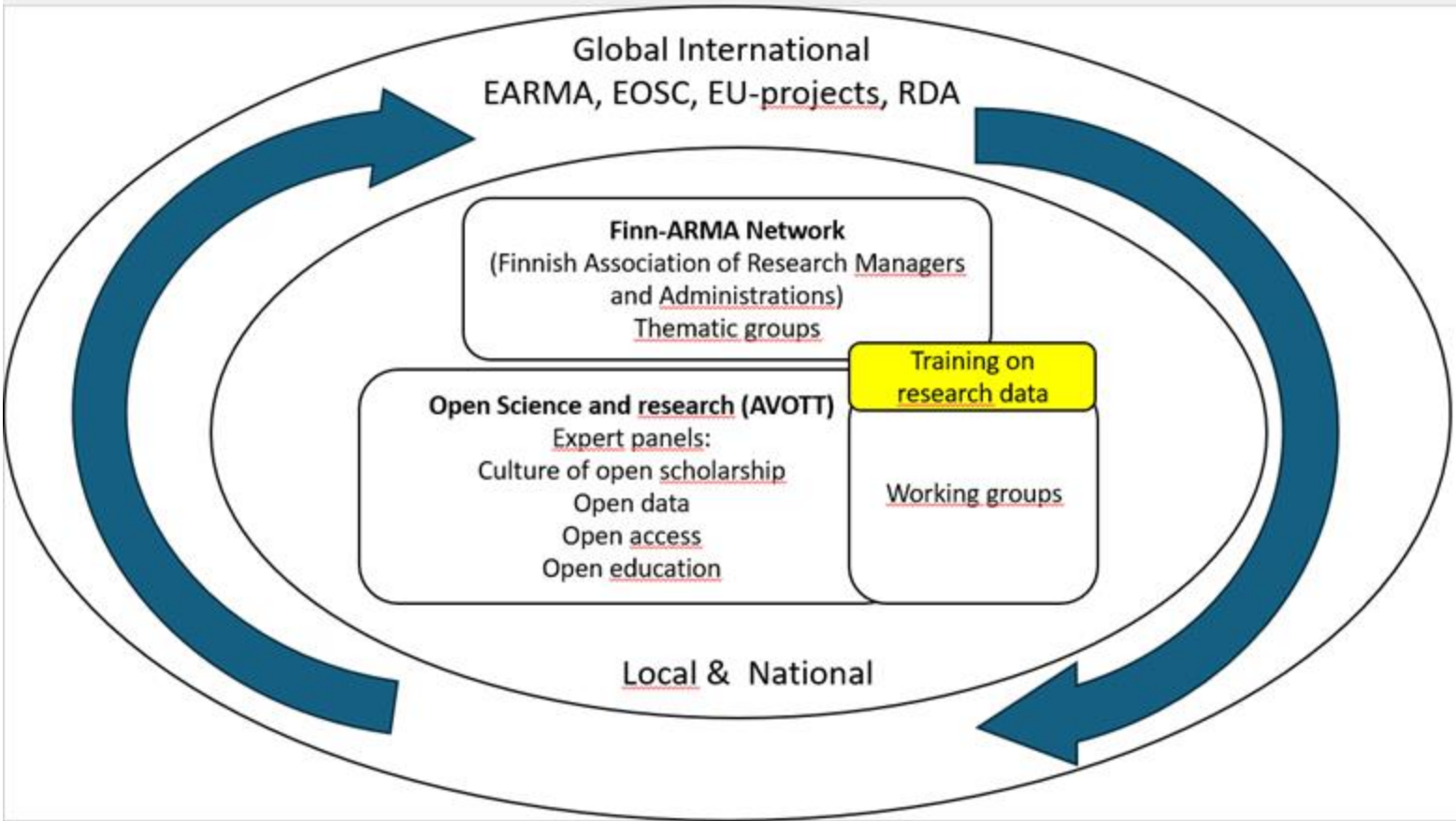
# National context

- The establishment of the network is part of long-standing national cooperation in open science and research administration
- Originally established as a part of the National Open Science and Research initiative
  - Fixed-term working groups, clearly defined output
- Change from fixed-term work to continuous collaboration and peer-support
  - Network was transferred to the FinnARMA network
  - continuous co-operation
  - still possible to use fixed-term small groups



