

Newsletter Quarter 1 2024

2024-02-05

Dear Reader,

With our sixth NFDI4Microbiota newsletter, we would like to share news about conferences, training courses, ELN (Electronic Lab Notebooks), grants and new cooperations. And as this is the first newsletter of the year, there will also be a short review of 2023.

If you can think of other topics that we should cover, please let us know. [We are happy to hear from you!](#)

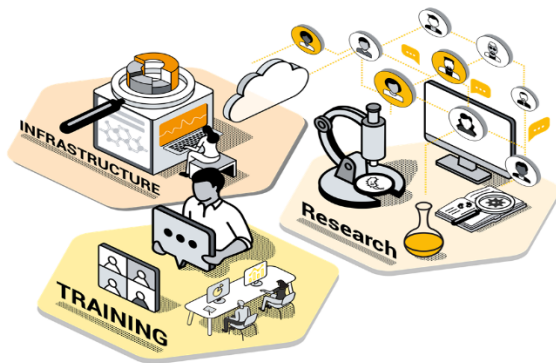
And now: Enjoy reading the newsletter!

Annual review 2023

In 2023 several nice events happened. In April, we held the annual **NFDI4Microbiota conference** which was centered on community engagement. The goals of NFDI4Microbiota were detailed in lecture talks that you can also find online: [here](#). Some of the participants presented their research in talks as well as posters and cross-topics like (meta)data deposition and required infrastructure were presented. This was complemented by round table discussions and a plenary discussion of the Use cases. Further highlights were the keynotes of LeeAnn McCue ([NMDC](#)) and Hauke Smidt ([UNLOCK](#)).

The annual conference was a great opportunity to get to know some of the NFDI4Microbiota participants and ambassadors.

Another highlight of the year 2023 was the **cross-consortia Hackathon DataXplorer** - organized together with NFDI4Earth and NFDI4Biodiversity. The hackathon was conducted mainly online, the end-presentations were hybrid, with the in-person part happening in Frankfurt, which was combined with a nice social event and a torchlight tour in the Senckenberg museum. The challenges were related to earth system sciences, biodiversity and microbiology. For example, one challenge entailed the design of a web-based question answering system to help researchers to find answers related to research data management.



One task in the field of microbiology concerned the development of a user-friendly and feature-rich meta-data annotation tool for metaproteomic experiments.

The presentations and results are accessible here:

<https://zenodo.org/communities/dataexplorers?q=&l=list&p=1&s=10&sort=newest>

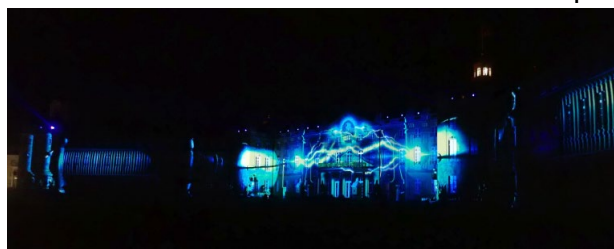
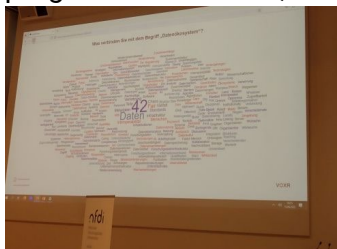
The next cross-consortia hackathon will happen in the beginning of 2025.

One great opportunity to get in touch with the NFDI4Microbiota community was provided at the **VAAM conference in September 2023**. Part of the consortium's outreach team represented NFDI4Microbiota at a booth and gave a short presentation titled 'National research data infrastructure for the research of microbiota (NFDI4Microbiota) – Democratize access to microbiota data and high-end computational analyzes' during the computational microbiology session. Several members of the community were interested in the work, asked questions after the talk and interacted at the booth. In addition, two posters were presented by the partners UFZ and DSMZ. The poster presentation of Isabel Schober from DSMZ about the NFDI4Microbiota service StrainInfo received a poster award. Congratulations!



