Research Data Management at Riga Technical University

Supporting Research Beyond the Surface

21.05.2026.

Meet our Team

Oksana Zaiceva

Gatis Lāma

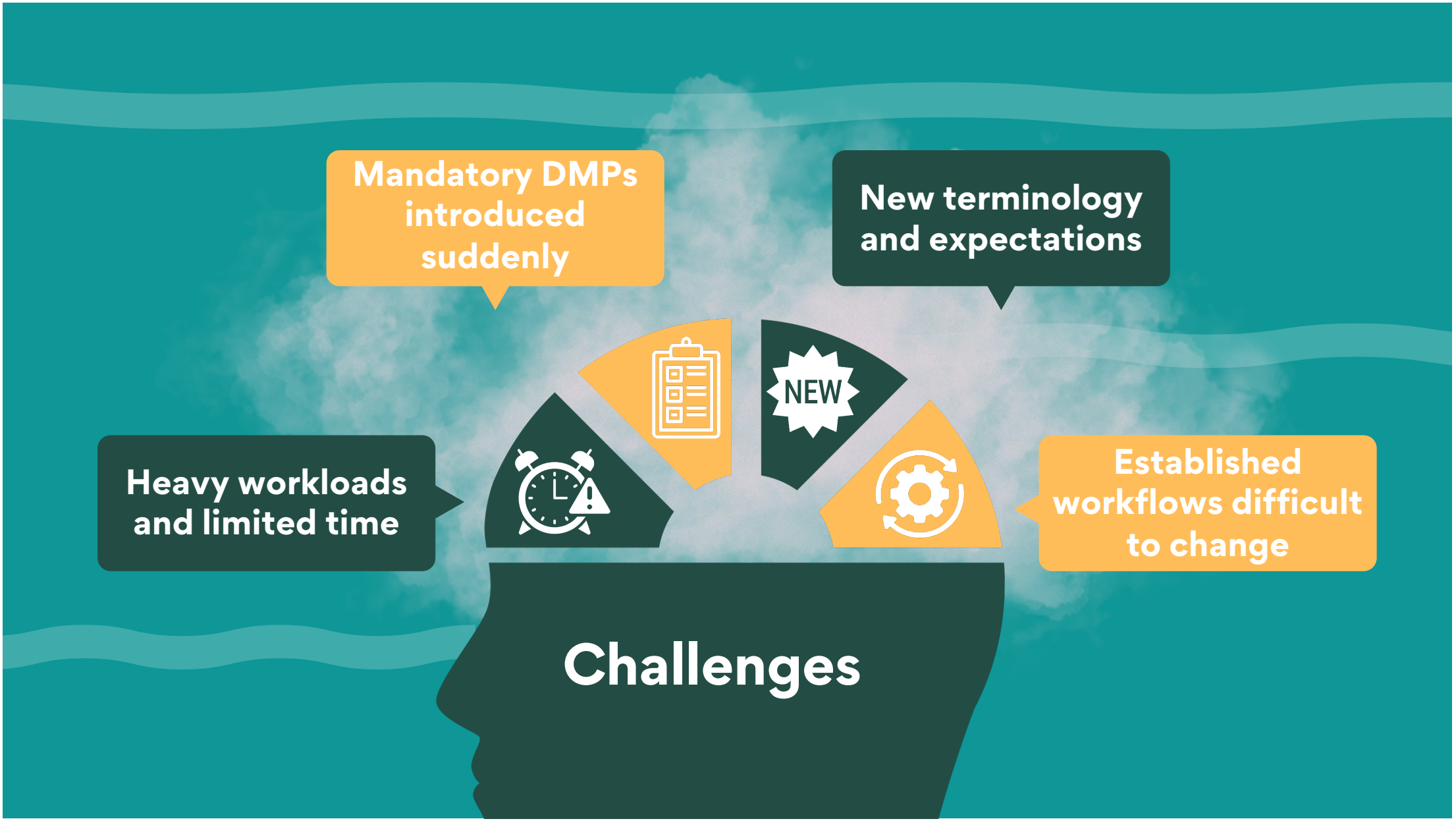
Elza Vecpuise

Mihails Korčevskis

Svetlana Sokolova

Our journey began in September 2024

The DMP made visible the unseen work beneath the research data management


Mandatory DMPs introduced suddenly
New terminology and expectations
NEW
Heavy workloads and limited time
Established workflows difficult to change
Challenges


Who are these data stewards, and why are they creating more work for us?
?