Photo: Joanna Norkko  
Source: University of Helsinki

# Global and National Context



# Working methods of the group

- Four remote meetings per year
  - two in the spring and two in the autumn
  - Long distances make it difficult to organise face-to-face meetings
  - Discussion and information sharing
  - Planning of training materials
- The data trainers' summer days (hybrid)
  - Development of skills in the chosen theme
- Sub-groups
  - Chosen topic and output
  - Voluntary participation



Photo: Linda Tammisto  
Source: University of Helsinki

# Working methods of the group - tools

- FinnARMA wiki
  - Meeting agendas and minutes
  - Outputs
  - Working documents
- Zenodo community
  - Outputs
- Google docs & spreadsheets
  - Working documents



Photo: Mostphoto  
Source: University of Helsinki

# RDM network achievements – sub-group outputs

- **Training materials** topics such as
  - data repository selection
  - data organisation
- **Guidelines** such as
  - how to write and comment research infrastructure DM policies



Photo: hy\_keva  
Source: University of Helsinki

# RDM network achievements – survey

- A training survey of research data management (RDM) training in Finland conducted in 2020 and 2021 (Kanerva et al. 2022) was used as an aid in **mapping training needs**.
- According to it, there is a particular **need for more discipline-specific training** in data management skills.



Source: University of Helsinki

# RDM network achievements – communication

- The training materials/guidelines are communicated
  - in cooperation networks outside the group (FinnARMA, AVOTT) and
  - by group members in their own organizations



Photo source: University of Helsinki

# Challenges of the Network: Continuity

Network is community-driven, not top-down – built on voluntary participation and shared purpose. This means:

- Network's activities continue as long as **enough active members** stay engaged and **find value in the group**.
- If this sense of meaning fades, activity will gradually decline.
- **No fixed plan**: future actions and next steps are created collaboratively in network meetings.



Photo: Mostphoto  
Source: University of Helsinki

# Summary: Benefits of the RDM Community

## Support for RDM specialists

- The network provides RDM specialists with peer support and opportunities to learn from each other.
- Members also bring new practices back to their organisations, helping to align standards and advance open science in Finland.

## Close expert network

- Members know each other well, which facilitates smooth and efficient collaboration between research organisations.

## Collaboration matters in a small country like Finland

- It enables efficient use of resources and shared development of expertise.

## National impact

- The RDM Training Network acts as one of the key national support structures for advancing open science in Finland.

# Outputs of the RDM Training Network

- Includes training materials, surveys, and guidelines supporting national RDM capacity building
- Most of the materials are available in network's [Zenodo community page](#).

Outputs	Links
Training materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to choose a service for data sharing and publishing? <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14777037">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14777037</a></li><li>• Data Organisation ABC workshop <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7944449">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7944449</a></li><li>• Managing data management in a research project (only in Finnish) <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13884728">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13884728</a></li></ul>
Instruction materials for thesis supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Master thesis and data protection (only in Finnish) <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11619156">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11619156</a></li></ul>
Instructions for research infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data Management Policy for Research Infrastructures <a href="#">Data management policy for research infrastructures - Research Council of Finland</a></li></ul>
Instructions for RDM specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to evaluate research infrastructure data management policys (only in Finnish) <a href="#">Taulukko 2024 DMPolien kommentoinnin avuksi - Finn-ARMA - Eduuni-wiki</a></li><li>• Data management competency objectives: table (only in Finnish) <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14823398">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14823398</a></li><li>• In progress:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ How to use social media data in research?</li><li>◦ Data management guidelines in arts and humanities</li></ul></li></ul>
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Survey of the Finnish Research Data Management (RDM) training 2020-2021 <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6580981">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6580981</a></li></ul>



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# Data Steward Training 2026



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data management  
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## CONTENT

- **Research Data Management & Open Science:** Learn the basics of data management, FAIR principles, and open science practices.
- **IT & Data Science:** Gain practical skills in data preprocessing, analysis and programming (Python, R).
- **Research Data Lifecycle:** Understand the phases of the data lifecycle, the importance of a data management plan (DMP), and requirements for long-term preservation.
- **RDM Support Services and Expertise:** Learn to build and develop data management support services for various organizations.
- **Project Work:** Apply your skills in a hands-on project.

## WHY PARTICIPATE

- **Up-to-date expertise:** Strengthen your skills in a rapidly evolving field.
- **Career benefits:** Data Steward expertise is in high demand in research institutions and companies.
- **Networking:** Meet experts and other professionals in data management.
- **Practical approach:** Includes exercises and a project.



**Thank you!**

Photo: Linda Tammisto / University of Helsinki