



FAIRsFAIR

16 Feb 2022 .

In 2020, FAIRsFAIR selected 10 repositories from an open call to receive support in CoreTrustSeal certification. At the end of this programme, repositories were asked to reflect on the experience through a survey and interviews with the FAIRsFAIR support team.

This post looks at what participating repositories thought would be good advice for future activities in support of CoreTrustSeal applicants.

Feedback on the support programme

Certification support is seen as useful when it resembles the actual certification process. In the first instance this is achieved with carrying out mock assignments and reviews, but this also includes replicating the structure and presentation of submitting a CoreTrustSeal application. Participants want something that looks and feels like the real thing.

This can be particularly helpful when focusing on aspects of CoreTrustSeal which previous applicants have found tricky. For example, where there is seen to be an overlap between requirements or applicants are unclear as to where to put specific information in their application.

“Repository support such as the FAIRsFAIR programme is very useful and should be ramped up to allow for many more repositories to be certified. Trust in data repositories is a foundation for Open Science.”

– Programme participant.

Keeping the structure of support in mind, if possible, a hybrid approach to the programme is welcomed. In person meetings help with launching the process, making connections, and having time and opportunity for discussion and open question learning. In other respects, though, online events significantly reduce the resource burden of having to attend meetings and can therefore welcome a more international cohort of repositories on board.

Support programmes should also keep in mind that not all repositories start from the same point of experience and readiness, so some pre-programme preparation is critical. Some participants will have

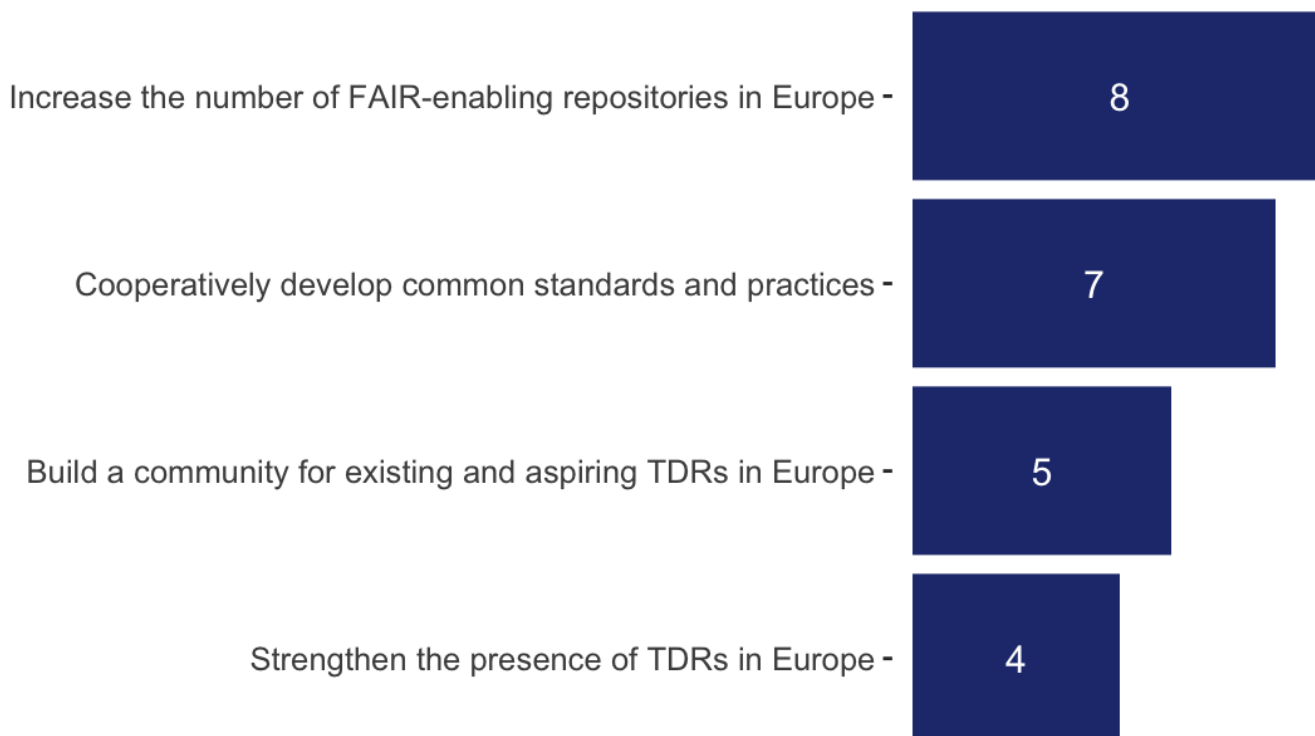


greater awareness of what CoreTrustSeal is and requires than others. Others may have some of the necessary documentation already written. These factors influence the help a repository will need in preparing an application.

