

## **ASSURED. A training and accreditation service for safe research.**

### **Authors:**

Simon Parker<sup>1\*</sup>, Deborah Wiltshire<sup>2</sup>, Vanessa González Ribao<sup>1</sup>, Markus Herklotz<sup>3</sup> and Wiebke Weber<sup>3</sup>

\*Lead presenter

<sup>1</sup>GHGA - German Human Genome-Phenome Archive, Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum in der Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft, Heidelberg, Germany

<sup>2</sup>Data Services for the Social Sciences, GESIS - Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften, Cologne, Germany

<sup>3</sup>Social Data Science and AI Lab, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Munich, Germany

### **Abstract:**

Germany has a large Research Data Centre (RDC) infrastructure that facilitates the analysis of complex and sensitive data. This infrastructure is being further developed through the NFDI to increase the number and range of research communities served. Within this growing infrastructure, there is an increasing need to use sensitive, potentially disclosive, research data responsibly. Researchers wishing to access data and Data Access Professionals working in RDCs require skills to handle these data in an ethical and efficient way.

Many institutions offer generalist data protection training to their staff but this rarely covers key specialist topics such as proper data citation, lawful data sharing, and how to produce non-disclosive research outputs which are essential to achieve the Safe Use<sup>1</sup> of sensitive research data. A survey conducted by the NFDI4Health consortium revealed that over 60% of respondents are interested in learning more about data access and sharing<sup>2</sup>. RDCs may offer dedicated training for Researchers seeking access to the sensitive research data they hold, but a lack of recognition across services means Researchers may have to train multiple times.

To address this situation, we are developing ASSURED<sup>3</sup>: an adaptable E-Learning training and accreditation system that enables Researchers and Data Access Professionals to achieve a widely-recognised accreditation for working with sensitive research data. This program is being developed collaboratively by institutions across three NFDI consortia; GHGA, KonsortSWD and BERD@NFDI. ASSURED is currently focused upon Researchers and Data Access Professionals in Germany but has the potential to expand in alignment with the objectives of the European Open Science Cloud.

The ASSURED program is divided into two parts; a suite of 'core' modules that explain the key concepts that are indispensable to work with sensitive research data safety. Additional optional 'specialist' modules can then be mandated as required by the RDCs. These 'specialist' modules will cover how to work in a particular secure environment, how to handle different data types, or additional topics related to performing a particular role such as training for Data Access Professionals. The modules are conceived as short and compact learning units. ASSURED will be presented via an online training platform and utilise written material, instructive videos, animations, and interactive quizzes to present the information in a clear and engaging manner. By integrating their 'training status' with an Authentication and Authorisation Infrastructure such as IAM4NFDI, those trained using ASSURED will be able to easily demonstrate their accreditation and have it recognised at multiple RDCs.

As a training and accreditation service, ASSURED is beneficial for the NFDI and the research data landscape as a whole. It supports improving the security models of Research Data Centres and building trust. The ASSURED approach promotes best practices for safe data use and sharing, and fostering career-development within the research data sector.

At the NFDI4Base User Conference, we will introduce our proposal to the NFDI community. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our work with an interested audience to understand

how ASSURED can meet their needs and to open up the project to potential further collaborators.

<sup>1</sup> Restel, K., Depping, R. (2022) Bericht zum 1. NFDI4Health User Survey: Status-quo-Erhebung 2021. Bremen: NFDI4Health, p. 31. <https://doi.org/10.4126/FRL01-006461780>

<sup>2</sup> Desai, T., Ritchie, F., Welpton, R. (2016). Five Safes: Designing data access for research. Bristol: University of the West of England. <https://uwe-repository.worktribe.com/output/914745>

<sup>3</sup> [Assured - Safe research by safe people \(assured-training.org\)](https://assured-training.org)

**Keywords:** safe research, adaptable training system, standardised accreditation, sensitive data