EVERSE Network of Research Software Quality

The EVERSE project is committed to improving the quality of software in European research in the international context. EVERSE will launch a Network of Research Software Quality to allow us to work with individuals and partner organisations to achieve this common goal.

It is anticipated that this document will evolve over the first three years of the project, and eventually act as the foundation of an Institute of Research Software Quality.

Vision

Our vision of the EVERSE Network of Research Software Quality is to establish a **Community of Practice around improving the quality of research software** in Europe and beyond. EVERSE and partners work to provide standard and documented practices around tools and training for software developers, researchers who code and research software engineers and service providers, to help them write better code. We help define the meaning and principles of software quality for the research domain. We work for enhanced recognition for software developers contributing to research activities.

Value

Members of EVERSE and of the future European network can:
- Become a member of the de facto EOSC Association expert group on software
- Help shape software quality practices in Europe by:
    - Providing input and feedback to the best practices captured within EVERSE
    - Contributing and receiving feedback on their community or research project's needs
- Participate in defining the key aspects around recognition for research software activities, including design, implementing, maintaining and improving software quality
- Participate in task forces and expert groups that the network will have in the future
- Join software quality seminars, webinars and other events, and have the opportunity to co-develop the agenda
- Be in touch with like minded researchers and developers
- Get access to EVERSE communication channels

We will support our members in establishing their own local communities for software quality, and help to liaise and coordinate with regional/national activities for software.

Join Us

Any individual or organisation that agrees with our vision statement is welcome to join the network.

Individual Membership

Any individuals agreeing to our principles may apply to join the network. There are no formal professional or other qualifications required. There is no fee for joining.

Organisational Membership

Organisations with an interest in research software quality, and who agree with our principles and are potentially willing to adopt and contribute to the EVERSE outputs, can apply to join the network. There is no fee in this initial stage of the network.

Notes - 2024-07-17

SAB comments on the network:

"Establish Network end of Summer (governance document [here](#)), open it for global participation (connect also to the [EOSC-A Opportunity Areas](#))
1. question: how formal/open will this be?
2. question: how will this be connected to the existing networks/communities? Is this going to be yet-another-community?
3. Comment: focus on the individual members. Focus on visibility of the project. Include TF/WG after and on top"

Our responses:
1. Open
2. It's a community of communities (individuals are our link to the communities they are members of)
3. We agree and think this is reflected in the current draft. N.B. Task Forces and Working Groups here are those in the network.

Early adopters:
- Ganil - low energy nuclear; Graeme met with Michel Jouvin (IJClab)
- PaNOSC are interested too
- Elixir communities, need to think about which ones to pick

What activities would we use to engage? Either joint or separately. We do have some budget ~50k.

- A joint activity may be hard to schedule - it's expensive to pay people to travel and hard to schedule
- Separate activities are cheaper (only the EVERSE people need to move), but more expensive of our time

Other things…

Other things that we would want to be able to start to advance on this with early adopters:

- Code of Conduct
    - [Example from ELIXIR](#) (general policy but including for events)
    - SKAO https://www.skao.int/en/about-us/ethics#__otpm0
    - (for community) Python Software Foundation - https://policies.python.org/python.org/code-of-conduct/
    - [The Carpentries: https://docs.carpentries.org/topic_folders/policies/code-of-conduct.html](#)
    - [RSE UK: https://rse.org.uk/funding-collaboration/codes-of-conduct/](#)
    - [NumFocus https://numfocus.org/code-of-conduct](#)
    - [Apache Sofware Foundation https://www.apache.org/foundation/policies/conduct](#)
    - [International Astronomical Union CoC (includes research, publication, social media, events): https://www.iau.org/static/archives/announcements/pdf/ann16007a.pdf](#)
    - Fotis: no particular suggestion, they are all the sameish.
    - Graeme - we should go for something concise, IMO ("be nice" 😀)
    - ACTION - take a look before next week's meeting, discuss on Mattermost [All]
- Process of joining
    - Web form
        - EU Survey (to make sure we align to GDPR expectation)
            - There is a draft up on EU Survey
            - ACTION: Use the personas from the task forces
            - ACTION: Ask people's expectations and interests
            - ACTION: Circulate link
        - Mailing list subscription?
            - Self-subscribing mailing list. What are the GDPR-friendly options?
                - CERTH lists not self-subscribable (that's a GPDR issue as well)
                - Could we use the everse.software domain name?
                    - MX record says where to send email for a DNS record
            - Monica will ask in Elixir about options
        - Mattermost?

