

# Electronic Laboratory/Field Notebooks (ELN)

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MUNI  
ICS

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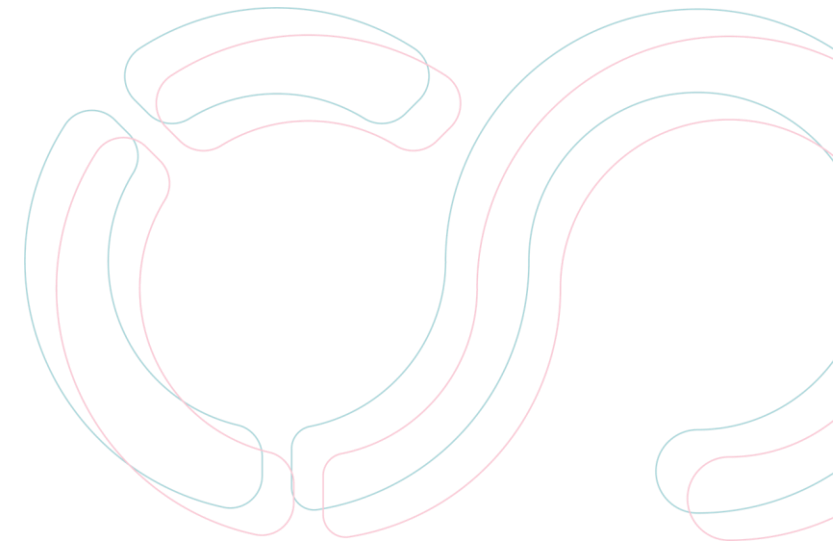
Czech Academy  
of Sciences



J. Heyrovský Institute

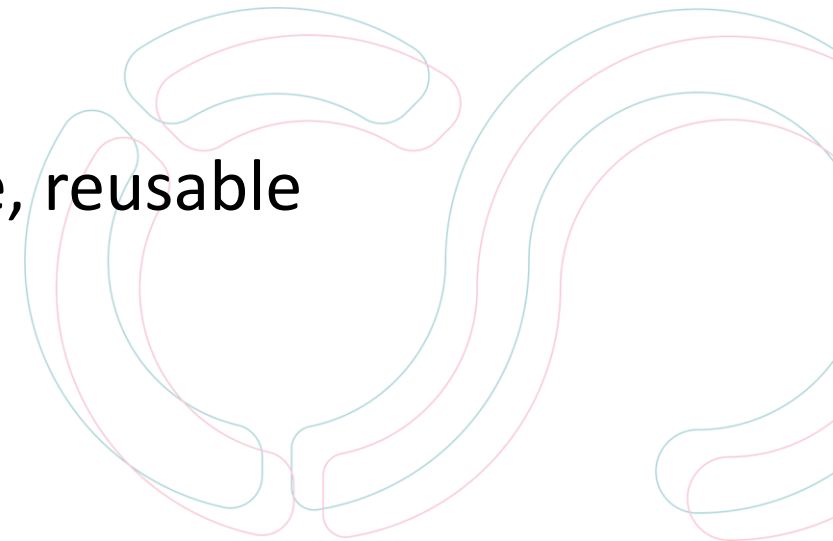
# Outline

- What is an electronic laboratory/field notebook – ELN?
- Why to use ELN?
- Which ELN is good for me?
- Comparison of selected ELNs
- Examples of use
- **Questions/Discussion**