In the same boat with researchers

We were learning together:

- New Open Science requirements
- Mandatory DMPs
- New workflows and responsibilities
- Unclear starting points

Support rather than control

Collaboration rather than auditing

Practical help instead of bureaucracy


Our role:
• Help researchers navigate requirements
• Build practical data management practices
• Write and translate policies into real workflows
• Support sustainable and reusable research data
• We also became connectors, translators, coordinators and navigators between the units
• Not “the people with all the answers”, but “the people who know where to find answers”

No One Navigates Alone

Good research data management is not built by one office – it is built across the university:

- RTU data stewards collaborate with other departments to understand their needs
- We support researchers while also learning from departmental requirements
- This enables a two-way exchange of knowledge and needs

Data Stewardship Is About People, Not Just Data

Technical understanding:

- FAIR principles
- Repositories
- Metadata
- Storage & security
- DMP requirements
- Policies and workflows

Soft skills:

- Listening
- Translating complex concepts
- Asking the right questions
- Empathy
- Communication
- Training & teaching
- Building trust
- Problem-solving

Successful data management starts with communication

Sometimes the most important skill was not knowing the answer – but understanding the real question

Supporting research means adapting guidance to where researchers are in their journey

PhD Students

"How do I navigate this?"

Where should I store my data?
What do I need for a Data Management Plan?
Which repository should I use?
How do I organize files and metadata?
What are the university requirements?

Mindset:
Curious and proactive
Looking for guidance and structure
More open to adopting new practices
See RDM as part of learning research skills

Senior Researchers

"Why do we need to change course?"

Why is this necessary now?
We already have our own workflow – why change it?
Is this another administrative burden?
Who has time for this?
Will this actually benefit the research?
Do funders really require this?

Mindset:
Experienced but often skeptical
Concerned about time and workload
Resistant to changing established practices
Need clear value and practical benefits

