

Network Research Data Support

The year 2025
in facts and
figures



rdm.vu.nl

The Network Research Data Support (NeRDS) helps researchers to find support, services and solutions to manage their data and software to work in line with the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles. The NeRDS is the local digital competence centre (LDCC) of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU) and consists of the RDM University Library RDM services, faculty data management support services and IT data management and compute services. Here we will look back to some of the milestones and achievements made by the NeRDS network in 2025.

User support

The VU RDM Support Desk is a central service of the library providing practical assistance, help and advice with RDM-related questions. The monitor includes only the questions addressed to the ticketing system of the central RDM Support Desk. Questions to faculty data stewards or IT are not included in this monitor, although most faculty data stewards collaborate in the central RDM Support Desk since 2024. This provides for further collaboration and professionalisation in handling data management questions from researchers. [\(Go to figures 1 and 2\)](#)

In 2025 the number of questions grew further, following the pattern of the previous years. In 2025 the Support Desk received 1,930 calls, a growth of almost 300 questions compared to 2024. Questions about data management tools is by far the largest category as they populate over half of all questions received by the Support Desk. Especially the questions about Qualtrics and Research Drive stand out in 2025. This was due to the final phase of the Qualtrics migration to the central environment, the phasing-out of Surfdrive and users migrating to Research Drive, and a large-scale upgrade within Research Drive carried out by SURF. On the other

hand, questions about Yoda and data management plans have decreased in 2025. This most probably is due to improved documentation and better organisation of Yoda intakes. The Other Tools category also grew in 2025 mostly due to an increase of questions about iThenticate. Over two-thirds of iThenticate questions concern requests to create accounts. The VU Library has formally managed this tool since 2024.

As in previous years, the overall trend is a continuous growth of questions from each faculty. The two main reasons for this are: 1) the visibility of the support team is still increasing, leading to more questions; 2) the usage of RDM-tools is growing (see the figures below), with an increase of tools-requests and questions about the usage of tools.

Data Management Plans

With DMPonline researchers can write, share and download a Data Management Plan (DMP). 2023 gave a tremendous increase of the number of DMPs created towards 2022, whereas in 2024 and 2025 the number of new DMPs remained stable: 793 new DMPs in 2024 and 853 in 2025. The overall number of Data Management Plans created since the introduction of DMPonline is 4,160. The vast majority (80%) of DMPs are created using the VU-templates. Not reflected in the figures is the quality of Data Management Plans. Based on the reviewed DMPs, we see an increase in the quality of plans, a result of awareness campaigns, RDM training activities and improved information resources. [\(Go to figure 3\)](#)

Training and workshops

In 2025 the Network has organized:

- 10 data management courses for PhDs with 193 participants
- 2 data carpentries with 11 participants
- 6 software carpentries with 98 participants
- 1 OSF training with 20 participants

Two new types of advanced level workshops were offered in 2025: the Low Volume Coding workshop (3 workshops with 12 participants) and the FAIR Data workshop (2 workshops with 11 participants)

NeRDS Community

The Network RDS is a community of researchers and research support staff within VU Amsterdam, who work with data and software management, exchange knowledge and experience on different aspects of research data and software management. The community consists of over 100 members and uses a Teams channel for direct communication and exchange of information and knowledge.

In 2024 the network organized:

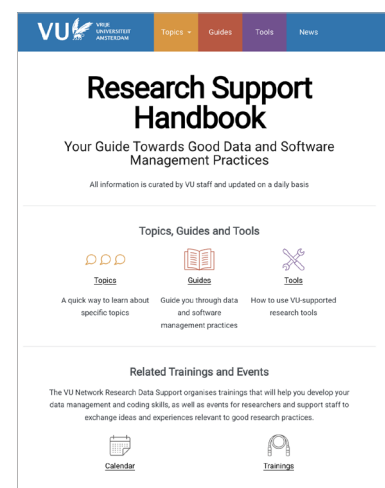
- 8 Data Steward Meetups for faculty and library data stewards
- 4 RDM Community Meetings for the network support staff
- 4 Data Conversations for support staff and researchers with 120 registrations
- 1 panel discussion on the consequences of the current geo-political situation for research and researchers
- 1 training week for support staff (the Summer training days)
- 8 Programming Cafés (Bytes & Bites) with 200 participants
- 6 RDS Newsletters. The newsletter has about 330 subscribers



RDM Information

RDM support website

In 2024 the NeRDS new information resource was introduced as the main source of information on research data- and software management, the [Research Support Handbook](#). This Handbook is a Github based environment, covering detailed information and guidelines on data- and software management. Development and maintenance of the VU Research Support Handbook is based on collaboration between faculties and central services and a major step towards a community-led information resource on data- and software management for VU researchers, with a transparent content development and decision-making process.



