



Software  
Sustainability  
Institute

# Community and Events

Dr Rachael Ainsworth, Research Software Community Manager



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Biotechnology and  
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Physical Sciences  
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Medical  
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Natural  
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Science and  
Technology  
Facilities Council

# About the Software Sustainability Institute



www.software.ac.uk

- A national facility promoting the advancement of software in research since 2010, by cultivating better, more sustainable, research software to enable world-class research
- A collaboration between the universities of Edinburgh, Manchester, Oxford and Southampton
- In 2018, SSI was awarded funding from all seven UK Research Councils (and has been supported through grants EP/H043160/1, EP/N006410/1 and EP/S021779/1)

*Better software,  
better research.*



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Arts and  
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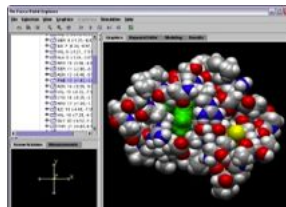
Science and  
Technology  
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Engineering and  
Physical Sciences  
Research Council

## Software

Helping the community to develop software that meets the needs of reliable, reproducible, and reusable research



## Training

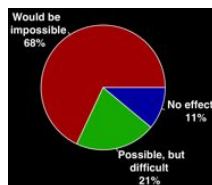
Delivering essential software skills to researchers, partnering with institutions, doctoral schools and the community

## Outreach

Exploiting our platform to enable engagement, delivery and uptake

## Policy

Collecting evidence on and promoting the place of software in research and sharing with stakeholders



## Community

Developing Communities of Practice by supporting the right people to understand and address topical issues

# Teams' activities



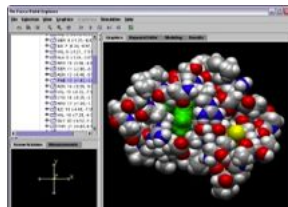
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## Software

75+ software consultancy projects

200+ evaluations

4 surgeries



## Training

460+ Carpentry workshops

9k+ learners, 300+ instructors

85+ guides

## Outreach

170+ external contributors

20k unique visitors per month

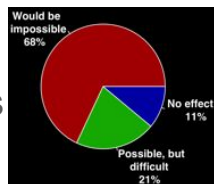
10.3k+ followers

## Policy

Hidden REF

Involved in UKRI long-term strategy

On 29 national & international committees



## Community

217 Fellows

3800+ RSEs engaged

30+ workshops organised

(14 Collaborations Workshops)



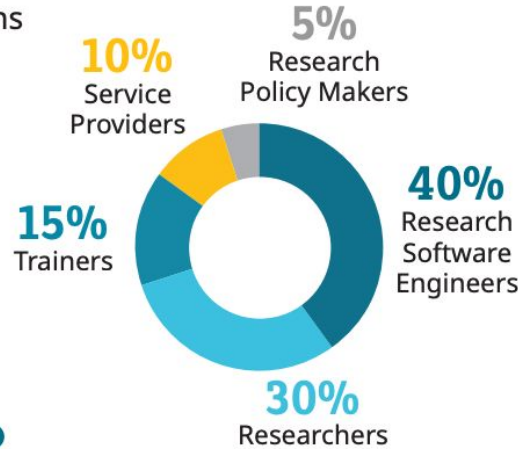
# Community Structure

## Community Management

Community management is provided via 2.1 to 2.9 FTEs distributed across 4 positions (**Community Lead**, **Research Software Community Manager**, **Community Officer**, and **Community Manager for UK Research Software Engineering**). Additional support is provided by other **SSI staff**. Participants in the **Fellowship Programme** organize events and grow their own communities of practice.



## Members



## Community Configuration



Woodley, Lou, Pratt, Katie, Kobilka, Sara, & Ainsworth, Rachael. (2021). CSCCE Community Profile: Software Sustainability Institute Research Software Community. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4947236>



## convey/consume



- email list
- newsletter
- webinar
- Twitter
- blog
- website
- LinkedIn

## contribute



- contact community manager directly
- submit newsletter content
- ask questions in a webinar / post in the chat
- replies on social media
- write a guest blog post
- contribute code or other resource
- fill in a survey

## collaborate



- contact one another directly
- meet in small groups (led by community manager)
- @mention or discuss on community platform
- co-author blog posts or papers (asynchronously)

## co-create



- simultaneous co-authoring (e.g., using Google docs)
- meet in small groups (member-led)
- create new communications channels
- organize events together