- Subscribe to calendar of events
- List of members
    - Only as internal document. List individuals that have a specific role in the Network (need consent in this case)
    - Organisations listed publicly
- Create a logo/badge for members to showcase
    - EOSC created the EVERSE logo
    - Could use a company to help
- Website for the network?
    - Dedicated section of the EVERSE website for now
- Governance
    - SQ Network Steering Group (major partners, plus EVERSE ex-officio, early adopters)
        - Need this one, at the very least to ensure responsibility for operations, CoC, etc.
    - ~~SQ Network Advisory Group~~ (do we need this initially? or only later on)
        - I would ignore this, as there is the EVERSE SAB that (should) have an oversight in any case.
- Operations/Activities
    - Monthly TCs?
    - Working Groups/Task Forces?
    -

All the Notes and Scribbles…

Discussed at [WP1 meeting Wednesday 24 April](#), see slides and notes.

Iterative process.

Value of Joining

We need to elaborate a value proposition:

* e.g., by participating you can influence the direction and content of RSQkit
* Daniel, Giacomo: What is it that I would get from the inside than just using the outputs of the project? Maybe the governance associated with some of the products?

* Daniel: as a community, we consolidate best practices. Together we can standardise good practices. This would be a good reason to join the network: to influence best practices, to push standardisation efforts, or to influence existing ones.
    * Critical mass and capacity to influence the community (credibility in EVERSE as a body)
    * Trust in our cases and rationale.
* Fotis: Additional perspective: no task force for software in the European Open Science Cloud association (EOSC). We are now effectively the "expert group" regarding software
* Stefan: WP5 - recognition of contributions to RSQKit (should be mentioned as a motivating factor)

Notes added on 29 April
Monica: participants could get access to EVERSE events - seminars in WP1
Also participants can contribute to a white paper, being recognised as authors.

Stefan: Feedback to universities on curricula taught for students / influence on good practices / curricula could be benchmarked against a list of standards.

Marco: Other one motivator could be the help and support to setup local realities

Graeme:
Opportunity to give input on most pressing issues facing a community (what are your needs?)
Support for setting up local groups that influence

who are the participants of the network ? institutional and thematic also alongside national initiatives

Governance

Models
- https://society-rse.org
    - "Our mission is to establish a research environment that recognises the vital role of software in research"
    - "Membership of the Society is open to anyone, from anywhere in the world, who supports the Society's aims of furthering research software engineering. There are no requirements to hold particular qualifications or be employed in a particular field."
- https://apache.org/foundation
    - "The Apache Software Foundation (ASF) exists to provide software for the public good."
    - Legal framework to promote software development and accept and disburse funds

- ○ Membership based model, at institutional / org level, related to EOSC-Association AISBL model
- https://www.rd-alliance.org/become-a-member/
  - ○ "The Research Data Alliance (RDA) was launched as a community-driven initiative in 2013 with the vision that researchers and innovators can openly share and re-use data across technologies, disciplines, and countries to address the grand challenges of society.
  - ○ "The RDA's mission is to build the social and technical bridges that enable that vision, accomplished through the creation, adoption and use of the social, organisational, and technical infrastructure needed to reduce barriers to data sharing and exchange. Scientists & researchers join forces with technical experts in focused Working Groups, exploratory Interest Groups and Communities of Practice. Individual membership is free and open to all."
  - ○ Membership
    - ■ Individual Membership: Any individual, regardless of profession or discipline, with an interest in reducing the barriers to data sharing and re-use can join the RDA community. Members must agree to the RDA's Guiding Principles and individual membership is free of charge.
    - ■ Organisational Membership: Global organisations provide an organisational perspective of the RDA, influence its direction, and assist in the implementation and adoption of the RDA's Recommendations. Organisational members pay an annual fee depending on their location, size and type.
    - ■ Affiliate Membership: RDA defines collaborative agreements with like-minded organisations that seek to coordinate efforts in mutual areas of interest and to avoid unnecessary duplication or conflict. Affiliate members enjoy the benefits of Organisational Membership. Due to the nature of the mutual agreement, Affiliate members do not pay the fee.

