



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Data Science Centre



# UvA Data Science Centre: Highlights 2021

[dsc.uva.nl](https://dsc.uva.nl)

# About

***'The first major achievement of the Data Science Centre was to get a new organisation rolling. We have made great progress in building a UvA Data Science community with the 'Accelerate Programme' for the appointment of data scientists at the faculties and the 'PhD Innovation Programme'. In addition, we organise 'Coffee and Data Sessions', where we offer advanced Data Science training, and we have organised the first annual Data Science Day. My big hope is that people will do research that they wouldn't have done otherwise.'***

**Prof. dr. Paul Groth**

Professor of Algorithmic Data Science, Faculty of Science Informatics Institute, & Scientific director of the Data Science Centre

Prof. Paul Groth



## About the UvA Data Science Centre

Launched in 2021, the Data Science Centre (DSC), part of the University Library, is a coordinating hub and facilitator for data-driven research within the University of Amsterdam.

Our mission is to enhance the university's research by developing, sharing, and promoting data science methods and technologies across faculties. With more than 25 members, the DSC strengthens data science expertise across all faculties, and propels greater innovation, diffusion and cross pollination of data science across the university.

## Data science networks

The Data Science Centre represents data science at the UvA at both a local and international level. The DSC is one of the founding members of the [Academic Data Science Alliance \(ASDA\)](#), a worldwide community network for academic data science leaders, practitioners, and educators. Notably, the DSC is the only Europe-based founding member of ASDA. The DSC is also an active member of [Amsterdam Data Science \(ADS\)](#), a network organisation of academic and industrial partners within the data science and artificial intelligence ecosystem in the Amsterdam region.

# Highlights of 2021

## Data Science Day 2021

**130+**  
**people**

attended the Data Science Day online and in-person

The inaugural Data Science Day took place on October 7 and marked an important milestone in the first year of the DSC. The day started with two interactive and hands-on morning workshops led by Denny Borsboom and Marc Galland. Both workshops included participants from six out of the seven faculties in UvA, demonstrating that data science techniques can be applied to all domains and areas of research.



## Accelerate Programme

**16**  
**proposals**



were awarded to 6 faculties to fund a data scientist or engineer

In January 2021, the DSC launched the Accelerate Programme, which helps support the hiring of data scientists and data engineers within faculties. This not only facilitates knowledge exchange throughout the university, but also incentivises the integration of data science roles into existing research activity.



6 faculties were awarded funding via the programme in March 2021. They were:

- Amsterdam UMC
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Economics and Business
- Faculty of Humanities
- Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences
- Faculty of Science

### Interdisciplinary PhD programme



There was huge interest for the DSC interdisciplinary PhD programme, which provides funding for interdisciplinary data-driven research within UvA. 7 PhD-candidates across 7 faculties were recipients of this funding, with research areas ranging from: deep learning in dental radiology to data-driven approaches to language-perception interaction, to development of data science methods to detect the existence and severity of legal risks in decentralised techno-social systems.

### Workshops

Natural Language Programming  
and Text Mining  
**Network approaches  
to multivariate data**  
*Data Carpentry  
Genomics  
Open Science with R*

SOFTWARE  
CARPENTRY

Through the University Library's digital skills development activities, the DSC community was offered a variety of different data science related workshops and training events. Workshop topics varied from Software Carpentry, Data Carpentry Genomics, Open Science with R, and Network Approaching to Multivariate Data. The workshops provided attendees the opportunity to learn new data science skills and knowledge in an interactive and hands-on way, and to also meet and interact with other like-minded colleagues in a relaxed environment.

In 2021 the workshop Natural Language Programming and Text Mining was developed especially by and for the DSC community. The initiative resulted in a unique and fruitful collaboration between the Faculty of Science and UvA Academic Affairs.

### Friday Coffee and Data Meet-Ups

The DSC hosted a number of Friday Coffee and Data Meet-Ups in 2021. During these Meet-Ups, fellow data scientists from the Accelerate Programme and members of the Affiliate Programme were invited to get together at the Library Singel, and brainstorm on existing data science challenges or design future data science projects.