## champion

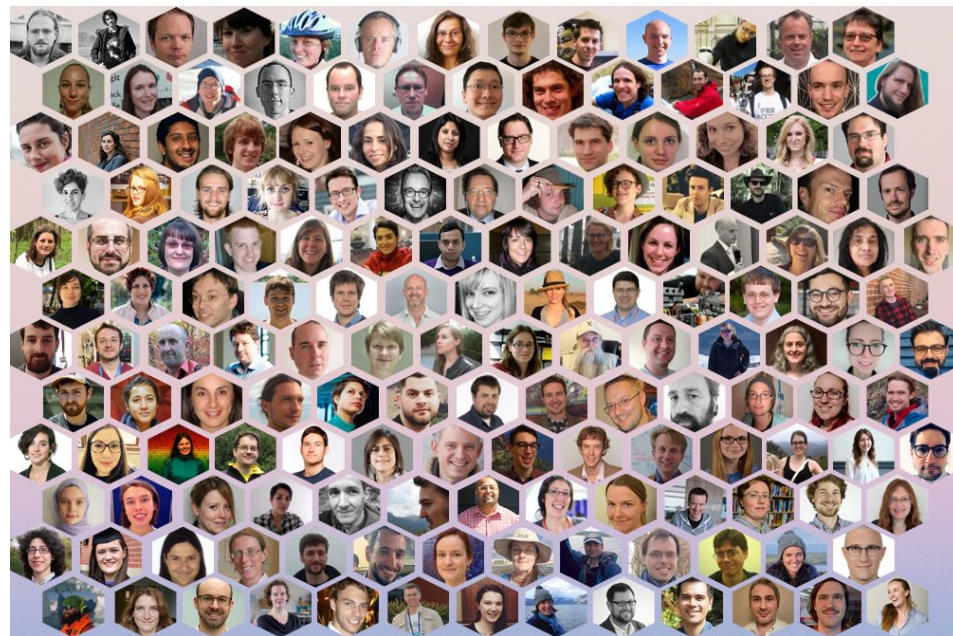
Woodley, Lou, Pratt, Katie, Kobilka, Sara, & Ainsworth, Rachael. (2021). CSCCE Community Profile: Software Sustainability Institute Research Software Community. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4947236>

# Fellowship Programme



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- Engaging with natural ambassadors of better software practice from the research community
- £3k funding to empower those involved with improving software practice; helping form communities of practice
- Fellows help SSI discover important information about software in different research domains
- Fellows help guide SSI training, policies, community work and consultancy engagements



<https://software.ac.uk/fellowship-programme>

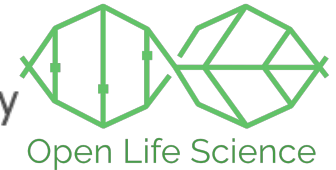




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# Examples of Fellows' Activities

- Carpentries Offline by Jannetta Steyn, Abhishek Dasgupta, Alison Clarke, Colin Sauze, Emily Lewis, Rebecca Wilson, et al.
- Reproducible Research and R workshops for Archaeologists by Alison Clarke & Emma Karoune
- Good mental health, good research software by Dave Horsfall
- Intermediate Research Software Development in Python at UKAEA by Matthew Bluteau
- RSE@Northumbria Launch Event by Lucy Whalley
- Software Carpentry at STFC by Eli Chadwick
- Great R packages for Ornithologists by Philipp Boersch-Supan
- Reusing Research Software and Tools in Digital Humanities Scholarship by Emily Bell & Anna-Maria Sichani
- Open Life Science by Yo Yehudi & Malvika Sharan
- Library Carpentry by James Baker