From Training to Research Culture

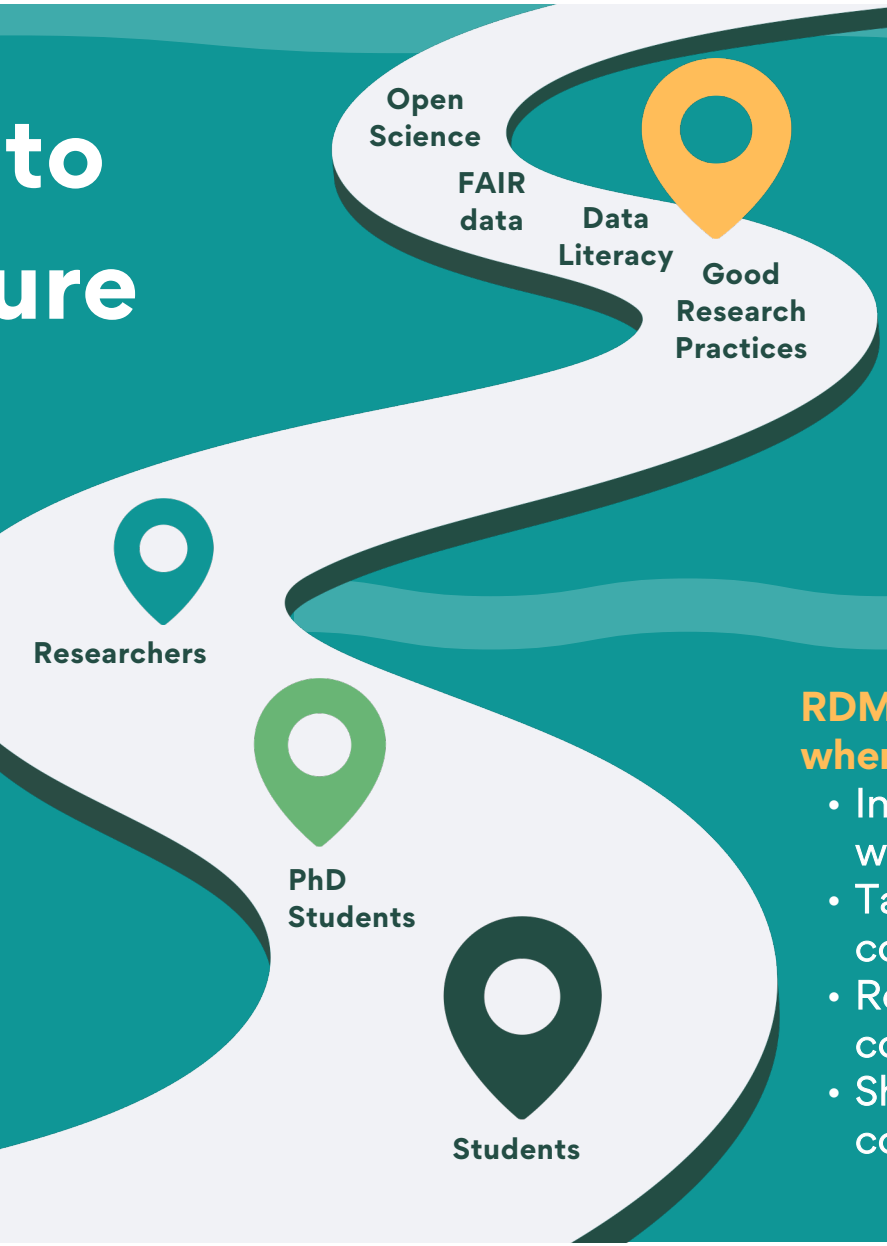
Building sustainable research culture starts early

Bachelor Students
Building awareness of responsible and open research practices

Master's Students
Developing practical research and data skills – data literacy

PhD Students
Advanced Research Data Management & Integrating RDM into independent research workflows

Researchers & Staff
Continuous Support



The goal is to gradually develop:

- Open Science awareness
- Data literacy
- Research integrity
- Research data management skills

RDM becomes sustainable when it becomes routine:

- Integrated into research workflows
- Taught as a research competency
- Reinforced through continuous support
- Shared across the research community

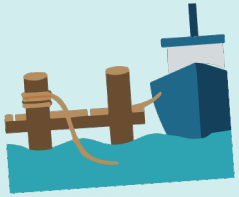
Navigating the Future of Research Data Management at RTU

Policy and Guidelines Development

RTU continues strengthening OS and RDM policies by **developing clear guidelines aligned with legal and ethical requirements**, supporting sustainable and responsible research practices, enabling collaboration, and incorporating the responsible use of AI in research workflows and data management

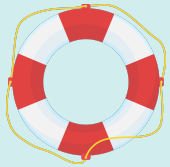
Training, Data Literacy and Collaborative Support

Focus on **expanding Open Science, data literacy, and RDM training for students,** PhD candidates, and early-career researchers, while supporting large-scale and international collaborative research projects



Infrastructure and Tools Enhancement

Continuous **improvement of infrastructure,** repositories, storage solutions, and support tools to meet evolving technical, ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements for research data management, **including RTU PURE integration for dataset visibility** in researcher profiles, and the responsible use of AI



Fostering the Role of Data Stewards

Data stewards are **recognized as research partners,** actively supporting researchers through guidance, collaboration, training, and communication, and making visible the structures behind research excellence and impactful publications

Latvian Research Data Steward Network Development

Maintaining and strengthening the Latvian Data Steward **network** through collaboration, shared expertise, and continuous professional development, while actively **guiding and inspiring the development of national-level RDM and Open Science policies**


Thank
you!