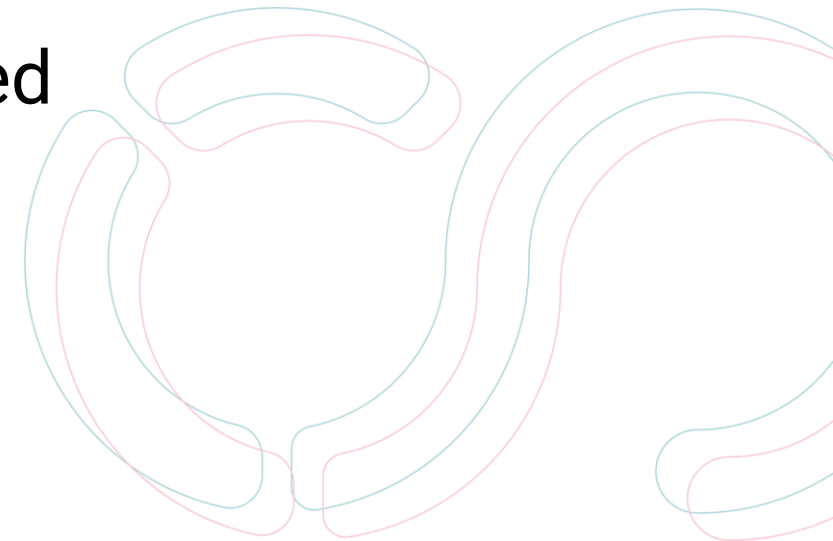
# Routine abbreviations

- Electronic laboratory (field) notebook (ELN)
- Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)
- Research Data Management (RDM)
- National Repository Platform (NRP)
- FAIR principles .... Findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable
- Machine-actionable (MA)



# Scientific notebook styles

- Paperback notebook
- Electronic notebook (e-notebook)
- Electronic laboratory (field) notebook – standard
- Electronic laboratory (field) notebook – advanced
- Inventory / LIMS



24/1/96 Test of Pfu polymerase for adding of any base to the 3' end of product (DMS/11)

1. 3' end of product

2. ~~PCR~~ SYSTEMS (1) PCR with Taq polymerase  
of 4 TUBES (2) and (3) PCR with Pfu polymerase

- the PCRs were done as usually (for Pfu was used 7h'c, 1' elongation)
- add to the 4 tubes were collected and treated 1x phenol-chloroform  
1x 2-intact precipitation

ADDITIONAL: SYSTEM (3) only

reaction with 1ul T4 polymerase (NEB)  
2ul 10x T4 pol buffer  
and DNA in total volume: 2ul