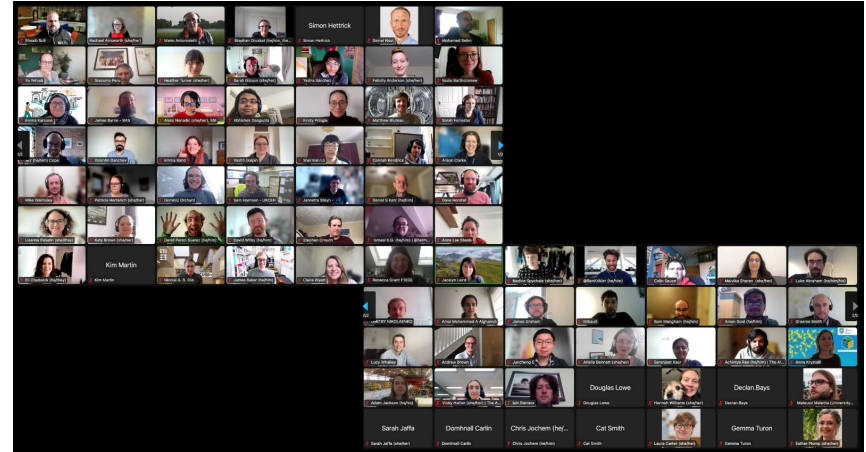


# Collaborations Workshop



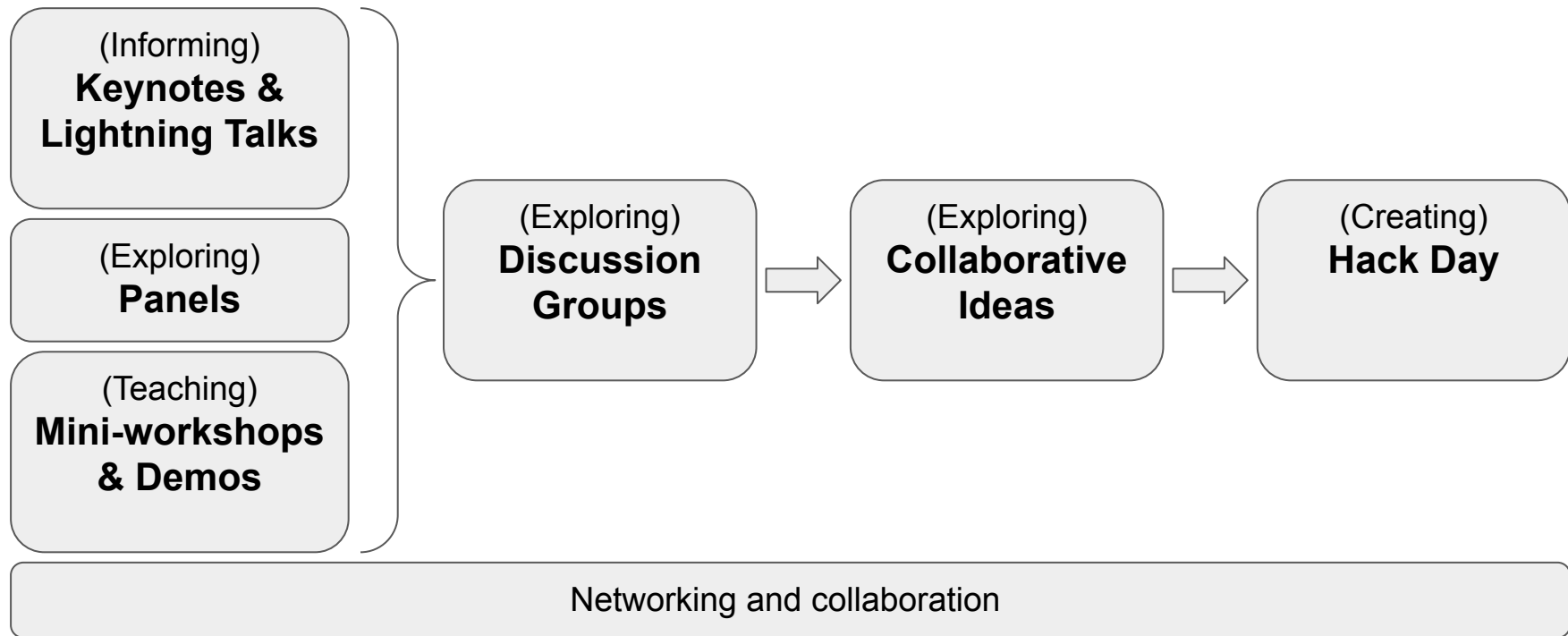
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- Brings together researchers, developers, funders, publishers, educators & more to explore important ideas in software/research, & start interdisciplinary collaborations
- Unconference: keynote presentations, mini-workshop/demo sessions, discussion groups, lightning talks, collaborative ideas, speed blogging and a hack day
- CW23 will take place 2-4 May 2023
  - <https://software.ac.uk/cw23>
  - Hybrid in Manchester, UK
  - Theme: Sustainable Career Development - looking after your software, your career, and yourself
  - Deadline for submissions: 24 February 2023
  - Deadline to register: 24 March 2023





