

NAISH Kickoff Invitation

Invitation: Kick-off Meeting for the Nordic-Baltic Dataverse Hub (NAISH)

21–23 April 2026, Kaunas University of Technology (KTU)

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We warmly invite you to join us for the launch of the **Nordic-Baltic Dataverse Hub (NAISH)**, a major new [NordForsk-funded collaboration](#) that brings together research data repositories, experts, and institutions across the Nordic-Baltic region. This **three-day kick-off meeting** marks the formal start of a shared initiative that begins with five years of dedicated funding, but whose overarching ambition is to establish a **long-term regional research infrastructure hub to strengthen the sustainability, interoperability, and long-term development of Dataverse-based repository services**. Read more [about NAISH](#).

Hosted at **Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) in Lithuania**, the meeting will gather project participants and leading international experts to set the course for NAISH's strategic, organizational, and technical work. Through focused, workshop-style sessions, we will **begin shaping the hub's common resources, federation and certification strategies, AI-enhanced repository functions, human capacity-building activities, and stakeholder engagement pathways**. The program is designed to create momentum, build shared understanding, and equip all participants with a clear roadmap for the project's first phase.

In addition to NAISH partners, we also welcome a limited number of external stakeholders who are engaged in research data management, operate Dataverse repositories, or are exploring Dataverse adoption. This is a **unique opportunity to connect with colleagues across the Nordic-Baltic region, gain insight into the future of Dataverse-based infrastructures, and contribute to the early formation of a landmark regional initiative**.

The NAISH kick-off will be held **21–23 April 2026** and combines collaborative sessions with **keynote contributions** from two internationally recognized experts, **Mercè Crosas** (BSC) and **Slava Tykhonov** (CODATA). More practical information, including registration details, can be found below in this document.

Key Information

 **DATES:** Tuesday 21 April 2026 at 12:00 EET – Thursday 23 April 2026 at 13:00 EET

VENUE:

- **On-site participation:**
 - Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) Library (Gedimino 50, Kaunas, Lithuania), Room 206. [Map](#).
 - 50 seats available. First come, first served.
 - **Deadline:** Wednesday, 25 March 2026
 - To register, see more information [below](#).
- **Virtual participation:**
 - Streaming of presentations from keynote and workshop introductions
 - No opportunity to interact in workshops
 - **Deadline:** Thursday, 16 April 2026
 - To register, see more information [below](#).

TARGET GROUPS:

- **NAISH project participants (primary target group):**

These participants will actively shape the project's implementation and are expected to take part in the workshop-style sessions that form the core of the meeting. The primary target group includes:

 - Work Package (WP) and Focus Groups (FG) leaders
 - Task leaders and task contributors
 - Members of the Project Management Board
 - Representatives from all partner institutions
- **Additional participants (project-external stakeholders):**

While the meeting is dedicated to project work, we also welcome a limited number of project-external participants who have a professional interest in Dataverse and research data repository services in the Nordic-Baltic region. These may include:

- Representatives from institutions exploring Dataverse adoption in other Nordic-Baltic countries (e.g., Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Åland, Greenland) and beyond
- Members of related research infrastructure communities

External participants are invited to attend the program and will gain insight into NAISH's goals and upcoming activities. However, the primary focus of the meeting remains the internal planning and coordination of the NAISH project.

FOCUS OF THE MEETING:

The kick-off will be fully dedicated to advancing project work. Each Work Package (WP) will host a workshop-style session aimed at establishing and refining approaches, identifying practical starting points, and planning collaboration. In addition, two external experts will contribute keynotes and provide guidance to support the project's thematic work.

The [agenda](#) below provides more details.

Why Attend?

Participants will:

- Contribute directly to shaping the project's first year of activities
- Engage with experts in TDR certification, AI in repositories, and FAIR data practices
- Build connections with colleagues across the Nordic-Baltic region
- Help define a shared roadmap toward more aligned, sustainable Dataverse-based services

The kick-off meeting lays the foundation for the collaboration ahead—and your expertise and input are essential to setting the direction and priorities for the coming years.

Registration

Registration form: [NAISH Kick-off Meeting - Registration](#)

Registration deadline (on-site participation): Friday, 25 March 2026 at 18:00 CET

Registration deadline (online participation): Thursday, 16 April 2026 at 23:59 CEST

Maximum on-site capacity: 50 participants

The form includes information about participation fees and practical information.

Please note that

- payment will be by payment card (Mastercard, Visa);
- it may take **up to 24 hours** for your order confirmation to be sent by email;
- your credit card company may apply a payment fee.

All participants—project partners and external attendees—must cover their own travel, accommodation, and participation costs. NAISH partners may use their NordForsk project funding for this purpose; external participants must rely on institutional or other funding.

Keynote speakers and expert facilitators

We are pleased to announce that the meeting will feature contributions from two internationally recognized experts: **Mercè Crosas** (Director of Computational Social Sciences and Humanities (CSSH) at the Barcelona Supercomputing Center and President of CODATA; former co-lead of the Dataverse project) and **Vyacheslav (Slava) Tykhonov** (Head of Artificial Intelligence and Interoperability at CODATA and Dataverse Ambassador; long-standing contributor to Dataverse technology and AI integration). Mercè will deliver the introductory keynote and Slava a keynote on technical operations and AI. In addition, Mercè and Slava will serve as expert facilitators during the workshop sessions. Their combined expertise in data infrastructures, AI-enhanced repository services, and large-scale Dataverse operations will provide invaluable guidance as we shape NAISH's strategic, organizational, and technical directions.

