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The WeNMR Case Study: Research Software as a Service for Demonstrating Impact, Securing Funding, and Serving a Global Community

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Sustained investment in research software requires moving beyond downloads/citations to demonstrate impact. This presentation uses the WeNMR platform — a VRE for structural biology with over 70,000 users — as a case for the "Research-Software-as-a-Service" (RSaaS) model. We will detail how the RSaaS model provides visible and quantifiable impact. By moving software into a centralized, managed service, we capture crucial metrics: over 12 million computational jobs processed per year, representing over 4,800 CPU-years per year of scientific output. These concrete usage statistics, alongside user growth and support requests, provide an irrefutable narrative of widespread adoption and scientific utility that is otherwise invisible when software is simply distributed. This data has been our primary tool to successfully convey importance to funding agencies and secure resources. We will share strategies for translating research software into services that we can be used into compelling arguments for institutional support, national grants, and international funding. The talk will cover technical aspects needed to create and operate RsaaS and discuss our integrations with EOSC/EGI for HTC and the development of a containerized architecture. This presentation will provide an overview on how to build, and sustain research software services by demonstrating its indispensable role in the modern research ecosystem.

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