***'I very much enjoyed the Friday Coffee & Data sessions organised by the Data Science Centre. It was amazing to see how big a role data science plays in so many projects around Faculties. We already touched upon some topics, in which I learnt from the fellow members. This is knowledge that I also again used in my teaching.'***

**Dr. Tessa Blanken**

Postdoctoral researcher at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences Programme group Psychological Methods

**UvA DSC International Advisory Board**

In 2021 the DSC International Advisory Board was established. The Board consists of five world-leading researchers in the data science community. Their connection to the wider data science community and their expertise in different aspects of the field will provide the DSC with strategic guidance. Its members are: Prof. Francesca Dominici (Director of the Harvard Data Science Initiative, at Harvard University and the Clarence James Gamble Professor of

Biostatistics, Population and Data Science at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.); Prof. Yolanda Gil (Senior Director for Strategic Artificial Intelligence and Data Science Initiatives at the Information Sciences Institute of the University of Southern California, Research Professor in Computer Science and in Spatial Sciences, and Director of Data Science programmes and of the USC Center for Knowledge-Powered Interdisciplinary Data Science); Prof. Caroline Jay (Research Director at the Software Sustainability Institute and Head of Research in the School of Engineering at the University of Manchester); Prof. Eva Méndez (Deputy Vice-President for Research Policy and Open Science, and Professor at the Library and Information Science at the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M)); and Dr. Micaela Parker (Founder and Executive Director at the Academic Data Science Alliance).

**Women in Data Science**

On 8 March 2021, International Women's Day, the DSC sponsored the Women in Data Science (WiDS) Netherlands event which focused on data and the impact on society. The DSC celebrates diversity, and we believe that it is important to promote inclusivity and equal opportunities.

**The Data Science Centre and the UvA Library**

The UvA Library supports data science providing tailored and hands-on support to researchers and faculties. The Library assists with research data management, offers training sessions and funding opportunities related to digital and data-driven research, and provides access to the UvA content collections and databases.

***'I am delighted that the university library hosts the Data Science Centre. The library always has been at the heart of the university and it is great to see a new generation of data scientists interacting with each other, learning new skills, meeting our library teams; all facilitated by the library. Their data-driven research also provides inspiration for the library's own digital transition and will ensure the library can continually support future academic research.'***

**Dr. Gerard Nijsten**  
Director of the UvA/AUAS Library

# Looking to the future: the DSC in 2022

## Data Science Day 2022

A second Data Science Day is being organised for Thursday 13 October 2022, in collaboration with the Social and Behavioural Science Data Science Centre (SoBe DSC). There will be a mixture of keynote presentations and interactive workshops. More information about Data Science Day 2022 can be found on the DSC website.

## Expansion of workshop programme and training support

Following the return to face-to-face settings at the start of 2022, the DSC has already organised a number of workshops on a variety of new topics for the DSC community. The DSC plans to provide members more opportunities to upskill and further develop

data science expertise. This includes the expansion of networking and skills development offerings to cover a broader range of data science topics, in close consultation with the community. The DSC will also continue to support members to attend external training activities that relate to their data-driven research.

## Accelerate Programme 2022

The DSC is looking to expand the DSC community with another 10 data scientists and engineers throughout the university in 2022.

## Continuing focus on interdisciplinary collaboration

The DSC will further stimulate interdisciplinary data science collaborations between university faculties and collaborate with data science hubs like SoBe DSC and other university institutes. The DSC will also continue building our local and international presence by leveraging existing Amsterdam-based and global networks that we are a part of.

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## Contact us

The DSC always welcomes new collaborations and partnerships. Please reach out to us if you want to collaborate with us, become a member, or want to learn more about how data science could help your field of research or faculty.



[dsc.uva.nl](https://dsc.uva.nl)



[@UvA\\_DSC](https://twitter.com/UvA_DSC)



[dsc@uva.nl](mailto:dsc@uva.nl)



University Library  
Singel 425, Amsterdam

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