Motivation: The Göttingen case

In Göttingen, a large number of research institutions (8) is located around the Göttingen University. Together they form the Göttingen Campus to foster cooperation between the institutes and interdisciplinary approaches. This setting offers great potential for creating synergies between infrastructural solutions for communication and information-scientific demands across disciplines.

The Göttingen eResearch Alliance (eRA) was founded by Göttingen University, SUB, and GWDG in late 2014. It is one of the first approaches in Germany with the specific aim to collect and promote the know-how on the campus and to connect researchers to resources via a central point of contact. Our team of experts has a multidisciplinary background, ranging from the humanities over natural sciences to computer science. This eases discipline specific communication with the researchers. In the future, communication with regional and international partners will be established and new partners are welcome to join the alliance. After a four-year pilot phase, an institutional substantiation of the eRA is planned.

Developing and implementing support workflows

The foundation of the eRA is closely connected to the implementation of the Göttingen University research data policy, which emphasizes the importance of research data management and curation.

A first specific implementation of this policy is a feedback loop for DFG funding proposals between the proposing researchers, the university administration, and the eRA. This loop aims to support the development of a data strategy for research projects. This involves the translation of funders’ specifications into project-specific requirements for information infrastructures. The proposals will be assessed internally by a commission of the senate as a measure of quality assurance. In the future it is planned to extend this procedure to other funding schemes.

Services

The service portfolio of the eRA focusses currently on four topics:

1. Consulting for
   • data-management plans in project proposals
   • data curation solutions (on campus)
2. Connecting researchers with
   • experts, e.g. visualization, databases, virtual research environments
   • IT services and tools
3. Training researchers in data management aspects through customized workshops
4. Developing solutions
   • through “project as a service”
   • by adapting existing services

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