

# Doing open research is more than just knowing how.

**Understanding** research cultures and sustaining  
open infrastructures are crucial too.

Kathleen Gregory  
March 6, 2026  
Open Research Week 2026

# Much progress

Increase in available open content

Development of local & (inter)national policies

Changes in researchers' attitudes

**FIGURE 4**  
Researcher attitudes towards open science practices, 2021-2025



# Many points of friction

**Sociotechnical challenges**

**Local contexts, within broader systems**

**A relational way of thinking about OS is needed**

## **Disciplinary & epistemic diversity**

Borgman, 2015; Leonelli, 2022

## **Unequal access (also to OS tools)**

Shanahan & Bezuidenhout, 2022

## **Assessment cultures**

Alperin et al., 2020; Gregory et al., 2026

## **Funding models**

Eschenfelder & Shankar, 2022

## **Sustainability & resilience**

Gregory et al., 2026; Bosman & Sondervan, 2025

## **Knowledge security**

Dutch Research Council, 2025

## **AI concerns**

Kochetkov, 2025

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NWO, 2025

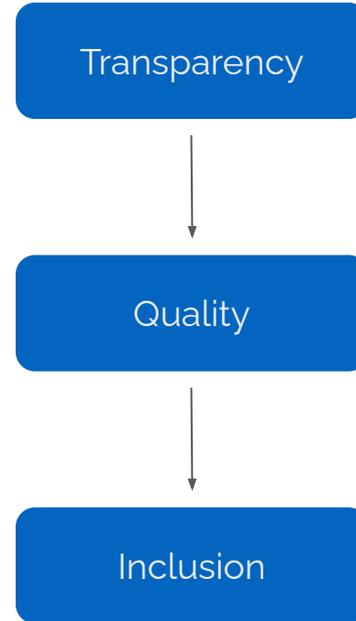
## **AI concerns**

Kochetkov, 2025

# Traditional perspective: Openness as sharing

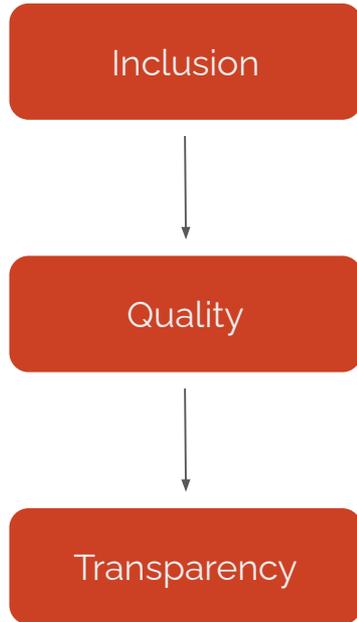
## An object-oriented view

Unlimited  
Digital  
Good  
Global  
Equal  
Focused on itemized outputs  
(objects that can be shared)



# Relational perspective: Openness as connections

## A process-oriented view



Relational  
Social  
Divisive  
Situated  
Equitable  
Focused on social agency  
(ways of doing and being with  
others)

# Open Research

Foregrounds context, practices,  
and diversity

Openness is not just about putting  
content online.

It is a matter of **considered  
relationships**.

What to share, when, with whom?  
Which relationships?



# Practicing open research is more than just knowing how.

A 'relational' view provides insights into  
how to progress open research.