A large-scale addition to the Handbook is the category of Tools, providing information, manuals and how-to-use guides on the research tools supported by VU Amsterdam.

Policies

In December 2024 a new version of VU data- and software management policy was published. This third iteration includes general policies on software management, as well as improved guidance for licensing of deposited research data. Also, a policy on the classification of research data has been created and published. This Research Data Classification Policy is new and addresses classification of research data in terms of availability, integrity and confidentiality, and outlines how the classification process should be carried out. All policy documents are published on the [VU Research Support Handbook](#).

RDM Tools

Store, publish and archive

VU Amsterdam supports several RDM solutions, of which Yoda is one of the preferred platforms for storing, managing and archiving research data in a cost-effective manner during and after a research project. The usage of Yoda has grown over the past years and in 2025 the number of users, projects and volumes stored increased further, from almost 591 users in 2024 to 832 in 2025, storing 70 TB of research data of 456 research projects. Research Drive is recommended as a platform for easy storage and sharing of data with other researchers within or outside the VU. Currently facilitating almost 1,600 users with 730 projects and 68 TB of data. DataverseNL is the platform to easily publish research data, whereas the Open Science Framework (OSF) is recommended for open data publication. SciStor is VU Amsterdam's on-premises solution for storage and analysis of large data volumes, connected with Compute services, holding 770 TB of data from 1,100 users.

There is a general increase of the use of all RDM data management solutions in 2025, in number of users, as well as in projects and data volumes stored. This is an effect of improved information resources about tools and when and how to use tools, related to the increased quality of Data Management Plans as researchers have become more aware of the importance of good data management and the tools which are available. ([Go to figure 4](#))

To help researchers to choose the most appropriate VU storage solution for their research data, in 2022 the data storage finder was introduced. ([Go to figure 5](#))

Qualtrics

A central VU Qualtrics environment has become available in 2022, replacing the existing faculty environments. From the introduction of the central environment, we saw the numbers of users, as well as the number of surveys and data volumes, rising, with a strong increase in 2024 and especially in 2025, marking the final stage of migration towards the central environment and phasing out the faculty environments, as a result of which all researchers and students fall under one license. Qualtrics is being used by researchers as well as by students. About two thirds of requests concerning Qualtrics originate from students using the tool for educational purposes. [\(Go to figure 6\)](#)

SciSure

In 2025 a centrally hosted solution for electronic lab journals was introduced at VU Amsterdam, SciSure (eLabNext). This environment is currently used by three faculties and 18 labs and has replaced some of the previously used solutions. As 2025 was the year of the introduction of this environment, numbers cannot be compared with previous years.

NeRDS ROADMAP

With the Roadmap 2026-2030 the Network Research Data Support presented a strategic and integrated approach to the deployment and further development of research data management services to ensure a solid foundation for high-quality support for researchers at all stages of their work, while making services more efficient, accessible and user-friendly. The roadmap is available in [English](#) and in [Dutch](#).



Contact

For RDM information: rdm.vu.nl

For RDM support calls: services.vu.nl

For the RDM support desk: rdm@vu.nl

NeRDS Roadmap 2025-2030: zenodo.org/records/18628804

For further information about the Network Research Data Support or this RDM Monitor, you can contact Marcel Ras (Coordinator network Research Data Support), m.j.m.ras@vu.nl

