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FAIR data in the Photon and Neutron community

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In recent years, funding agencies and scientific journals have started requiring that research data is FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. This is not an arbitrary decision. It reflects the intrinsic value of research data if additional use were possible; for example, to support new research, as reference data, or as pedagogical material.

Although some general principals of FAIR data management adoption have been investigate, each research community is individual and has unique challenges when making their data FAIR. One important activity is to tailor general approaches to match that community while finding solutions for the community-specific aspects.

ExPaNDS is a 3½ year, EU-funded project to support the adoption of FAIR data at European Photon and Neutron (PaN) facilities. Together with PaNOSC (also EU-funded), ExPaNDS has established FAIR data as a common goal within the European PaN community. ExPaNDS has provided policies and procedures, developed software and supported software adoption, all while providing training and outreach. Such activity includes building portable analysis pipelines being used at facilites with common instrument technologies or at horizontal compute infrastructures, creating common terminology in the form of various ontologies (making data findable and reusable), writing data management policies (describing how to make data FAIR) and a self-assessment procedure (allowing progress to be marked), establishing best practice for Active DMPs and persistent identifiers (PIDs) for dataset. Together, this is laying the groundwork for a future data commons.

We will present the challenges faced by PaN facilities when adopting FAIR data along with the many achievements of ExPaNDS in tackling those challenges.

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