Epistemic diversity & funding models

From local to systemic concerns

## 1. Understanding research cultures

Data practices in ethnographic  
research

## 2. Sustaining open infrastructures

Cultivating  
careful relationships and  
funding streams

# Understanding research cultures

Data practices in ethnographic research

# How do (qualitative) researchers relate to and care for their data?

An autoethnography of data practices

The screenshot shows the journal's header with the title 'Information Research' and subtitle 'An international electronic journal'. A navigation bar includes links for HOME, ABOUT, ARCHIVES, AUTHOR GUIDELINES, JOURNAL POLICIES, and ANNOUNCEMENTS. The article title is 'What Emotions Bring to Managing, Caring for, and Sharing Qualitative Data'. The authors listed are Kathleen Gregory (Leiden University), Andrea Schikowitz (University of Vienna), Elaine Goldberg (University of Vienna), and Sarah R. Davies (University of Vienna). On the right, there are buttons for PDF, HTML, and XML (download). Below these are sections for 'PUBLISHED' (2026-01-15) and 'HOW TO CITE' (Gregory, K., Schikowitz, A., Goldberg, E., & Davies, S. R. (2026). What Emotions Bring to Managing, Caring for, and Sharing Qualitative). The DOI is provided at the bottom: https://doi.org/10.47989/ir31154039.

# How do (qualitative) researchers relate to and care for their data?

Why does data sharing not happen as may be expected?

my experience of being a chemist myself into an interview or summ attempt to elicit further comments

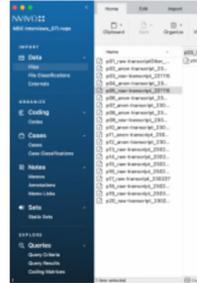


Figure 4a. Interview transcripts experience as a chemistry libra



that point in time) and third from the bot transcript floor. This is because when I was original Word files for the interview tran m. I know these existed, and I actually fo but couldn't find the original - I didn't not to use that, so I was pretty sure I had folder on the Google Drive folder see als handover when Colita left, they were con some agent print them off too, and it's original files, presumably because they want to lock you into using the platform for everything. So in the end I emailed Colita to ask if he had them and could send them to me.

I guess none of this would be necessary if we had made a proper data management plan at the start of the project. The whole experience is a bit of a mess, and I think my data through maybe that is too hard. Actually I have never really lost anything in the past; the complexities are at least in part because there are now multiple people involved in engaging with the data. And this is not

One of the things that first emerged for me when I thought about my data practices was a sense of guilt. This is something that I feel like I handle badly, something that I would like to improve. I have always stored my data - photos, audio files, interview transcripts - on a normal commercial cloud service in part because this seemed necessary when I was moving institutions every two years and in part because photos are usually easier to get than university drives. I am trying not to do this anymore, not least because I am promising not to do so in project applications, but this way of storing data is something that is very loaded down in terms of my practices. It is also a deeply personal and individual way of handling data - I use the drive that I use for everything, personal as well as professional files, and no one else has access to this. The system has been built up over 20 years and is totally idiosyncratic.

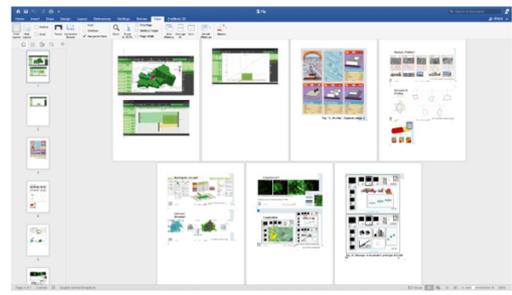
it



The first photo shows my desk at home, where I am currently editing, and the hard drive on which the data and the project are stored. I guard it like a treasure and take it with me everywhere in case I get to work on it while I'm on the road. This means that I have also developed a very intimate relationship with my research data, because so much work



I reflect on the process of producing a first draft of a chapter to present at the Raach summer school. Considering that I analyze data visualizations in this chapter, I found it interesting to reflect on my own (visual) practices for making sense of visual data.



way, what I produced here is also... data.