Why Join RDA as an Individual Member?

Individual Member Benefits

- **Contribute** to acceleration of data infrastructure development
- Work and **share experiences** with collaborators throughout the world
- **Access** to extraordinary network of colleagues with various levels of experience, perspectives and practices
- Gain greater **expertise** in data science regardless of whether one is a student, early or seasoned career professional
- **Enhance** the quality and effectiveness of personal work and activities
- **Improve** one's competitive advantage professionally and positioning oneself for leadership within the broader research community

Why Join RDA as an Organisational Member?

Organisational Member Benefits

67 Organisational & 13 Affiliate Members

- Provide an **organisational perspective** on the work of RDA and ability to influence RDA's direction
- Assist in **implementation & adoption** of RDA Recommendations & Outputs
- **Participate** in all RDA Organisational Forums
- Receive regular **updates** on the work of the RDA
- Attend Organisational Assembly meetings and vote on **proposed policies** for consideration by the RDA Council and for members of the Organisational Advisory Board
- Provide **advice to RDA Council** through the Organisational Advisory Board
- Be recognized on the RDA Website and at RDA Meetings as a **supporter of data interoperability**
- Communicate open job positions in your organisation to entire RDA community (**Exclusive to Organisational Members**)
- Reduced RDA Plenary meeting registration fee (**Exclusive to Organisational Members**)

Join as an Organisational Member! →

- Software Sustainability Institute (project partner)?
- Software Heritage (external)?

Notes added on 29 April

- ***Individual membership*** *is key - advantages: building a network of contacts with similar interests; members can get priority to registering to events;*

- *Be flexible with sign-up*
    - *Audiences interested in software quality*
    - *Do not go with validation of people's background*
    - *We want to include different types of of audiences:*
        - *Beginners (people interested in the topic) - these could benefit from learning from the activities*
        - *Advanced RSE - these could contribute to the development of the RSQkit*
- *Institutional organisation - organisations can have a greater weight in decision making*
    - *European link (science clusters)*
- *Affiliated organisations (organisation that don't have funds to join, but they are in the same area of interest)*
    - *Non-european?*
- *Timeline for setting up a membership process*
    - *Need to agree what it means to be a member - have this ready by the summer.*
    - *Feedback needed from partners of EVERSE contributing organisations.*
    - *The membership can be announced after summer, when we have more concrete activities going on (seminars, webinars).*
- *Another institute of interest: https://www.softwareheritage.org/*

EOSC Dimension

- Research Software Quality will now be represented by the EVERSE project in e.g. EOSC Association context, alongside new Task Forces
    - This is a recent development so still to be fleshed out in practice
    - Outcomes of previous Task Forces, 2021-23
        - Has an item on Research software quality
        - Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda (SRIA) documents, these are influential
- Could be defined as a "Way into policy at European level"
- EOSC Association has a membership model per institution as voting members, but anyone can volunteer and join Task Forces, SRIA (Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda) consultations etc (which can influence direction / scope of future EC funding calls etc)

Notes from WP6 meeting, 2 May:

EVERSE expert group for EOSC-A

EVERSE moves forward with establishing an "expert group" within the project consortium. As soon as we have the mechanism in place, we will communicate this with the EOSC-A and they will consequently push this to the appropriate channels within EOSC-A.
- Graeme: What is the difference between the Network (WP1) and the "expert group".