Agenda

The final agenda has been shared with all registered participants. If you have any questions, please contact Rieke Lo Madsen; email: rieke.l.madsen@uit.no.

Social event

More details about the **social event**:

Three interesting options are available (duration ~ 2 hours), the organizing committee will choose the most requested option:

1. Guided tour “**Phenomenon of temporary capital**”. Kaunas experienced an exceptional period of growth between 1919 and 1940, when it served as the temporary capital of Lithuania and had to be rapidly built and developed. During this time, the city saw major achievements in architecture, culture, and urban planning, including thousands of new buildings, funiculars, and a vibrant cultural scene. Today, more than 6,000 modernist buildings remain, and Kaunas modernism has been recognized by UNESCO, making the city an important destination for exploring interwar heritage. [Read more](#).
2. Guided tour “**Medieval Kaunas**”. This tour explores medieval Kaunas, focusing on how the city was founded and how it became Lithuania's only Hanseatic League city. Visitors learn

about the crafts, trade, merchants, and goods that shaped Kaunas in the Middle Ages, as well as its surviving Gothic architecture. The tour reveals what medieval buildings still stand today and uncovers whether Kaunas once had royal residences. [Read more](#).

3. Guided tour “**Kaunas street art**”. This tour presents Kaunas’ street art, highlighting large legal murals, sculptures, and installations that form the city’s modern artistic identity. Starting near Kaunas Castle, visitors can admire well-known works such as “The Wise Old Man” by Tadas Šimkus and Žygimantas Amelynas, and “The Pink Elephant” by Vytenis Jakas. The experience showcases how contemporary street art has become an essential and vibrant part of Kaunas’ cultural landscape. [Read more](#).

NOTE: Only one common tour will be organized. If you sign up for the social event, you commit to payment of the social event fee regardless of the option that finally will be selected by the organizing committee.

Tips for booking your stay in Kaunas

- **Suggested nearby hotels:**
 - [Radisson Hotel Kaunas](#) (K. Donelaičio g. 27, Kaunas, Lithuania).
 - [Best Baltic Kaunas](#) (A. Mickevičiaus g. 28, Kaunas, Lithuania).
 - [Viešbutis KAUNAS](#) (Laisvės al. 79, Kaunas, Lithuania).
 - [HOF Hotel](#) (Maironio g. 21A, Kaunas, Lithuania).
 - [Kaunas City Hotel](#) (Laisvės al. 90, Kaunas, Lithuania).
 - [Moxy Kaunas Center](#) (Maironio g. 19, Kaunas, Lithuania).
- **Travel to Kaunas:**
 - Near-by airports are in Kaunas and Vilnius.
 - Karlshamn ferry to Klaipėda: [book here](#).
- **Sustainable travel options:**
 - The event is taking place in the city centre of Kaunas and all venues are within walking distance.
 - Public transportation options to/from Kaunas:
 - from Vilnius airport (e.g., [train](#) or [bus](#), alternative [bus](#))
 - from Kaunas airport (city bus No. 29)
 - from Klaipėda (e.g. [bus](#))
 - from Riga (e.g., [bus](#), or alternative [bus](#)).

About NAISH

The **Nordic-Baltic Dataverse Hub (NAISH)** is a collaborative research infrastructure initiative bringing together Dataverse-based repositories from Norway, Denmark, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Latvia, and Lithuania. Its mission is to strengthen the organizational, technical, and human capacity

needed to operate **FAIR-enabling Trustworthy Digital Repositories (TDRs)** and to promote sustainable, aligned, and interoperable repository services across the region.

NAISH builds on a shared commitment to:

- **Common resources:** Developing shared guidelines, templates, and operational frameworks
- **Federation & Certification:** Supporting CoreTrustSeal readiness and alignment with European and global initiatives such as EOSC and FIDELIS
- **Artificial Intelligence:** Exploring responsible integration of AI into repository operations and metadata workflows
- **Human capacity:** Offering training, mentorship, and structured competence development
- **Engagement & Advocacy:** Strengthening the regional voice within international research data communities
- **Sustainability:** Establishing a long-term collaboration model and business plan

By consolidating expertise and reducing duplication of effort, NAISH aims to increase the impact and resilience of the Nordic-Baltic research data ecosystem and to serve as a model for regional collaboration within the global Dataverse community.

The **NAISH consortium** brings together six partner organizations operating Dataverse-driven research data repositories across the Nordic-Baltic region. These include

- [UiT The Arctic University of Norway](#) (Norway), host of [DataverseNO](#) and the Tromsø Repository of Language and Linguistics ([TROLLing](#));
- [Danish e-Infrastructure Consortium – DeIC](#) (Denmark), owner of the national [DeiC Dataverse](#);
- the [University of Iceland](#) / [DATICE](#) (Iceland), the national research data service;
- the [University of the Faroe Islands](#) (Faroe Islands), which is preparing to establish a Dataverse-based repository;
- [Rīga Stradiņš University](#) (Latvia), host of Latvia's first institutional Dataverse installation ([RSU Dataverse](#)); and
- the [Kaunas University of Technology](#) (Lithuania), home to the Lithuanian Data Archive for Social Sciences and Humanities ([LiDA](#)).

Together, these institutions represent a diverse range of national, institutional, and domain-specific repositories, forming the foundation for a strong and collaborative regional research data infrastructure hub.

Contact

We look forward to welcoming you in Kaunas and to launching NAISH together!

If you have any questions, feel free to get in touch with Rieke Lo Madsen; email: rieke.l.madsen@uit.no.