→ the sample was set without cleaning

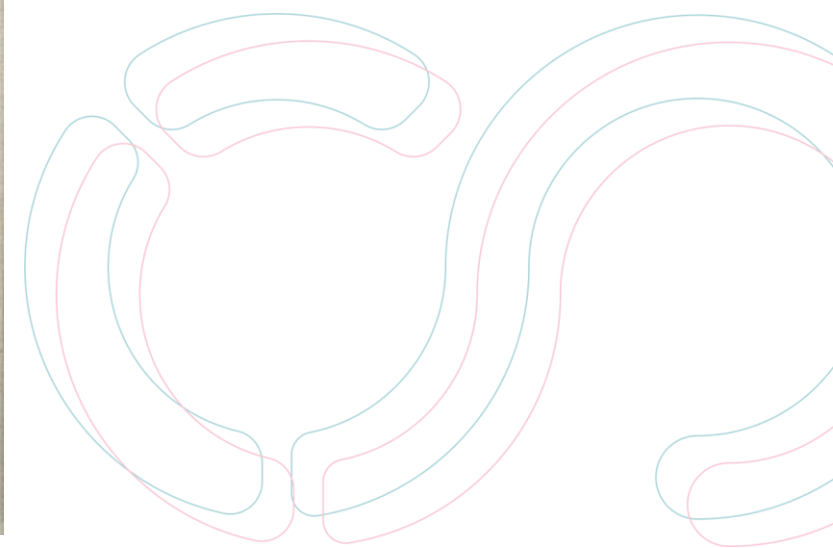
11. Cleavage with EcoRI, 4h

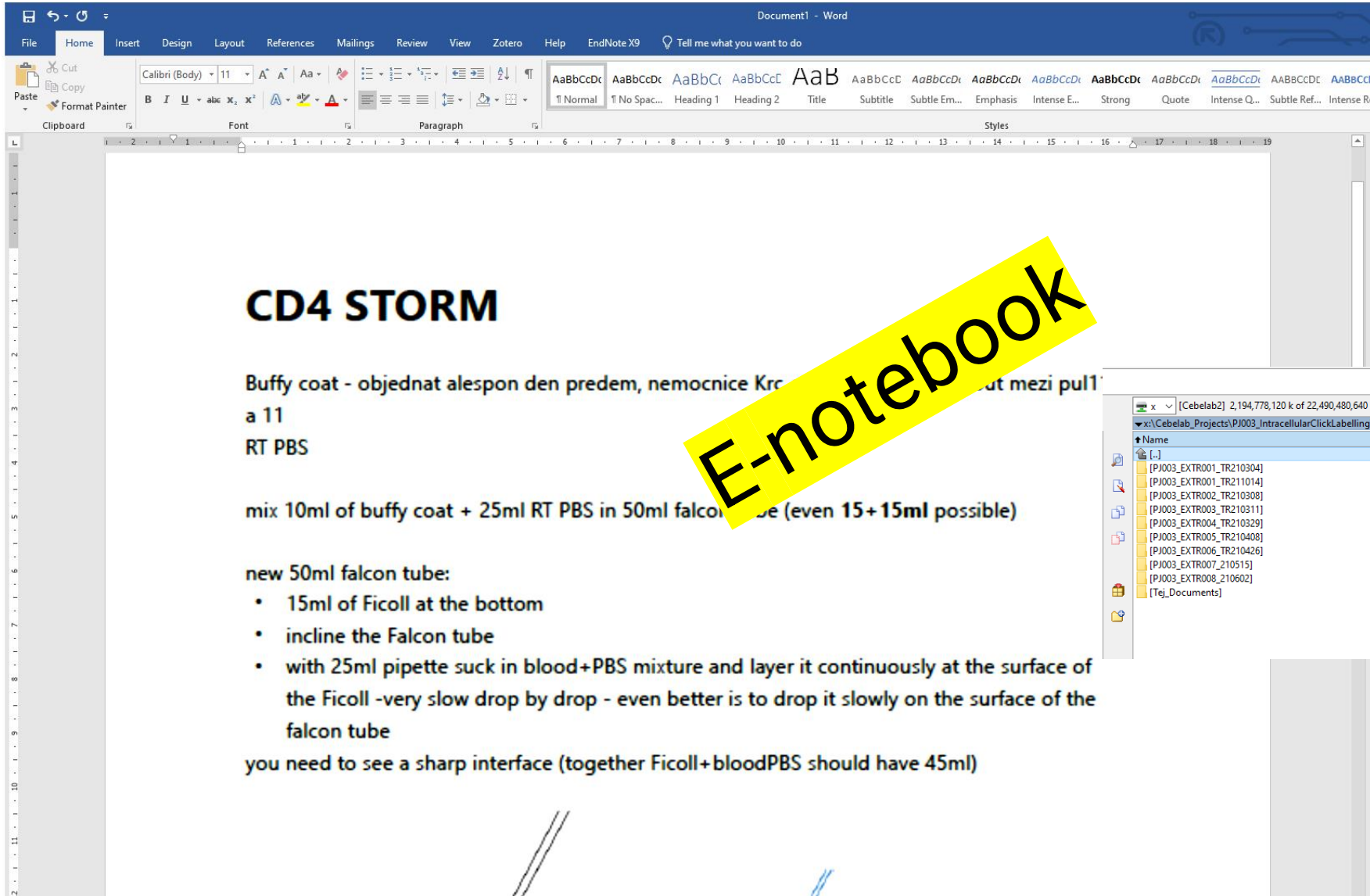
ELF: 2h

25/1/96 I. Elution of samples (cont) from gel, ligation and transformation of K803 cells for subcloning to pCD48-H21

- the samples from the gel were eluted separately as in "Extraction of DNA samples from LMP (1%) gel"
- all samples were washed 3x 70% EtOH and resuspended in 20ul H<sub>2</sub>O

Laboratory notebook - paperback





**CD4 STORM**

Buffy coat - objednat alespon den predem, nemocnice Krc  
a 11  
RT PBS

mix 10ml of buffy coat + 25ml RT PBS in 50ml falcon tube (even 15+15ml possible)

new 50ml falcon tube:

- 15ml of Ficoll at the bottom
- incline the Falcon tube
- with 25ml pipette suck in blood+PBS mixture and layer it continuously at the surface of the Ficoll -very slow drop by drop - even better is to drop it slowly on the surface of the falcon tube

you need to see a sharp interface (together Ficoll+bloodPBS should have 45ml)

