Generic concepts for organising data management in research projects

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Since few years Research Data Management is becoming an increasingly important part of scientific projects regardless of the number of topics or subjects, researchers or institutions involved. The bigger the project, the more are the data organization and data management requirements in order to assure the best outcome of the project. Despite this, projects rarely have clear structures or responsibilities for data management. The importance of clearly defining data management and also budgeting for it is often underestimated and/or neglected. A rather scarce number of reports and documentations explaining the research data management in certain projects and detailing best practice examples can be found in the current literature. Additionally, these are often mixed up with topics of the general project management. Furthermore, these examples are very focused on the certain issues of the described projects and thus, a transferability (or general application) of provided methods is very difficult.

This contribution presents generic concepts of research data management with an effort to separate them from general project management tasks. Project size, details among the diversity of topics and the involved researcher, play an important role in shaping data management and determining which methods of data management can add value to the outcome of a project. We especially focus on different organisation types, including roles and responsibilities for data management in projects of different sizes. Additionally, we show how and when also education should be included, but also how important agreements in a project are.