



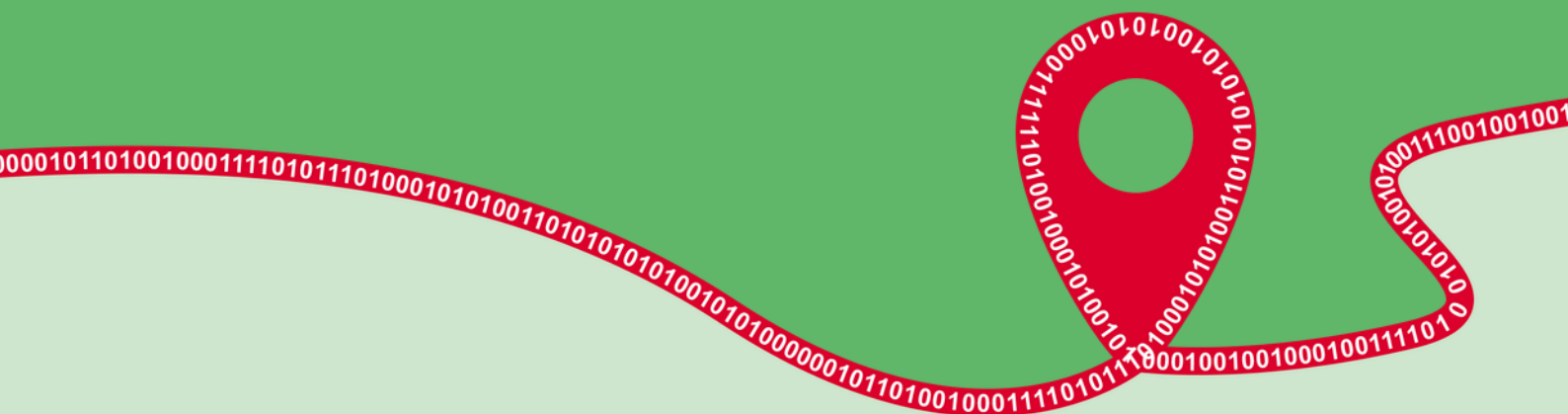
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Digital Competence Centre

Annual report

2025



Digital Competence Centre
Your one-stop for research IT and data

rug.nl/dcc



DCC 2025 in numbers

1,310 support requests

95 datasets published

462 research planning support requests

26 trainings and webinars

433 PhD students greeted

284 Whisper AI users

23 restricted dataset access requests

86,579 website visits

3,000+ newsletter subscribers

9.5/10 researcher satisfaction grade received





About the DCC

The UG Digital Competence Centre (DCC) supports researchers at the University of Groningen before, during and after their research. Our team offers expertise in research data and software management, privacy and data protection, research data archiving and publication, and Open Science and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles.

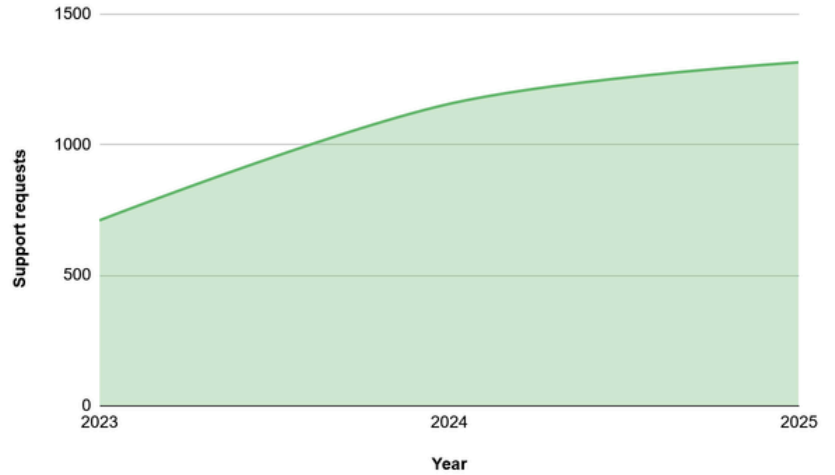
Our services include providing feedback on Research Data Management Plans (RDMPs) and Research Software Management Plans (RSMPs), advice on handling personal data, research data and software publication support, IT tools guidance, training and workshops, practical guides, and facilitating connections with experts across the UG, UB and CIT. In 2025, the DCC further strengthened its strategic position as a mature, embedded research support service with expanded expertise in research software and data interoperability.





Support requests

In 2025, the DCC logged 1,310 support requests in TOPdesk, representing a 13% increase compared to 2024 (1,157 requests) and a 62.73% increase compared to 2023 (711 requests). User satisfaction remained consistently high. In 2025, 108 researchers responded to our service survey. Satisfaction levels were slightly above previous years, confirming continued appreciation of our services across faculties.