# Our relationships with data

*I notice how I build up a relationship with my data that changes over the course of the research project: first there is **pride** at having collected and stored so much data, then **overwhelm** at having to sift through and process it all, **frustration** when something goes wrong, which is usually the case, and **always concerns** about the rights of the data. **Finally, when you work with them every day, they become part of your thinking and working.***

## Data work is emotion work.

Guilt, shame,  
vulnerability

Tensions with  
personal visibility

Emotions a feature,  
not a bug

*In these transcripts, I am **very visible** in the data, not just as an interviewer, but also through comments about my own experiences, my preferences, and my ways of communicating [...] I have to wonder - **how much of myself do I want to make visible to a wider public?** [...] **Sharing this type of data, where I am so visible, would make me feel very vulnerable.***

## Caring for data by caring for research participants

Tensions with  
removing data from  
researchers' care

*When using a quote or writing up an argument, I always **check that against the personal relation I have** to the materials. **I use my emotions towards it as a test** of the 'validity' and the morality of that claim – if it feels appropriate or not.*

## Caring for data by caring for maintenance & infrastructure

Tensions with  
recommended  
systems & short-term  
employment, with  
security & usability

*I have always stored my 'data' – photos, audio files, interview transcripts – on a normal commercial cloud server, in part because this seemed necessary **when I was moving institutions every two years** and in part because these are **usually easier to use** than university drives. I am **trying not to do this anymore** ... but this way of storing data is something that is very bedded down in terms of my practices.*

# What does this mean for progressing open research?

## Various tensions in the material

- With concern about letting data out of our care
- With infrastructural concerns
- With notions of what data sharing could look like
- With objective expectations and messy reality

## How could it be different?

Designing with and for emotions

- Encouraging future relationships with data (for data producers as well as reusers)
- Flexibility & diversity in data sharing (also in teams)
- Speaking different languages: data care plans?

# **Sustaining open science infrastructures**

Cultivating careful relationships  
(and funding streams)

Open infrastructures are not as stable as we may think.

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By [Smriti Mallapaty](#)

OPINION | FIRST OPINION

## The NIH’s drastic cut to indirect cost rates is a critical threat to U.S. research infrastructure

These costs are not a waste or luxury — they make groundbreaking discoveries possible



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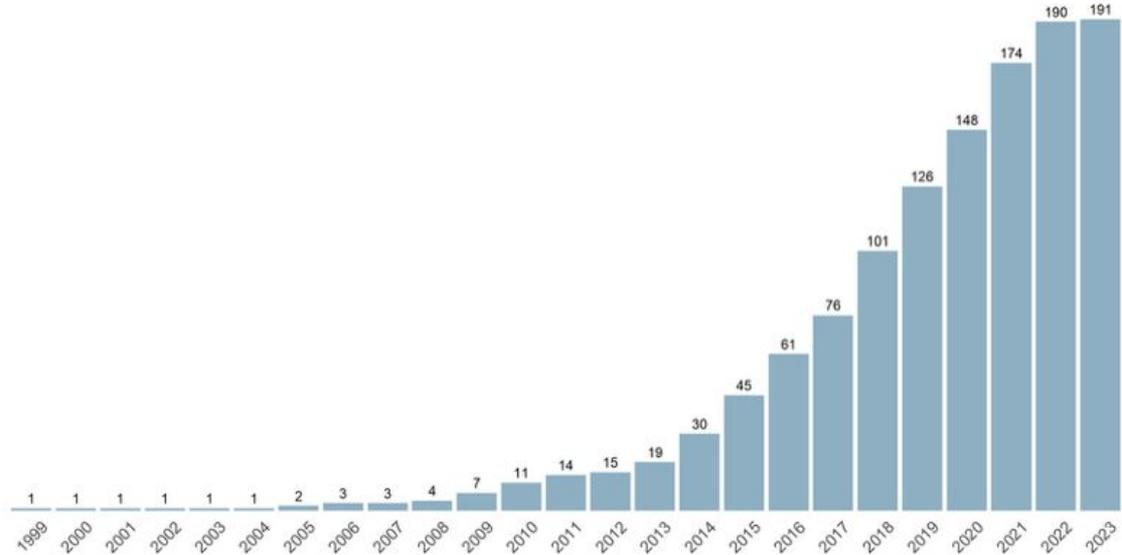
## Trump admin ends extreme weather database that has tracked cost of disasters since 1980

UPDATED MAY 8, 2025 ▾

By Andrew Freedman

**Open  
infrastructures  
are not as  
stable as we  
may think.**

Number of closed repositories  
indexed in re3data (cumulative)