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Appendix

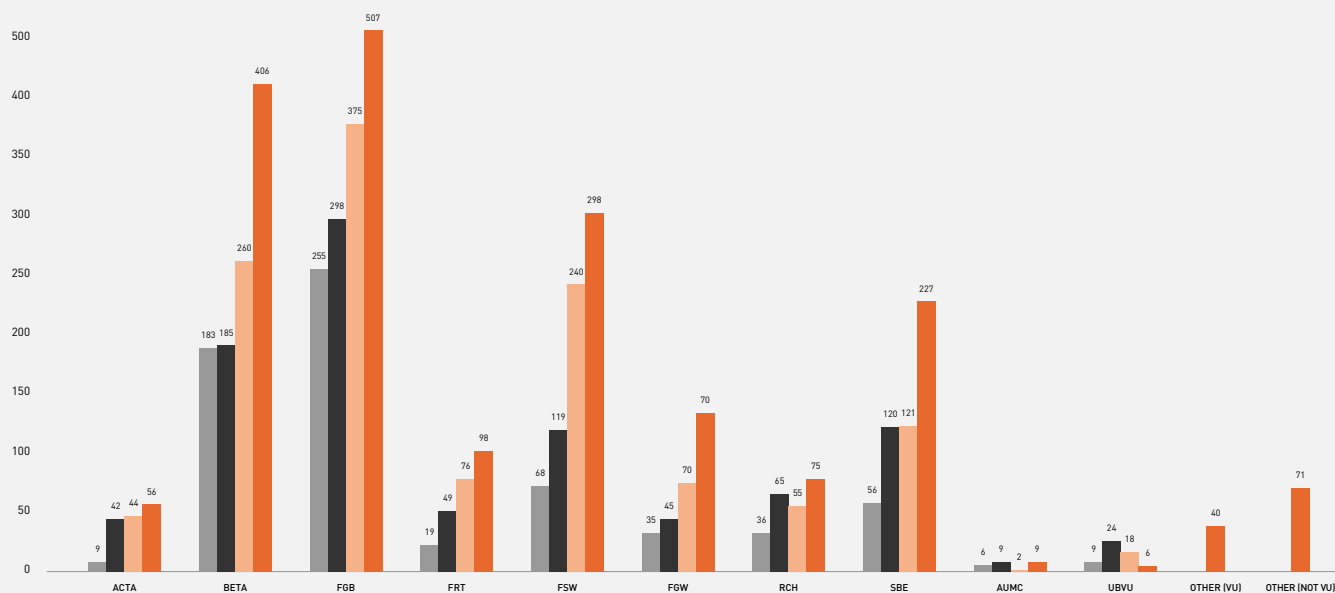


Figure 1: Number of Support Desk calls per faculty, 2022 – 2025

■ = 2022 ■ = 2023 ■ = 2024 ■ = 2025

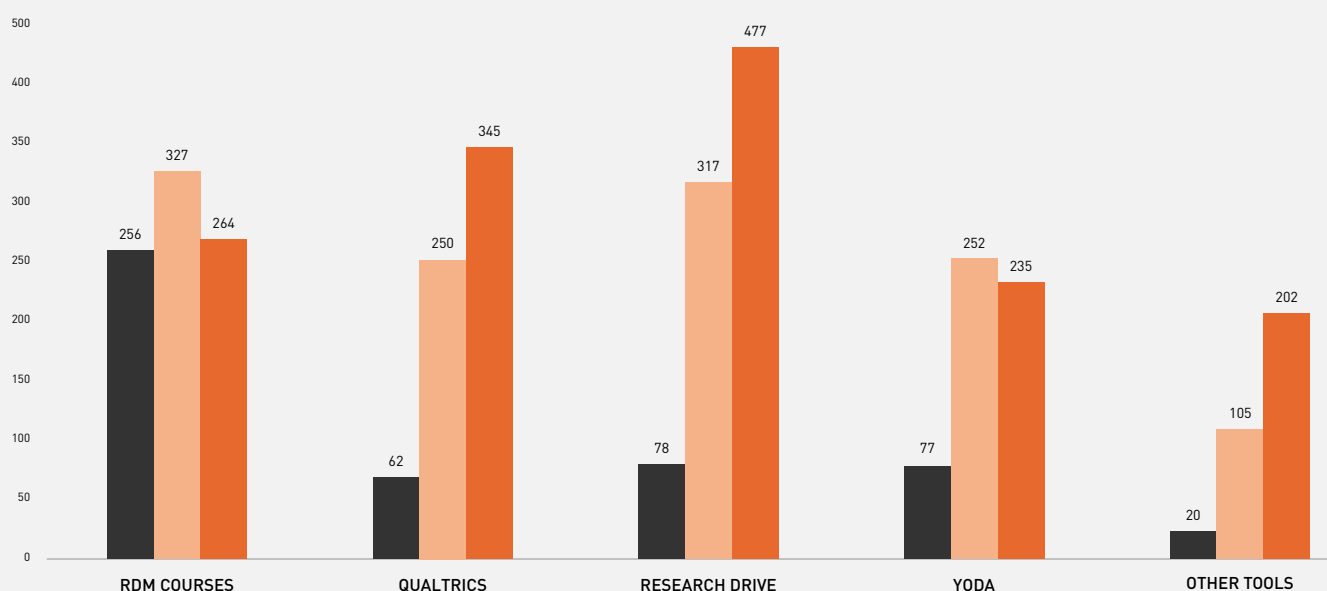


