

FAIR Data and Software Award Lower Saxony



"FAIR data publications and software releases pave the way for greater insights and excellent science. We can only realize the vision of more effective research data management if a comprehensive cultural shift is achieved. The FAIR Data and Software Award addresses this very point. I look forward to many valuable submissions."

– Prof. Dr. York Sure-Vetter (Director of the National Research Data Infrastructure e.V. and patron of the FAIR Data and Software Award Lower Saxony 2026)

Terms and Conditions and Privacy Notice

Organizer

Technische Universität Braunschweig K.d.ö.R.
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Event Title

FAIR Data and Software Award Lower Saxony

Submission Deadline

Applications for the competition are possible from May 18, 2026, to **July 19, 2026**.

Subject of the Competition

The competition covers two types of publications:

- a) Published datasets adhering to the FAIR principles.
- b) Published software adhering to the FAIR4RS (FAIR for Research Software) principles.

Two prizes will be awarded: one for the dataset that best adheres to the FAIR principles and one for the software publication that best adheres to the FAIR for Research Software principles.

Eligibility

Submissions can be made by individual researchers or groups. The State Initiative for Research Data Management Lower Saxony explicitly supports group submissions. Regardless of whether it is an individual or group submission, there must be exactly one submitting person who meets the following conditions:

Eligibility is limited to researchers who are, at the time of participation, members or affiliates of a university or non-university research institution in Lower Saxony, and whose dataset/software publication was created and published as part of this activity. The submitting person must also be the author or co-author of the submitted dataset or software publication. If co-authors are involved, they must agree to the submission. The submitted dataset or software publication must be publicly accessible by the deadline. Changes made after the deadline will not be considered in the evaluation.

Datasets or software publications that have already been awarded in another competition are excluded from participation. The organizer reserves the right to exclude participants who do not meet the eligibility requirements.

Award and Use of Prize Money

The prize money for the best dataset and the best software publication is €4,500 (four thousand five hundred euros) each. The State Initiative Research Data Management Lower Saxony reserves the right to award additional datasets/software publications with a prize of up to €500 (five hundred euros).

After the submission deadline, an evaluation committee will assess the entries supported by the usage of FAIR Assessment Tools (see our [Checklist for FAIR Data](#) & [Checklist for FAIR Software](#)). The committee comprises members from the state initiatives for research data management from Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Thuringia and Saxony. In case of winning, participants will be informed via email. Winners must confirm acceptance of the prize within four weeks of receiving the email, or they will forfeit the prize. The feedback from the submitting person is decisive in this regard.

The prize money is intended to strengthen the institutional budget and can only be used for institutions or projects of a Lower Saxony university or non-university research institution by the winners. Personal payouts as additional compensation are excluded. The payout is made to the cost center of the submitting person or their institution.

The prize money should be used to support research data management, open science, or the digitization of research processes. This means that personnel or material costs can be funded in connection with the generation, description, storage, archiving, or publication of research data/software, or to promote open science. Examples include the annotation of datasets with metadata by student assistants, paid long-term archiving in appropriate archives, preparation of

datasets via data centers (e.g., anonymization of interview data), procurement of hardware and software, funding a training session or open-access publication, or participation in FDM- or open-science-focused conferences.

Participation and Agreement to Terms

Participation involves submitting a published dataset/software publication via appropriate references to the identifier (e.g., DOI) or the publication location (e.g., URL). The submitting person should send these references via email to award@fdm-nds.de (subject "**Competition FAIR Dataset**" or "**Competition FAIR Software**"; please choose the appropriate category). The email must be sent from the institutional email address of the submitting person, serving as proof of affiliation with a Lower Saxony university/non-university research institution, and must include the following contact details:

- Pronoun/title, full name, email address, full institutional address and phone number of the submitting person
- Pronoun/title, and full names of all other authors
- In the case of group submissions, the group name (e.g., working group name or similar)

The email should also briefly describe why the contribution was submitted and should be awarded, as well as a short description of the potential use of the prize money (**max. 500 words**). Please read the consent text at the end of this document and include it in your email. This gives your consent to the processing of your personal data.

By submitting, the submitting persons declare that they have read the competition's terms and conditions, agree with them, have the permission of all other authors, and will use the prize money as described in the "Award and Use of Prize Money" section.

Award Ceremony

The prizes will be presented as part of the conference of the State Initiative for Research Data Management Lower Saxony. The prize presentation includes a brief presentation of the dataset/software publication by the winners. The event will take place on **November 25, 2026**, in Oldenburg. Travel costs for the winners will be covered by the State Initiative for Research Data Management Lower Saxony (in addition to the prize money). Furthermore, the winners and their submitted datasets/software publications will be presented and documented on the website of the State Initiative for Research Data Management Lower Saxony.

Privacy

Purposes for which personal data will be processed

Competition for awarding the best data publications that best comply with the FAIR principles and the best software publication that best complies with the FAIR for Research Software principles.

Legal basis of processing

Consent (Article 6 (1) (a) GDPR)

Duration of data storage

Personal data of the participants will be deleted after the competition ends, unless there are legal reasons preventing deletion.

The winners and their submitted datasets/software publications will be presented and documented on the website of the State Initiative for Research Data Management Lower Saxony even after the competition ends.

Recipients of personal data

None

Intention to transfer personal data to a third country or international organization

Personal data of the affected persons will not be transferred to third countries. Such a transfer is also not planned.

Obligation to provide data

Participation in the competition is voluntary. Consent to data processing can be revoked at any time for the future. There is no obligation for the affected persons to provide personal data.

Automated decision-making

No automated decision-making with legal effect is carried out.

Data subject rights

If we process personal data about you, you have the following data subject rights:

- The right to access the processed data and receive a copy.
- The right to rectification if we process incorrect data about you.
- The right to deletion, unless exceptions apply that allow us to retain the data, such as retention obligations or limitation periods.
- The right to restrict processing.
- The right to object to processing in the public interest or based on legitimate interest.
- The right to data portability.
- The right to withdraw consent to data processing at any time (please send any withdrawal to l.grunwald@tu-braunschweig.de).
- The right to lodge a complaint with a data protection supervisory authority if you believe we are not processing your data properly. The supervisory authority for the university is the State Commissioner for Data Protection Lower Saxony, Prinzenstraße 5, 30159 Hannover. If you are in another federal state or outside Germany, you can contact the local data protection authority.

Contact for Data Protection

For questions about data protection, please contact our data protection officer at datenschutz@tu-braunschweig.de.

Disclaimer and Exclusion of Legal Recourse

The organizer reserves the right to change the terms of participation or to cancel or terminate the competition at any time without notice and without giving reasons.

The organizer assumes no liability for missed winning opportunities due to technical disturbances in email transmission. Legal recourse is excluded regarding the prize decision.

Consent

I consent to Technische Universität Braunschweig K.d.ö.R., Universitätsbibliothek, Universitätsplatz 1, 38106 Braunschweig processing my personal data (salutation, title, full name, email address, full institutional address, and phone number of all submitting persons) for the purpose of participating in and conducting the FAIR Data and Software Award Lower Saxony. In the event of winning a prize, I agree to the publication of my personal data on the website of the State Initiative for Research Data Management Lower Saxony.

My participation is voluntary. This consent can be withdrawn at any time for the future. I had the opportunity to inform myself about the following privacy notices.

By signing, I consent to the described processing of my personal data.

- Pronoun/title
- Full Name
- Email Address
- Full Institutional Address and Phone Number of the Submitting Person
- In the case of group submissions, the group name (e.g., working group name or similar)
- Signature

For each additional submitter

- Pronoun/title
- Full Name
- Signature