Support requests logged in TopDesk (2023-2025)

Research data and software management

There were 462 requests for access to the [RDMP web tool](#), indicating sustained demand for data management planning support. Research Software Management continued to



gain visibility, with some dedicated requests for support; the number is expected to rise following the appointment of the first Research Software steward at the DCC in late 2025.

Embedded data stewardship continued to demonstrate its added value. At the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (BSS), our embedded data steward conducted 28 full BSS RDMP reviews, reviewed 15 funder RDMPs and responded to approximately 60 RDMP-related calls. This faculty-based model continues to strengthen local expertise and improve the quality of data management planning at an early stage of research projects.

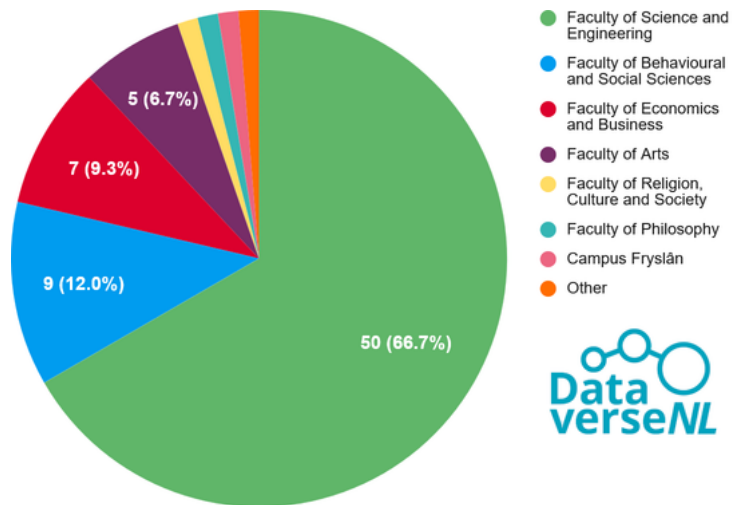


Research data publication

Our efforts in research data publication continued to grow. In 2025, a record 95 datasets were published in [DataverseNL](#), the UG’s preferred repository, locally managed by the UB and DCC and hosted by DANS. This represents a 36% increase compared to 2024 (70 datasets) and a 10% increase compared to 2023 (86 datasets), making 2025 the strongest year to date for dataset publication support.

Publishing [FAIR data with restricted access](#) received an increase of requests. In 2025, the DCC processed 23 requests for access to restricted datasets in DataverseNL, more than doubling the 11 access requests handled in 2024, reflecting a 109% increase. This growth indicates increasing awareness of controlled access data sharing solutions for sensitive research data.

Datasets published by Faculty in 2025



Research software and IT solutions

Research software support and infrastructure scaled significantly in 2025. Demand for open-source tools increased across faculties, particularly within the Faculty of Religion, Culture and Society, reflecting a broader institutional interest in open science and data autonomy.

A major development was the implementation of the [Whisper AI transcription tool](#) and vLLM services on Habrok. Since 1 October 2025, 284 users have registered for Whisper access, with an average of 15–16 new requests per week, projecting more than 800 requests annually if the trend continues. This rapid uptake demonstrates strong demand for locally hosted, open-source AI tools.

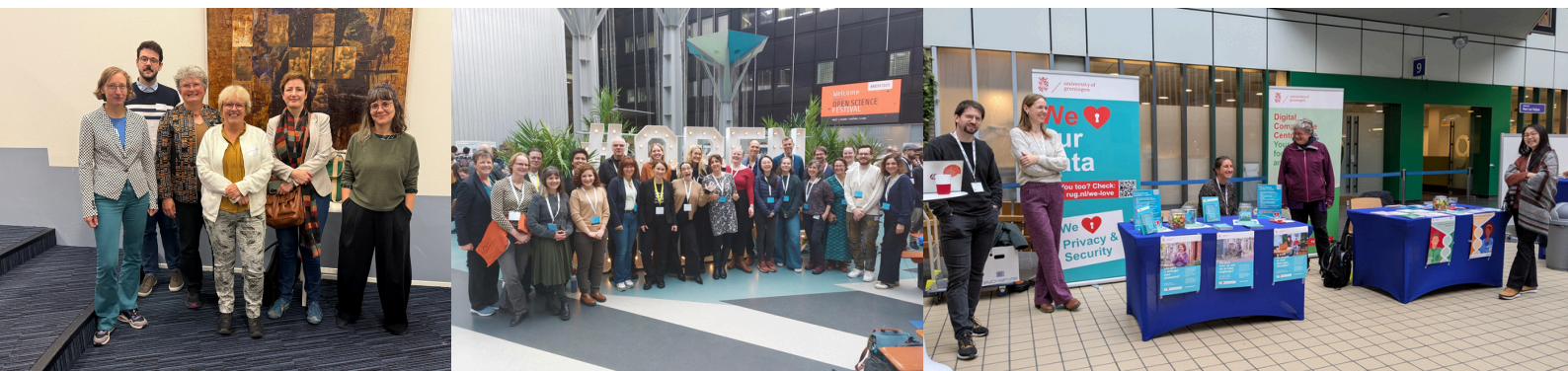
An additional open-source application supported in 2025 is [BORIS](#) (Behavioral Observation Research Interactive Software), widely used for systematic coding of behavioural data, offered via a Docker-based environment which ensures reproducibility and scalability.