# Open infrastructures are not free to operate.



Reliance on project funds  
(especially in early stages)

Reliance on federal funds

Need for diversity of funding  
streams

But no secret sauce - and funding  
infrastructures is just not sexy



# DRYAD

*Dryad is an open data publishing platform and a community committed to the open availability and routine re-use of all research data.*

## Methods

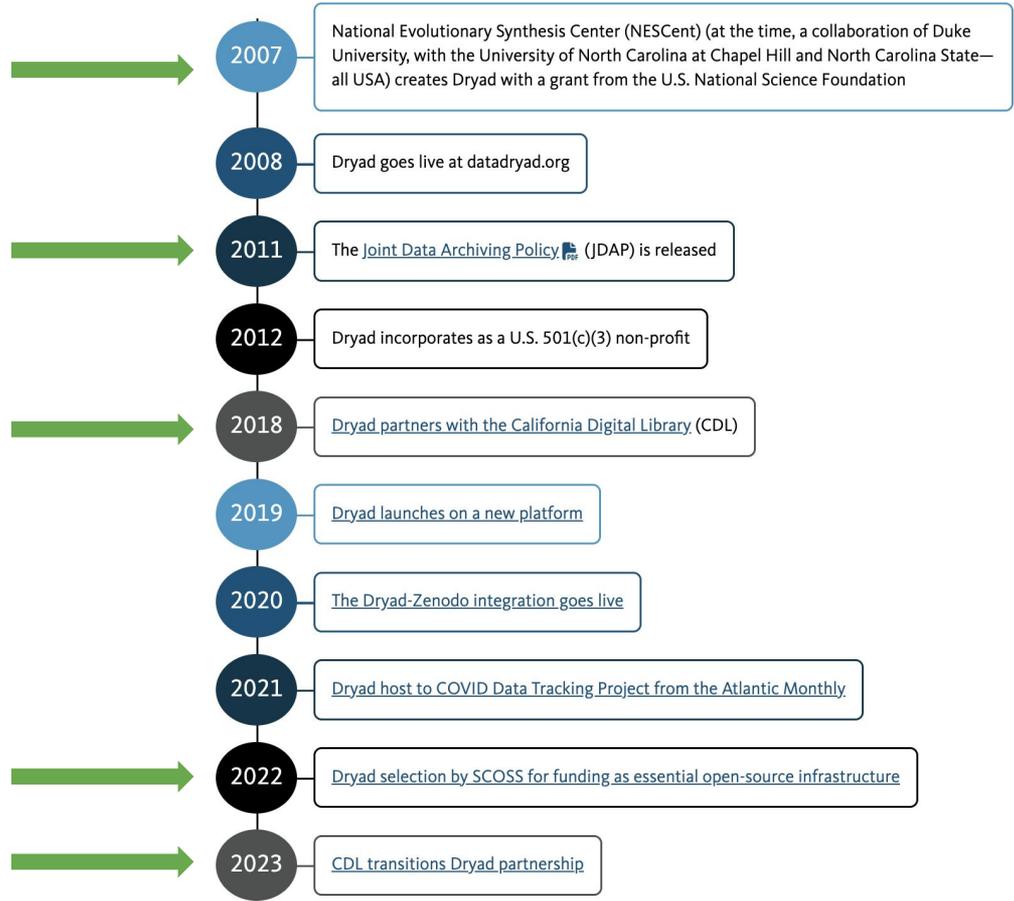
- Document analysis of open blog posts, web materials
- Descriptive data analysis
- Semi-structured interviews (n=14), with Dryad board members and staff
- Coding, thematic analysis