**E-notebook**

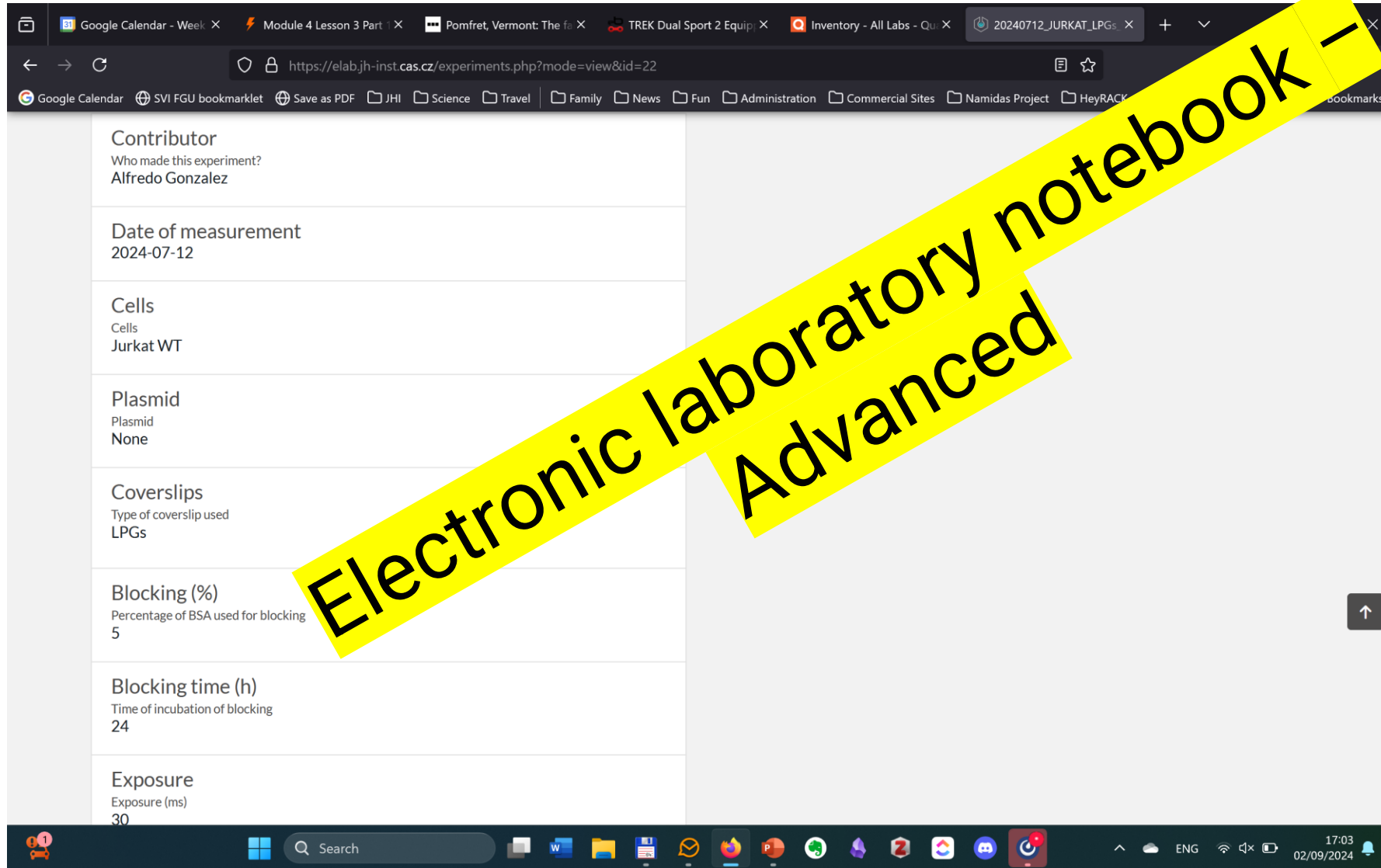
Name	Ext	Size	Date
[PJ003_EXTR001_TR210304]	<DIR>		21/06/2022 13:22
[PJ003_EXTR001_TR211014]	<DIR>		28/08/2022 12:44
[PJ003_EXTR002_TR210308]	<DIR>		01/11/2021 12:32
[PJ003_EXTR003_TR210311]	<DIR>		28/08/2022 12:59
[PJ003_EXTR004_TR210329]	<DIR>		28/08/2022 13:07
[PJ003_EXTR005_TR210408]	<DIR>		28/08/2022 18:52
[PJ003_EXTR006_TR210426]	<DIR>		28/08/2022 19:10
[PJ003_EXTR007_210515]	<DIR>		28/08/2022 20:43
[PJ003_EXTR008_210602]	<DIR>		28/08/2022 20:46
[Tej_Documents]	<DIR>		29/08/2022 21:18
	<DIR>		28/08/2022 11:51