Figure 2: Top 5, number of Support Desk calls per category, 2023 – 2025

■ = 2023 ■ = 2024 ■ = 2025

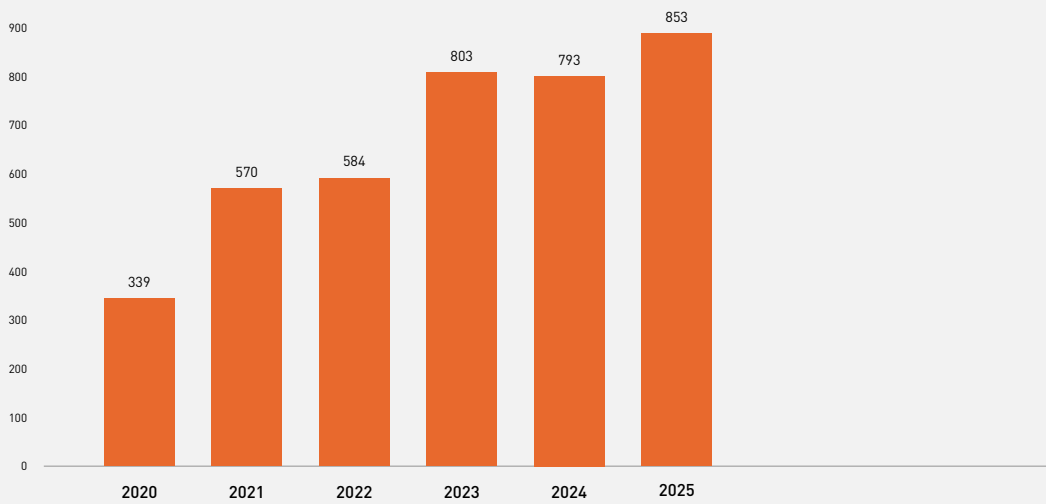


Figure 3: **Number of Data Management Plans**

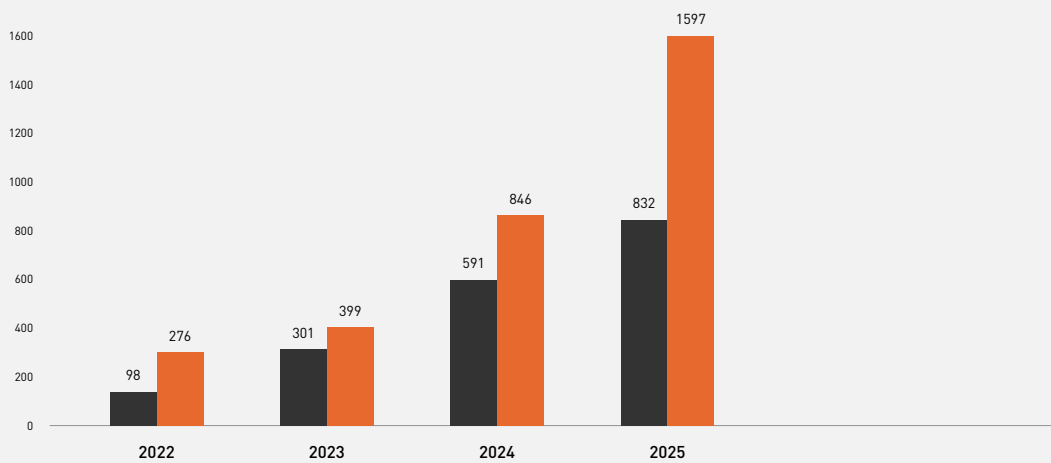


Figure 4a: **Yoda vs Research Drive, 2022 - 2025. Number of users**

■ = YODA ■ = RESEARCH DRIVE