**Sustaining Dryad requires careful reconfigurations of relationships.**

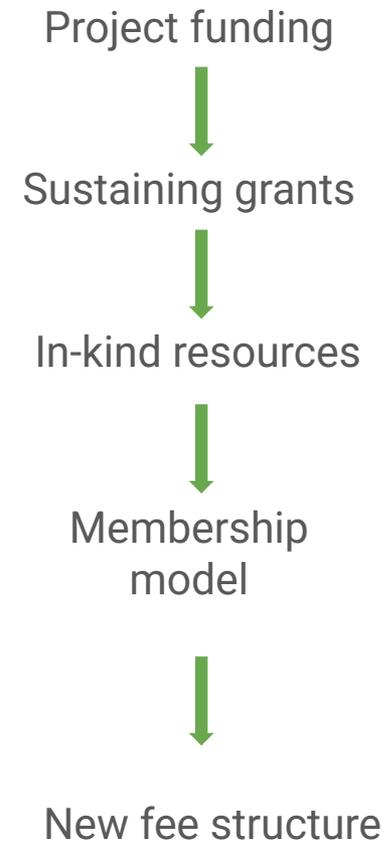
**These relationships shape and are shaped by funding streams.**

**A historical perspective**

# Reconfiguring relationships



# Business models

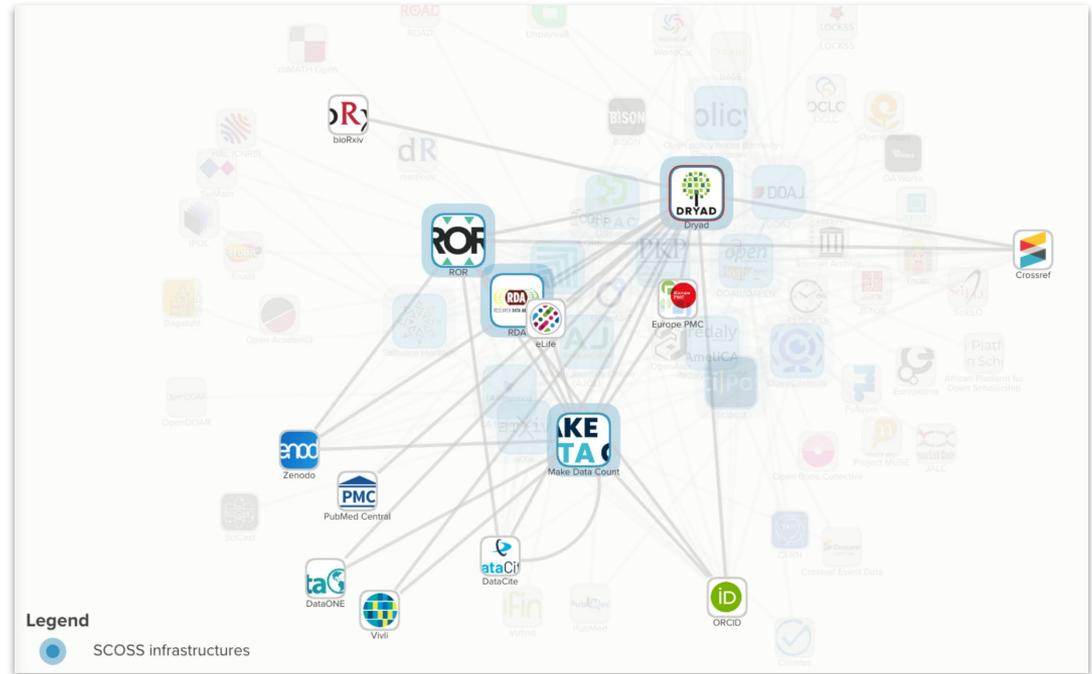


# Types of reconfigurations of relationships

*Reinforcing*  
relationships with  
publishers

*Forging* relationships  
with institutions

*Positioning*  
relationships with  
infrastructures



<https://scoss.org/>

# Competition, collaboration, or coopetition?

## The case for coopetition

*So where is it we need to cooperate?*

***What are sort of the base level standards that we all need to meet and all need to sort of work together to define and describe and to ensure that we're all there. And then where are the places where we can compete, where we can sort of say we're different and we're better because we have X, Y or Z.***  
(P2)

## The case for partnership

*This is a conversation [...] about the multiplicity of open infrastructure, all **knocking on the same funder's doors to get money.** How can we all either **share resources or come up with a package** that is, "This is the support that open infrastructures can provide to you as an academic institution." And how do we **collectively create those synergies** so that people don't go and pick a proprietary software? (P6)*

# Excluding/ending relationships

Who to collaborate with (and who not to?)