The screenshot shows an Evernote interface for a notebook named 'Danca UMG notebook'. The main content is a note titled 'CD4 STORM' which describes a laboratory protocol. The text includes instructions for mixing 'Buffy coat' and 'RT PBS' in a '50ml falcon tube', followed by a list of steps: adding 15ml of Ficoll, inclining the tube, and pipetting the mixture. A diagram shows a pipette tip adding a red drop to a blue layer in a tube labeled 'Ficoll'. Below this, it instructs to 'Centrifuge at ROOM temperature (23C) 1250g (2500rpmi big eppendorf centrifuge) 30min brake 2 - balance properly' and to 'take out of cetrifuge carefully - there is gradient'. A yellow diagonal banner with the text 'Laboratory e-notebook' is overlaid on the image.

The screenshot displays the RSpace Enterprise interface for an electronic laboratory notebook. The browser address bar shows the URL `rseln.jh-inst.cas.cz/notebookEditor/640?initialRecordToDisplay=755`. The interface features a top navigation bar with 'Workspace', 'Gallery', 'Messaging', 'Apps', and 'Inventory'. A left sidebar shows a file tree under 'Hard Work' with entries like 'STORM CD4 mutant X3', 'Untitled document', 'Epic experiment 1', and 'SMLM Image Acquisition'. The main workspace has a 'CREATE' button and icons for editing, deleting, and sharing. The central content area shows the notebook entry for 'STORM CD4 mutant X3' with tags 'CD4', 'STORM', and 'click'. The text describes a procedure for creating a gradient, including a diagram of a pipette and centrifugation parameters: 'Centrifuge at ROOM temperature (23C) 1250g (2500rpm big eppendorf centrifuge) 30min brake 2 - balance properly' and 'take out of centrifuge carefully - there is gradient'. A large yellow diagonal banner across the center reads 'Electronic laboratory notebook - Standard'.



The screenshot displays the eLabFTW web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the eLabFTW logo and menu items: EXPERIMENTS, RESOURCES, TEAM, SEARCH, and DOCUMENTATION. The main content area is titled "Experiments > Viewing an entry" and includes a "Create" button. Below the title, there are icons for editing, deleting, and other actions. A light blue banner indicates the entry is "Owned by Alfredo Gonzalez". The experiment details include: "Started on 2024-07-16", the title "20240712\_JURKAT\_LPGs\_CD54\_StrCy5 I", "Team: Cebecauer", "Category: LPGS COVERSIPS", "Status: SUCCESS", and "Tags: Alfredo's Pojects, LPGs". There are also settings for "Visibility" (Only members of the team) and "Can write" (Only owner and admins). A "NEXT STEP" section is titled "Transfection (Optional)" and contains a "MAIN TEXT" section with the text: "Collaboration with Free Universitat Berlin" and "Purpose: Evaluate if coverslips produced by Reiner Haag's group are suitable for use in SMLM microscopy." The browser's address bar shows the URL "https://elab.jh-inst.cas.cz/experiments.php?mode=view&id=22". The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the date as 02/09/2024 and the time as 16:55.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying an ELN interface. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://elab.jh-inst.cas.cz/experiments.php?mode=view&id=22>. The interface contains several data fields:

Contributor	Who made this experiment? Alfredo Gonzalez
Date of measurement	2024-07-12
Cells	Cells Jurkat WT
Plasmid	Plasmid None
Coverslips	Type of coverslip used LPGs
Blocking (%)	Percentage of BSA used for blocking 5
Blocking time (h)	Time of incubation of blocking 24
Exposure	Exposure (ms) 30