- "Expert group" might imply that only specific people need to be involved
- Daniel: The expert group may be for feedback on specs, vocabularies, guidelines. Not for all adopters. I think the network != expert group
    - True: but we can have the "Interest Group" comprise of both experts and interested parties. Much more difficult to have to maintain two structures in place.
    - Jonathan: I will attend the forthcoming EOSC Association GA later in May on behalf of ELIXIR with the EMBL reps. So I will be advocating there and take guidance from EVERSE of course
        - we should ensure EVERSE is presented in as inclusive a way as possible and it's outputs can then be represented as needed in e.g. EOSC Association circles

Action WP1: Have a governance model / statement of principles in place (WP1 started this). Minutes link
- Name of the group: "Interest Group" or "EVERSE Network"
- Who can join the network?
- What are the expectations?
    - Depending on discussion, the network will be able to produce targeted Task Forces / Subcommittees (defined term with concrete outputs)
- What is the frequency of engagement?
- Governance Framework
    - Society of Research Software Engineering https://society-rse.org
    - Apache Software Foundation https://apache.org/foundation
    - RDA: https://www.rd-alliance.org/become-a-member

Action TBD after the Network is in place (Fotis): Create and maintain a list of stakeholders
- Already we have people that we have identified. Where to capture them.

Timeline: Have this ready by Aug 2024, regular calls to be setup and start Sept 2024 (ideally having one at least one before the EOSC-A Symposium in October)

EVERSE

EVERSE is …

The initial value proposition for joining EVERSE is:

- For individuals:
    - To benefit from professional development initiatives by:
        - Receiving updates and communication about related initiatives
        - Having favourable conditions in signing up to EVERSE events (pre-registration, discounted price)
        - Having formal recognition of the personal involvement in leading and attending training activities
- For organisations:

- To influence and steer the direction of the development and maintenance of the RSQKit
- To be part of the leading body in the context of EOSC regarding software and software quality.
- To take part in the lobbying and policy development in the EU context that pertain to research software
    - For individuals and organisations:
        - To gain support in setting up local or theme-focused RSE groups

It is anticipated that this definition will evolve over the first three years of the project, and eventually inform the proposal for the European Network.

EVERSE coordinates by …

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Input from ChatGPT, not bad. In particular I appreciate the idea of structuring the document with the sections:
- Membership
- Structure and Governance
- Evaluation and Feedback

Governance Document for the EVERSE Network of Research Software Quality

Introduction

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Values

Members of EVERSE and the future European network can:

- Become a member of the de facto EOSC Association expert group on software.
- Help shape software quality practices in Europe by:
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    - Participating in defining the key aspects of recognition for research software activities, including design, implementation, maintenance, and improvement of software quality.
    - Participating in task forces and expert groups that the network will establish.
    - Joining software quality seminars, webinars, and other events, and having the opportunity to co-develop the agenda.
    - Engaging with like-minded researchers and developers.
    - Accessing EVERSE communication channels.

We will support our members in establishing their own local communities for software quality and help to liaise and coordinate with regional/national activities for software.

Membership

Individual Membership

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Organisational Membership

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Structure and Governance

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee will be established to oversee the activities and strategic direction of the network. The committee will be composed of representatives from member organizations and individual experts in the field of research software quality.

Working Groups

The network will create various working groups focused on specific aspects of research software quality, such as training, best practices, and recognition. These groups will be open to all members and will report to the Steering Committee.

Meetings and Communication

Regular meetings will be held to discuss ongoing projects, share knowledge, and plan future activities. Communication will be facilitated through a dedicated online platform and mailing list.

Policies

Code of Conduct

All members are expected to adhere to a Code of Conduct, ensuring respectful and productive collaboration.

Data Privacy

The network will comply with relevant data privacy regulations to protect the personal information of its members.

Evaluation and Feedback

Regular evaluations will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the network's activities and gather feedback from members to guide future developments.

Conclusion

The EVERSE Network of Research Software Quality is dedicated to fostering a community that enhances the quality of research software across Europe. By joining forces, we can achieve significant improvements and recognition for the vital contributions of software developers to the research community.