



PRESS RELEASE

Robert Koch Institute and Data4Life launch first joint digital public health project

- *The MEx metadata exchange platform makes research data universally discoverable and supports subsequent use*
- *MEx promotes rethinking in health research and is part of the German government's open data strategy*

Potsdam (Germany), July 5th, 2022. The metadata exchange platform, in short MEx, is the first joint public health project of the Potsdam-based non-profit health tech company [Data4Life](#) and the [Robert Koch Institute](#) (RKI). MEx is a digital platform that maps metadata on research activities and research data at the RKI in a transparent way, aiming to facilitate the reuse of this data. The project is the first initiative of the long-term [collaboration between the RKI and Data4Life](#) and is being developed jointly by teams from both organizations. MEx is one of many measures being taken to implement the German government's open data strategy.

Metadata as a basis for reusing research data

Often data for health research is distributed across multiple storage locations and difficult to find. MEx provides a central and comprehensive overview of existing research activities within the RKI based on their metadata. This metadata contains structured information on titles, descriptions, and research areas of projects, but also technical information on the type of data collection, file formats, and technical documentation. By using a search mask, users can search for specific research projects and data.

Through the approach of cataloging metadata, even research data that cannot easily be shared publicly is made transparent and findable. As a result, this data can be specifically requested and used for cooperative research.

Encouraging cultural change consistent with the FAIR principles*.

Data4Life and the RKI want to promote a change in thinking within the research community by implementing the MEx project. The platform primarily aims to provide scientists who perform secondary data analysis with a modern, digital, and transparent solution for everyday research. The broad database can also serve as a foundation for research using artificial intelligence.

"We need to break down data silos and empower researchers to share their data and results in a transparent, intrinsically motivated way in order to give new, valuable impetus to research and bring about a cultural shift towards the FAIR principles", says PD Cornelius Remschmidt, MD, epidemiologist and Chief Medical Officer at Data4Life.

Data4Life provides digital engineering expertise and supports the RKI by applying the FAIR principles (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, Reuse), upholding scientific



compatibility, and implementing the German federal government's open data strategy. All transparency resulting from MEx marks a key step towards realizing the full potential of a continuously growing data pool, facilitating secondary research, and fostering developments in the field of artificial intelligence.

The MEx platform is currently in a pilot phase and will be launched internally at RKI in the beginning of 2023.

**More details on the FAIR principles: <https://www.go-fair.org>
For a visual description of the MEx project, watch [this video](#).*

About Data4Life

D4L data4life gGmbH is a nonprofit organization funded by the Hasso Plattner Foundation. With a team of over 100 people, Data4Life is working towards its vision of a world where health data is ready for research in the areas of public health and personalized medicine to improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. In pursuit of these goals, Data4Life collaborates with leading public health institutions, esteemed medical experts, and renowned research institutions worldwide, including the Robert Koch Institute, Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, and the Fraunhofer Heinrich-Hertz-Institut.

Data4Life was founded in 2017 and is headquartered in Potsdam, Germany with offices in Berlin and Singapore. Since July 2019, Data4Life is certified according to ISO 27001 based on the IT-Grundschutz by the German Federal Office for Information Security. More details on www.data4life.care.

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