



RSEs at Academic Conferences

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Computers and the software we run on them play an unquestionably important role in research today. The relevance of code and computational analysis is likely to increase in the coming years across all sciences. This is naturally also the case in geosciences with their vast variety of connected science domains and the diversity workflows and related data, ranging from microscopic analysis of specimen in the lab to crunching huge amounts of data collected about millions of light-years in space on supercomputers.

For this talk we take it as a given that software is important for science. We want to take a look at the people behind the software and how scholarly communications, scientific conferences, and learned societies may be more welcoming to their contributions to science and their needs. While scientific software was long developed by students, Post-Docs or professors "on the side" and carried along using a series of short term research grants, the need for more expertise, quality, and long-term perspectives in developing and maintaining the software leads to an increasing number of people self-identifying as Research Software Engineers (RSEs). The same needs must now be translated to the programme and structure of academic events and the changing landscape of performance evaluation in academia.

We report on results of a survey across participants in the the first RSE Townhall Meeting at the EGU General Assembly 2018. Sparked by discussions at the same meeting, we argue for means to better facilitate the fact that software is an important output for science at conferences such as the EGU General Assembly. While the EGU short courses are successful in teaching "additional" skills, conference set-up and rules (such as the single first author submission) act against software and data as first class research outcomes. We propose means to give room for both scientific results and the means they were achieved at conferences, thereby enabling skilled developers to remain active in science and letting data and software continue to be drivers for open and high quality research, and not side-projects or obstacles.