Conflicting ideas about business models can lead to ending relationships.

Tension: Perceived values about 'openness' with need to cover costs (urgently)

The challenge of ending relationships in a respectful, "amicable" way

# What does this mean for progressing open research?

Thinking about relationships is also “thinking like a business” (and vice versa)

Thinking like a business is not a bad thing.

Sustainability is a systemic issue. Consider how to reconfigure (or end) relationships.

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# Thank you

## Questions?

Kathleen Gregory  
[k.m.gregory@cwts.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:k.m.gregory@cwts.leidenuniv.nl)

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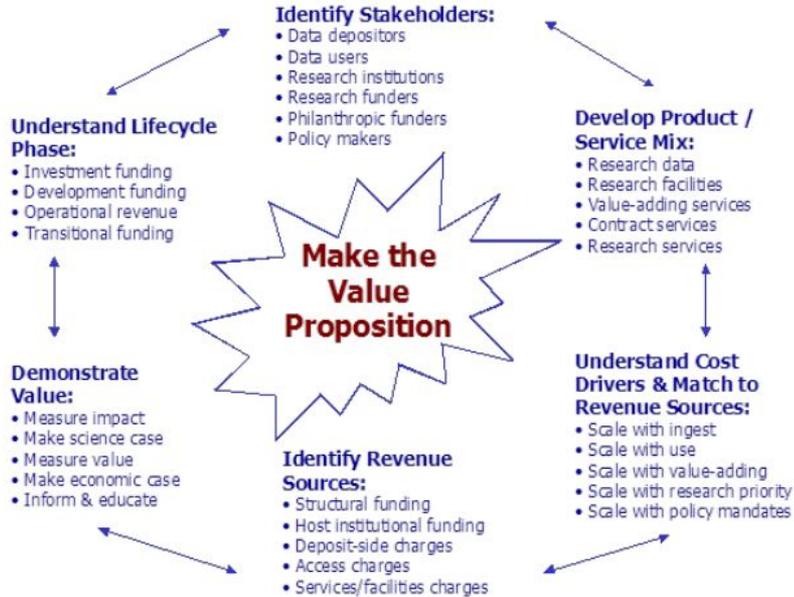
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Figure ES.1. Elements of a research data repository business model



## Value proposition

- **Community** interest (nonprofit ethos)
- From platform to **service provider** (we will take care of it for you)
- Service: curation + responding to data sharing policies

## Unique selling points

- Curated data, curation service (visibility, reporting)
- Openness (by default)
- Values alignment
- It costs less for us to do it
- On the approved lists
- Integrations

# The new business model

## Points to consider:

Models which support open principles (OECD, 2017)

Mixture of funding streams (variety of partners/supporters, not just based on deposits)

Fixed funding for fixed costs; variable funding for variable costs

Accommodate different tiers of institutions, different budgeting timescales

How to transition existing partners?

# The new business model

## Partner fees calculation formula

### Data Publishing Charge + Annual Service Fee

*Covers the cost of data curation, publication, and preservation*

Based on the estimated number of datasets under 10GB published each year

*Covers the fixed costs of service, infrastructure, and operations*

Based on the partner organization's annual revenue or expenditure

+ Any fees for large datasets

= Total annual partner fee

[Contact us to learn more](#) about becoming a Dryad partner.

Consult the links below to estimate fees with our fee calculator and explore our detailed fee schedule.



Institutional partnership fees



Publisher or society partnership fees

[https://datadryad.org/join\\_us](https://datadryad.org/join_us)

3 (or 4) types of fees

Fixed costs: Annual fee (staff & systems)

Variable costs: DPC + large data fee (curation, storage)

But have to allow for flexibility