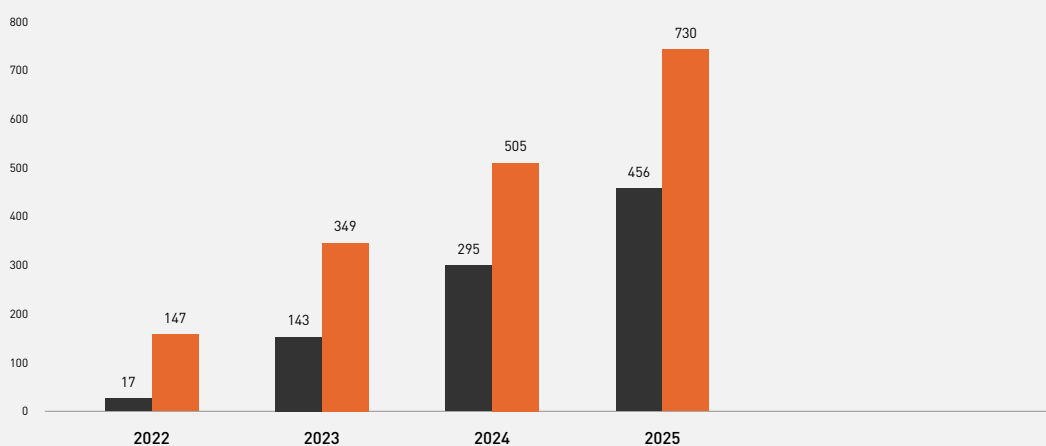


Figure 4b: **Yoda vs Research Drive, 2022 - 2025. Number of projects**

■ = YODA ■ = RESEARCH DRIVE

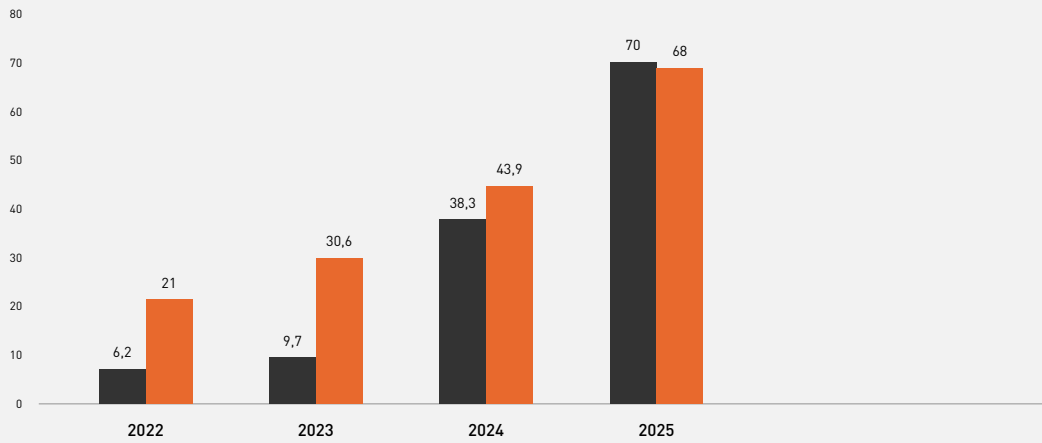


Figure 4c: **Yoda vs Research Drive, 2022 - 2025.** Number of **volumes**

