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Tools and incentives for the curation of geosciences data. Experiences from GFZ Data Services

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GFZ Data Services, hosted at the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ), is a domain repository for geosciences data that assigns digital object identifier (DOI) to data and scientific software since 2004 and is Allocating Agent for IGSN, the globally unique persistent identifier for physical samples, providing IGSN minting services for physical samples since 2012. The repository provides DOI minting services for several global monitoring networks/observatories in geodesy and geophysics (e.g. INTERMAGNET; IAG Services ICGEM, IGETS, IGS; GEOFON), collaborative projects (TERENO, EnMAP, GRACE, CHAMP) and the curation of long-tail data by domain specialists.

Provision of (1) comprehensive domain-specific data description via standardised and machine-readable metadata with controlled domain vocabularies, (2) complementing the metadata with comprehensive and standardised technical data descriptions or reports; and (3) embedding the research data in wider context by providing cross-references through Persistent Identifiers (DOI, IGSN, ORCID, Fundref) to related research products (text, data, software) and people or institutions involved are used by GFZ Data Services to increase the interoperability of long-tail data.

For their data and software publication activities, GFZ Data Services provides an XML metadata editor¹⁸ that assists scientists to create metadata in different international metadata schemas (ISO19115, DataCite), while being at the same time usable by and understandable for the scientists (Ulbricht et al., 2017, 2020). Together with the new website launch of GFZ Data Services in 2022 user guidance has increased significantly and the website has further developed from a searchable data portal (only) to an information point for data publications and data management. This includes information on metadata, data formats, the data publication workflow, FAQ, links to different versions of our metadata editor and downloadable data description templates.