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Research Software - Sustainable Development and Support

IAMO Policy Brief 42 focuses on the needs and strategies for sustainable research software practices based on DFG roundtable position paper

Halle (Saale), 26 August 2021 – Research software is the backbone of much 21st century research. In November 2019 more than 50 scientists from various institutions gathered at the Robert Koch Institute for a DFG roundtable discussion on sustainability aspects of research software development. The latest IAMO policy brief, based on the Anzt et al. (2020) roundtable position paper, outlines the needs and strategies for sustainable research software practices.

Research software is a major asset in academic research. In order to effectively understand, replicate, reproduce, and build upon existing research, the software must be sustainable. Researchers often base their research on software that was developed in-house or as a community effort. Many of these software stacks cannot be sustained – often because the research software is not a first-class deliverable in a research project and it remains in a prototype stage, or because of missing incentives and resources to maintain the software after the end of the project funding. This results in a highly inefficient system where millions of lines of code are generated every year that will not be re-used after the end of a project or the software developer's position.

In order to rectify this situation, the authors propose criteria to apply when deciding which software to sustain, pathways for funding, and the creation of infrastructure to support long-lasting research software.

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Further information

IAMO Policy Brief 42 "Research Software - Sustainable Development and Support" was published in English and German. The issues can be downloaded free of charge on the following website: www.iamo.de/en/publications/iamo-policy-briefs.

IAMO Policy Briefs

IAMO conducts research on important agricultural policies. In our IAMO Policy Briefs we share our take on the researched issues. In this series of publications, we elaborate briefly and in comprehensive language on various topics, which are relevant for today's society. We hope to involve the interested public in these topics as well as decision makers in politics, the economy and the media. Since 2011, we publish IAMO Policy Briefs at irregular intervals.

About IAMO

The Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO) analyses economic, social and political processes of change in the agricultural and food sector, and in rural areas. The geographic focus covers the enlarging EU, transition regions of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, as well as Central and Eastern Asia. IAMO works to enhance the understanding of institutional, structural and technological changes. Moreover, IAMO studies the resulting impacts on the agricultural and food sector as well as the living conditions of rural populations. The outcomes of our work are used to derive and analyse strategies and options for enterprises, agricultural markets and politics. Since its founding in 1994, IAMO has been part of the Leibniz Association, a German community of independent research institutes.

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