# Collaborations Workshop Flow

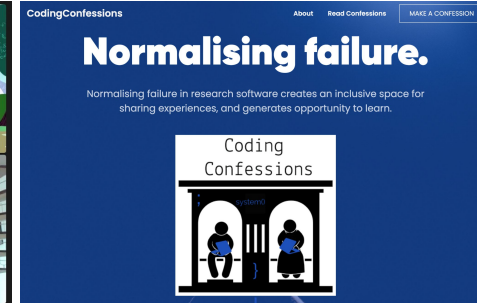


# Collaborations Workshop Outcomes



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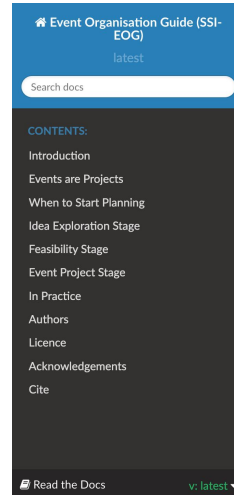
- Blog posts authored by discussion groups are published to the SSI website
- Collaborative Ideas groups feed into Hack Day projects
- 70% of participants start 1-2 collaborations based on conversations at the workshop (CW21)
- 80% of participants intend to carry on working on the hack day project, for example (CW21):
  - Carpentries Offline (formerly CarpenPi) <https://carpentriesoffline.github.io/>
  - Coding Confessions <https://coding-confessions.github.io/>





# Event Organisation Guide

- Guide on how the SSI organises events (project management of events) with CW as the main example
- Templates (e.g. venue requirements, budget, event timeline, duties roster, event roles, risk management)
- In Practice section, including detailed write-up of how we organised CW21 from Feasibility Stage to Closing
- Open for contributions
- [event-organisation-guide.readthedocs.io/](https://event-organisation-guide.readthedocs.io/)



Docs » Event Organisation Guide [Edit on GitHub](#)

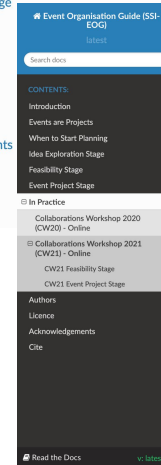
## Event Organisation Guide

### Contents:

- Introduction
- Events are Projects
- When to Start Planning
- Idea Exploration Stage
- Feasibility Stage
- Event Project Stage
- In Practice

### About

- Authors
- Licence
- Acknowledgements
- Cite



## Collaborations Workshop 2021 (CW21) - Online

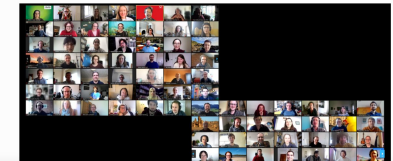
In Practice authors: Rachael Ainsworth (ORCID)

The Collaborations Workshop (CW) is the annual flagship event of the Software Sustainability Institute. It brings together researchers, developers, innovators, managers, funders, publishers, leaders, and educators with a focus on research software to explore and share best practice.

We made the decision from the beginning that the Collaborations Workshop 2021 (CW21) would take place online for two main reasons:

1. It was clear that the global COVID-19 pandemic would be ongoing and there would still be hesitancy from both organisers and participants towards traveling to an in-person event. It turned out that there were still many restrictions around international travel and in-person events at the time of CW21, so we would have been forced to remain online had we planned an in-person event.
2. It was an opportunity to improve and build off of what we achieved running CW20 Online.

Here is how we did it. This In Practice write up covers how we organised CW21 Online, following the steps in the Feasibility Stage and the Event Project Stage of the main Event Organisation Guide. Alternatively, if you would like to read about what happened at CW21, that can be found in this CW21 Highlights blog post.





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# Research Software Camps

- Free online events twice a year over the course of two weeks
- Each Camp focuses on introducing and exploring a topic around research software, thus starting discussions among various research communities
  - Supporting Mental Health (November 2022)
  - Next steps in coding (May 2022)
  - Beyond the Spreadsheet (Nov 2021)
  - Research Accessibility (Feb 2021)
- Sessions include panels, training, workshops, guides, blog posts, and social media discussions
- Many opportunities to get involved as part of the mentorship programme and software surgeries



# SSI Collaborators and Partners



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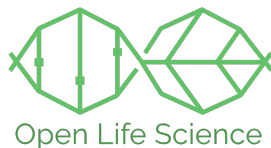
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# Contact us



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