■ = YODA ■ = RESEARCH DRIVE

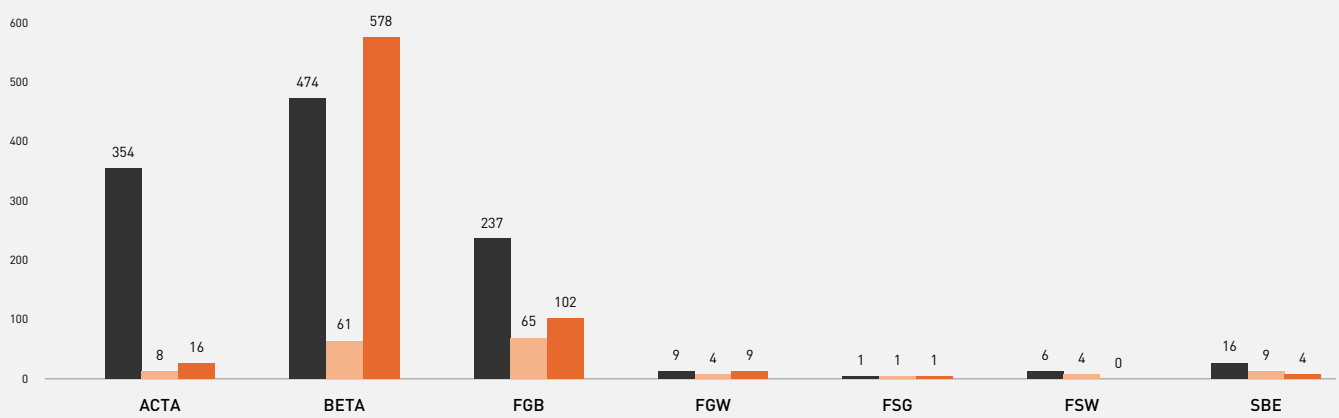


Figure 5: **SciStor 2025.** Number of users, projects, volumes

■ = USERS ■ = PROJECTS ■ = VOLUMES

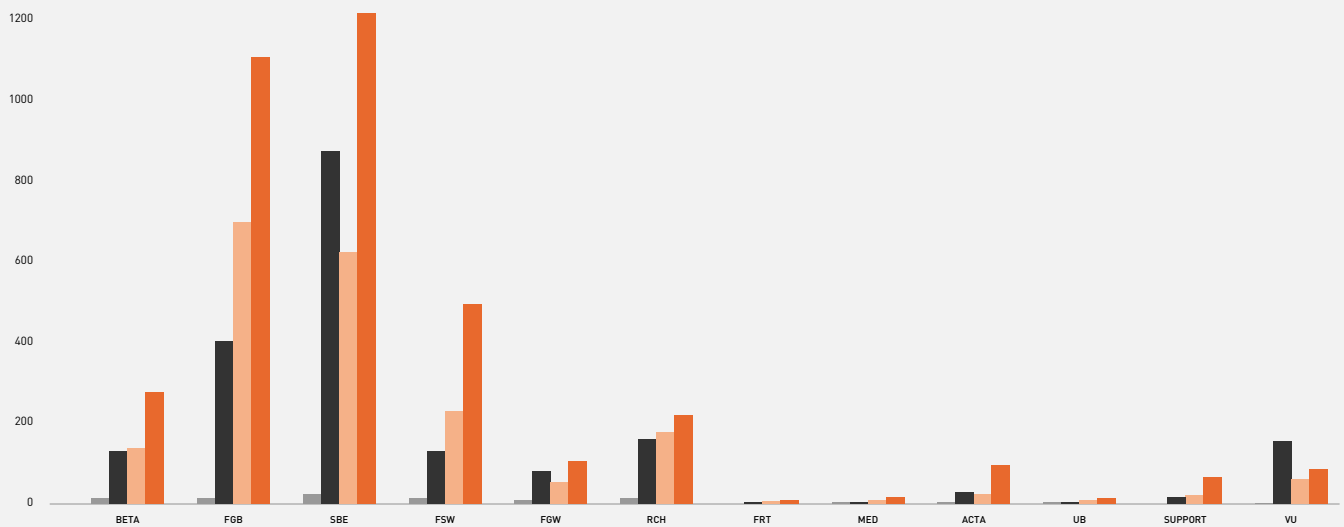


Figure 6: **Qualtrics**

■ = USERS 2022 ■ = USERS 2023 ■ = USERS 2024 ■ = USERS 2025