Training and outreach

Training and outreach remained a central pillar of our work. In 2025, the DCC hosted 26 trainings and webinars and delivered approximately 7 guest lectures. We continued our collaboration with the research domain of the CIT, actively providing trainings for the Research Support Hub. We also spoke to approximately 433 PhD candidates during introduction days, and were present in the information market of several events across the university. Our continued presence at these events ensures early engagement with data management, research software and Open Science practices.



Communications efforts

Our quarterly newsletter “[DCC Up to Data](#)” reached over 3,000 subscribers, showing a significant growth of our network. The [DCC website](#) remained an essential knowledge hub, receiving 86,579 visits in 2025, reflecting sustained high visibility following the rebranding and website expansion completed in 2024. More than 20 information pages were updated in 2025 to ensure alignment with current guidelines and policies.



The [DCC wiki](#), launched in 2024, was further expanded in 2025 with detailed technical guides on research IT solutions, offering step-by-step technical support. Additionally, we produced numerous new physical and online materials addressing common researcher questions and practical implementation challenges.





Participation in UG-wide initiatives

The DCC continued its close collaboration with the university's Privacy and Security (P&S) guild, ensuring that guidance and materials for researchers handling personal or sensitive data remain aligned across research support services. Through this collaboration, the DCC contributes to the development of shared guidance, tools and training materials addressing privacy, data protection, and responsible data use in research.

In 2025, this included contributions to university-wide initiatives such as e-learning materials for students covering privacy, security, research data management and research ethics; improved guidance on the use of research IT tools in relation to privacy and security requirements; clarifying the criteria that determine the necessity of a DPIA, and updated advice on agreements in research involving personal data. We also continued being part of the Privacy and Security awareness group of the guild, which launched several campaigns and materials university-wide.



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The DCC also collaborated with the UG's HR department to develop an [offboarding checklist for research supervisors](#). This checklist helps ensure that departing researchers complete mandatory research data management steps, contributing to improved compliance, continuity and institutional knowledge retention.



The DCC continued leading Pillar 2 "FAIR data & software" of the UG Open Science Programme 2024–2026, strengthening FAIR implementation across faculties and aligning local practices with national Open Science developments.

We also launched a working group with Research and Impact (University Services) to coordinate the revision of the University's general research data management policy and the development of supporting protocols, such as those for personal data handling, data archiving and data publication. In the coming years, this collaboration aims to establish a sustainable framework that ensures legal requirements, (inter)national guidelines, and University policies are fully aligned with the practical needs of researchers and research support teams.





National collaborations

The UG DCC led an NWO-awarded project that investigates the [financial aspects of sustaining research software in the Natural and Engineering Science \(NES\) domain](#), using a national survey to identify structural funding bottlenecks. By highlighting the under-recognized maintenance efforts and fragmented funding landscape, the study offers key findings and recommendations to better support the long-term viability of research software essential to scientific progress.

We have also joined a national workgroup with data stewards from Leiden University, Radboud University, University of Twente. The aim of this working group is to develop accessible and practical resources regarding research data management to bachelor's and master's students across disciplines and universities.

Grants awarded

In 2025, the DCC received two grants from the national Open Science Programme (2025–2029), aimed at strengthening local and thematic DCCs. The awarded work packages focus on community management for data interoperability and expanding research software training capacity.



Looking ahead

As a mature and embedded service, the DCC will continue focusing on scaling research software management, strengthening interoperability expertise, expanding faculty-based stewardship and further embedding FAIR and Open Science practices across the University of Groningen. In 2026, we aim to scale our research software support and we will introduce a certification program for researchers to recognize and enhance their competencies in good research software practices. We will also host the kickoff event for the university-wide research data interoperability project, bringing together researchers, support staff and infrastructure partners to advance interoperable data practices across faculties.

The DCC team manager will join the national DCC coordination group, contributing to the alignment of local and national data stewardship initiatives. In addition, the DCC will participate in several working groups under the recently approved NWO DCC-T2 investment plan, helping shape future national investments in research data, software and digital research infrastructure. Through these activities, the DCC will continue to expand its role both within the university and in the broader national Open Science ecosystem.





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