WORKING TOWARDS A FAIR DATASET

THINKING AHEAD

- What will be the size of your dataset?

- Who may access your dataset? Everyone, selected groups, or is access only possible in specific cases (General Data Protection Regulation applies)?

- After determining who may access your data, choose a repository that (1) offers this access type, (2) offers sufficient storage space, and (3) is directed at your research domain. Request a DOI.

- Which file types will be used in your project?

- Which conversions are needed to obtain universal file formats?

- What is the user allowed to do with your work? Given these permissions/restrictions, which license is suitable?

- Prepare a draft ReadMe file with a draft metadata description.

TIPS WHILE CONDUCTING YOUR RESEARCH

- A research journal is a useful tool to keep track of your research steps and of choices that were made during the research phase.

- Make a distinction between unprocessed and processed data. Which workflows were applied to processed data?

- A predefined file naming system may help to keep version management clear and easy to follow.

- The ReadMe and/or metadata files are not items to write only when your project is finished. While working on your project, continuously update your ReadMe and metadata files now that everything is still fresh in your memory!

- If possible, ask a co-author or colleague to assess the clarity of your ReadMe and/or metadata files. Is it clear for someone else what information the dataset contains? For instance, are the names of variables clear? Is it clear which units are used?

POINT OF ATTENTION

- Finalizing an accepted manuscript or report _and_ publishing a dataset requires careful planning to make sure both contain each other DOI. Often, the dataset DOI can be requested prior to uploading and publishing the dataset. Subsequently, it can be included in the Data Availability Statement of the manuscript/report. If possible, include the manuscript/report DOI in the ReadMe file of the dataset (by finalizing the dataset after the manuscript/report DOI has been assigned).