The **FEMS2023** - the conference of the federation of European Microbiological Societies - was a great platform to interact with the international microbiological community. We presented a poster and met strong interest. It was also possible to get in contact with other consortia and it was amazing to get such a good overview about the research activities in microbiology.

Working within NFDI means that you interact with a lot of people from other consortia, but in most cases only online. **CoRDI**, the conference on Research Data Infrastructure was an opportunity to meet those people in person. NFDI4Microbiota presented three posters, as well as talks for example one about ARUNA object storage and participated in the "Market of the consortia". The "Market of consortia" was a possibility to present the consortium and make contacts. Both led to some interest. Additionally, the conference featured a nice social program like a dinner, a tour to a neutrino detector and the Schlosslichtspiele.



Still the outreach team was not only active on conference, but also contributed a panel discussion to the **LoveDataWeek** in Berlin. It was jointly organized by the NFDI consortia NFDI4Biodiversity, DataPLANT, NFDI4Health and NFDI4Microbiota. Panelists were Dr. Barbara Ebert (NFDI4Biodiversity), Prof. Dr. Konrad Förstner (NFDI4Microbiota), Prof. Dr. Björn Usadel (DataPLANT) and Prof. Dr. Iris Pigeot (NFDI4Health). The discussion was moderated by Dr. Kerstin Elbing (Verband Biologie, Biowissenschaften und Biomedizin in Deutschland e. V. – VBIO). The session opened with keynote presentations from Dr. Martin

Friedrichs-Manthey (NFDI4Biodiversity), Prof. Dr Björn Usadel and Prof. Dr Iris Pigeot. The [video](#) of the panel discussion is available online.

2023 was a good year that showed substantial progress towards our goals. Also in 2024, we are very much looking forward to interacting further with you.

Community engagement – events and conferences

Upcoming conferences

As the new year begins, so does the conference season! We are preparing for numerous conference visits to present our work and to meet our various target communities. Please come by to meet us if you are attending – we look forward to meeting you in person! You can find our contributions to all events below and soon [on our web portal](#).

- [RDA-conference](#) – poster
- [75th Mosbacher Kolloquium](#) – poster
- [VAAM&DGHM](#) - Symposium

Restarting of Ambassador meetings

After a little break, we have restarted the ambassador program on January 29th. The goal of this meeting was mainly to present NFDI4Microbiota to this community. The ambassadors were asked for their opinion in a survey and the program was adjusted accordingly. The ambassador meetings are held bimonthly on the last Monday of the month, starting at 15:30 ending around 16:30. The ambassadors are given network opportunities and an in-person meeting is planned.

Are you a young scientist in the field of microbiology? Do you like meeting like-minded people? Are you curious about NFDI4Microbiota? As an ambassador, you receive training and support and you can participate in talks by experts of different fields.

Join our bimonthly meetings, the next one is on March 24th.

Upcoming Events

NFDI4Microbiota Community Workshop (February 5th, 10-12:00 CEST, online)

There are new [NFDI4Microbiota](#) services online! We will introduce them in our online community workshop on February 5, 2024, 10-12 CEST. We will talk about the NFDI4Microbiota [Knowledge Base](#) which provides information about research data management, software development and much more. You will get insights how to use the [ARUNA](#) Object storage to store your (meta-)data according to [FAIR](#) principles.

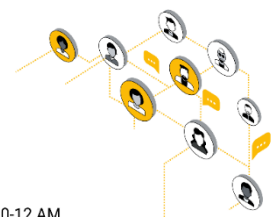
A live demo of [StrainInfo](#) will introduce you to our service that is providing microbial strain identifiers. Finally, the new virus database [VirJen](#) will be presented.

NFDI4
MICROBIOTA

Community Workshop

February 5, 10-12 AM

In collaboration with:



Join us and log in via Zoom:

Meeting ID: 687 5464 7684

Passcode: 363736

We look forward to an exciting event. See you there!