Towards a European network of FAIR-enabling repositories

In terms of what the future might look like, repositories were asked their opinions on the idea of a [European network of FAIR-enabling Trusted Digital Repositories](#). All supported it, with the most mentioned goal being to increase the number of FAIR repositories.

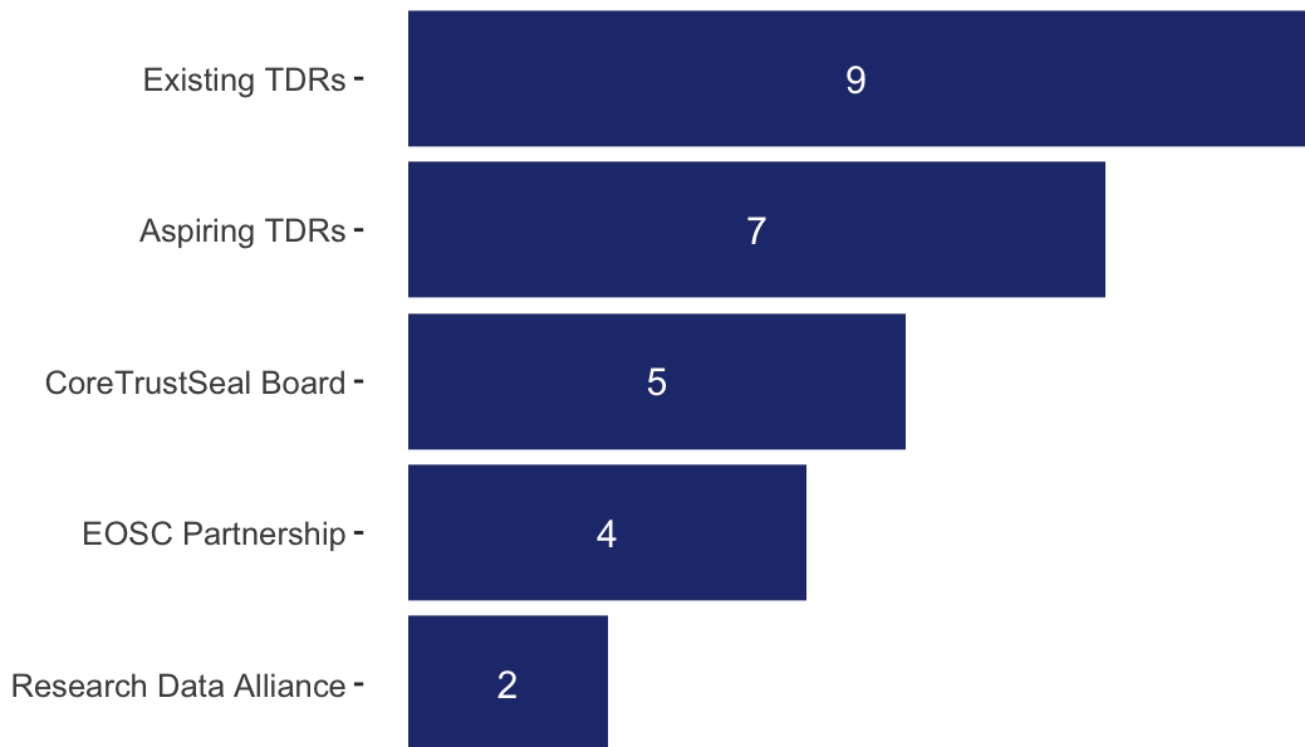
Goals: What should be the possible goals of such a network in your opinion?



Over half of the respondents also indicated an important goal of the network should be supporting the development of common standards and practices. The repositories saw repositories themselves - existing and, to a lesser extent, aspiring trusted digital repositories - as the core of any such network. This vision is shared by the FAIRSFAR team. Together with the repositories supported in other parts of the project, these repositories can be seen as an initial seed of a European network of FAIR-enabling Trustworthy Digital Repositories (TDRs).



Stakeholders: Which stakeholders do you think should be represented in such a network?



In the next blog post, we will look at advice and tips from participants in the programme for other repositories thinking about CoreTrustSeal.

This series complements deliverable 4.3 [Report on the certification support and guidance for repositories and reviewers](#), which describes the support programme, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations made by the FAIRsFAIR team. Learn about the [Repository Support Programme](#) on the FAIRsFAIR website.

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