

Guidelines

for Consortia



National Research Data Infrastructure (NFDI)

- The aim of the NFDI is to systematically manage research data, provide long-term data storage, backup and accessibility, and network the data both nationally and internationally.
- Data management must be standardized: In accordance with the **FAIR principles**, research data must be findable, accessible, interoperable and re-usable.

1. What consortia and NFDI as a whole should achieve

- Comprehensive research data management and increased efficiency throughout the scientific system
 - Linking of research-oriented data services, improving interoperability
 - Accepted, standardised processes and procedures in line with methodological requirements of (very) different disciplines
 - A common voice for data concerns in the science-policy arena
- But not**
- Merely accumulate „Data“
 - Collect local solutions (or repositories) waiting for future users
 - On-size-fits-all
 - Overly strict regulation („juridification“)

2. Role of consortia in NFDI & NFDI Consortia Assembly

- Help building the NFDI as a whole
 - Control question: What is the added value a consortium brings to the overall structure?
 - Creating a common knowledge base and organising horizontal structures between the consortia
 - Agreeing on common elements and standards for a federated data landscape in Germany
 - Contributing and sharing IT services as well as common concepts for training, consulting, software maintenance
 - Providing gateways to international networks
- But not**
- Outsourcing to additional service entities which apply separately for NFDI-Funding
 - Meta-Consortia (i.e. „small NFDI’s“ within NFDI)
 - Debate Clubs waiting for top-down initiatives

3. Portfolio development (1)

- Portfolio: a set of services for the chosen scientific domain/community
- ... selected, maintained and operated in joint responsibility by the consortium partners
- Services that – demonstrably! – are solutions for specific methodological requirements
- Generic services with added value to the NFDI as a whole
- Mode of operation: own services and tools, or integration of services operated elsewhere (possibly adapted for the domain)

But not

- Marketplaces/ directories for all existing tools
- Unrelated use cases
- Tools for individual projects
- Just a location for storing data
- Mere “Competence Centre”
- one more generic solution (mere technology)

3. Portfolio development (2)

How to build the portfolio

- Integrate all (!) relevant players/research “nodes” in the domain at an early stage
- Define what “science-driven” means in and for the community
- Identify a range of essential services through comparative analysis, rational evaluation and selection
- Ensure the coordinated advancement of the selected (and future) services
- Establish procedures to prioritise future services and developments

But not

- Pool services of existing partners (at least not without a participatory process)
- Extra financing for already ongoing activities
- “phase-out” financing for existing pilot-projects

5. Involvement of users in consortia

- Effective participation structure for the researchers who use the services
 - Participation appears sufficiently important and rewarding from a researcher's perspective
 - Divergent requirements of data users and data producers are managed
 - Different groups within the user community have a balanced voice
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- But not**
- Provide a few „reference users“
 - Collect signatures of scientific societies or testimonials
 - Allow only one-way feedback
 - Know-it-all approaches

Take home messages

- Check on nfdi.de if there are already funded consortia relevant for your field (9 out of 30 were funded)
- Provide feedback to initiatives with questionnaires to have your interests represented
- Get in touch with initiatives that compete for funding this year:
see
https://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/programme/nfdi/nfdi_konferenz_2020/programm_webkonferenz_2020.pdf
- Maybe come up with a new consortium for 2021