NFDI4Microbiota Services

Electronic Lab Notebooks (ELNs)

NFDI4Microbiota actively promotes the use of Electronic Lab Notebooks (ELNs) through various activities. ZB MED - Information Centre for Life Sciences supports researchers and infrastructure teams in selecting and implementing of an ELN. For instance, ZB MED is currently supporting microbiology researchers at the Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg in testing several open source ELNs. As the researchers are currently in the process of testing eLabFTW, ZB MED is supporting them together with another NFDI4Microbiota member, the Philipps University of Marburg (UMR). UMR has been using eLabFTW for some time and can offer support to researchers who wish to test and/or implement it. ZB MED also offers workshops on ELNs. For more information about our ELN efforts or to request a workshop, please contact forschungsdaten@zbmed.de.

NFDI4Microbiota cooperations

NFDI supports the BiodivGesundheit projects of BMBF research initiative for the conservation of biodiversity (FEa)

Together with other life science NFDI consortia, NFDI4Microbiota supports the BiodivGesundheit projects of the BMBF research initiative for the Conservation of Biodiversity (FEa). The discipline-specific training, tools & services of the life sciences and social sciences NFDI consortia: FAIRagro, NFDI4Health, KonsortSWD, NFDI4Biodiversity and NFDI4Microbiota were presented to the current BiodivGesundheit projects of the funding measure "Exploring the links between biodiversity and human health" at their kick-off meeting on December 4-5 2023. Thirteen research projects are investigating the influence of biodiversity on health as part of FEa and are in a funded preparatory phase. The NFDI consortia offer support and advice on topics like metadata standards and data management plans to prepare the projects for their official start in summer 2024. The service will be provided after summer 2024 throughout the project phase.

Further details on FEa and the BiodivGesundheit projects can be found on their website:

<https://www.feda.bio/de/projekte/biodivgesundheit/>.

NFDI4Microbiota receives BY-COVID grant

An NFDI4Microbiota team consisting of Dr. Noriko Cassman and Prof. Dr. Manja Marz from FSU Jena as well as Prof. Dr. Konrad Förstner secured the BeYond-COVID ([BY-COVID](#)) grant. The successful proposal, submitted with Prof. Dr. Marz as applicant, is entitled "*Validation and submission tool to facilitate virus data flow into ENA via secure intermediate storage.*" We look forward to the results of this project!

Save the date

Annual meeting

The next NFDI4Microbiota annual meeting will take place from 2024-12-03 to 2024-12-04 in Leipzig. A panel discussion on the cultural change to FAIR and Open, keynotes and a practical workshop on NFDI4Microbiota Services are planned. You will be informed as soon as registration is open.

NFDI4Microbiota Coffee Talk meetings and Ambassador meetings

Alternating with ambassador meetings, there will be coffee talk meetings, that are open for the community. Both the Ambassador meetings and the Coffee Talk meetings are on the last Monday at the month starting at 15:30 until 16:30. The Coffee Talks will cover services, research and will also feature external speakers talking about their research. The first Coffee Talk will be given by Justine Valendorpe about electronic lab notebook (ELN) on the 26th January 15:30 . The next ambassador meeting will be on the 25th March 15:30. You will get informed about the topics of the coffee talk meetings ahead of time. If you would like to give a coffee talk get in [touch](#).

Training

There are already a lot of interesting training courses planned. At the beginning of May there will be an "Introduction to R course", at the end of May "Basic statistic with R". In September you can learn about "Linux basics for bioinformatics" and in November about "Metagenomics". As soon as the registration opens, you will find it on the [homepage](#). Further training will soon be announced so it is worth checking the website regularly for training opportunities.

Media

The [NFDI4Microbiota](#) consortium aims to be the central hub in Germany that supports the microbiology community with access to data, analysis services, data/metadata standards and training. We stand for a collaborative, open and FAIR research environment. That is why we stopped being active on X.

NFDI4Microbiota is now part of the Bluesky network

To replace our now deprecated X-account, NFDI4Microbiota started a Bluesky account. Follow us on [BlueSky](#)

We are looking forward to get in touch with you there.

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