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Summary

Increasingly, researchers and the scientific community, governments, and the private sector are generating large-scale data sets on proxies for food procurement, purchasing and consumption of food. These datasets give a unique insight into patterns and modes of food related lifestyle behaviours. The potential of such large-scale datasets is immense, both for research and industry, but also public policy. All is based on the ability to share, link, access and reuse data from diverse digital sources and as such can potentially help make better decisions for the benefit of society and public health. But in order for this to happen, an innovative research infrastructure (RI) must be developed. *It is therefore paramount to identify and establish the needs, wishes and expectations of the various stakeholders engaged in such a research infrastructure, including scientists and risk assessors, governmental risk managers, food manufacturers and food retailers.*

With this point of departure, the "RICHFIELDS Nordic Node" WP 8 organised a 1 day stakeholder workshop in Copenhagen, hosted by RICHFIELDS partner GS1 Denmark and co-organised by partners RISE SE and AAU DK. The aim was to present WP8 case study findings to the stakeholders in order to elicit feedback and suggestions on the needs and wants for such a research infrastructure. The discussion topics included scientific potential, user needs and access strategies, governance models as well as ethics related to the design of a future research infrastructure.

This report focusses on the second part of the workshop in which stakeholders were engaged in discussion to elicit their opinions on the challenges and motivations for collaborating with the proposed RICHFIELDS (RI). The findings reported here illustrate stakeholders' willingness to be a potential user of the RI provided that the quality and validity of the data available thereon is unquestionable, that the RI is able to meet stakeholder needs and provided that a concise and well-defined value proposition can be made. For participants with a research background, benefits of an RI lie in having access to data from different perspectives of consumers. For businesses, it is important to get access to new types of data that address their needs. The researchers were of the opinion that virtually unlimited amount of research questions can be asked based on the numerous and diverse data shared. A limitation to this is that researchers cannot fully predict what kind of questions to answer in the future. Some businesses may be reluctant to share their data as it can contain sensitive information linked to competitive advantage and disclosing it could potentially endanger the organisation's market share. *It appears that innovative services RI will offer is not understood very well outside to the both research and business organisations engaged in collecting data on consumer behaviour.* From the workshop we conclude that it is of utmost importance that the RICHFIELDS consortium, its actors and other concerned stakeholders put emphasis on communicating and interacting with stakeholders' about the value and services such an RI can offer and its benefits to data providers and users. This should be done within the wide array of governmental agencies, businesses, civil society organisations and science. Here it should be noted that stakeholders have reservations in terms of what data they are willing to disclose and share. We conclude that their positions are likely to be driven by privacy, confidentiality, and economic considerations. We also conclude that the stakeholders will view their potential participation in a RI in the light of 2 different aspects: what they need to input and what the output will be for them. In that respect an exchange rate view seems to be in place. On the one hand it seems that they don't want to share "data with everybody" and on the other hand some stakeholders have the view that if they are to be in control of things in a rapidly changing retail environment they might be able to benefit from "data collectivity" and from models that are better able to make sense of consumer behavioural data.

Our recommendations both summarise the findings and translate them into concrete actions for those charged with designing the RI. The recommendations and suggestions for the design of the RI platform received from the participants of the stakeholder workshop highlighted that (1) a powerful search engine would be needed to find relevant data for specific research questions, offering analysis and interpretation services for the data available on the platform. (2) Developing case studies to show the benefits of data sharing for businesses was seen as a useful tool in order to more easily persuade business to share data with the platform. (3) Furthermore, the platform should provide information about how the original data was collected by the data provider and feed back to data providers about when and for what purpose their data has been used. The RI should make it clear to stakeholders the kind of exchange model that can be expected if they deliver data to it. Also the added value should be clear in terms of what they can expect in return compared to their competitors – in other words a participation vs non participation scenario.

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