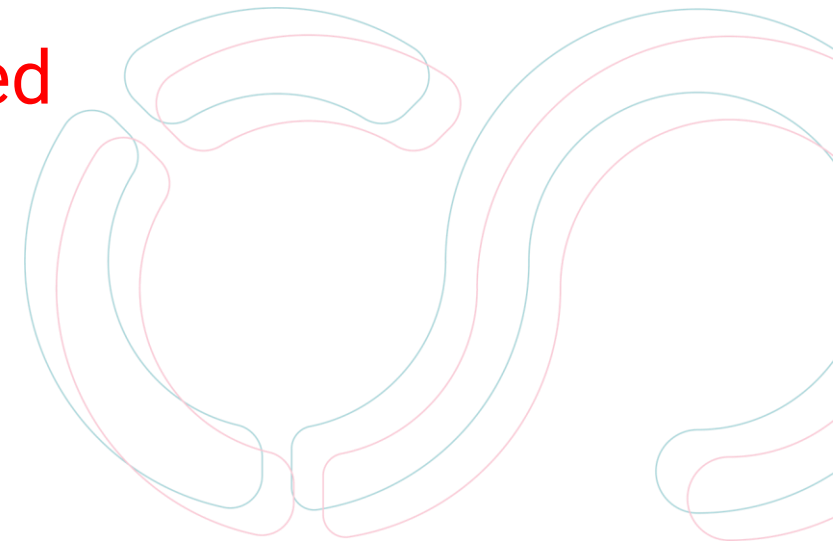
A large yellow diagonal watermark with the text "Electronic laboratory notebook - Advanced" is overlaid across the center of the screenshot. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 17:03 on 02/09/2024.

Inventory/ Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)

Item Name	Vendor	Updated	Request	Archive
HEK293T Wuerzburg		Sep 19, 2017	Request	Archive
HEK293 ATCC	Marek Cebecauer	Sep 19, 2017	Request	Archive
4 units Liquid nitrogen D4	Marek Cebecauer	Sep 19, 2017	Request	Archive

# Scientific notebook styles

- Paperback notebook
- Electronic notebook (e-notebook)
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- **Inventory / LIMS**

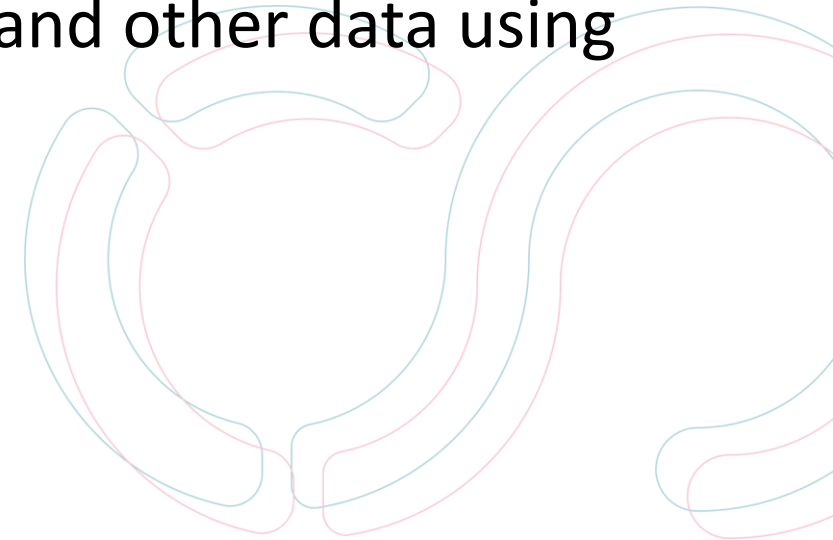


# What is ELN?

... definitions ...

## *Harvard Medical School:*

An Electronic Lab Notebook (ELN) is a software tool that in its most basic form replicates an interface much like a page in a paper lab notebook. In an ELN you can enter protocols, observations, notes, and other data using your computer or mobile device.



# What is ELN?

... definitions ...

*Imperial College London:*

Lab notebooks are a way for researchers to remember vital information about their research through an organised and systematic manner. They may be considered part of your research data and will need to be archived along with your other data.

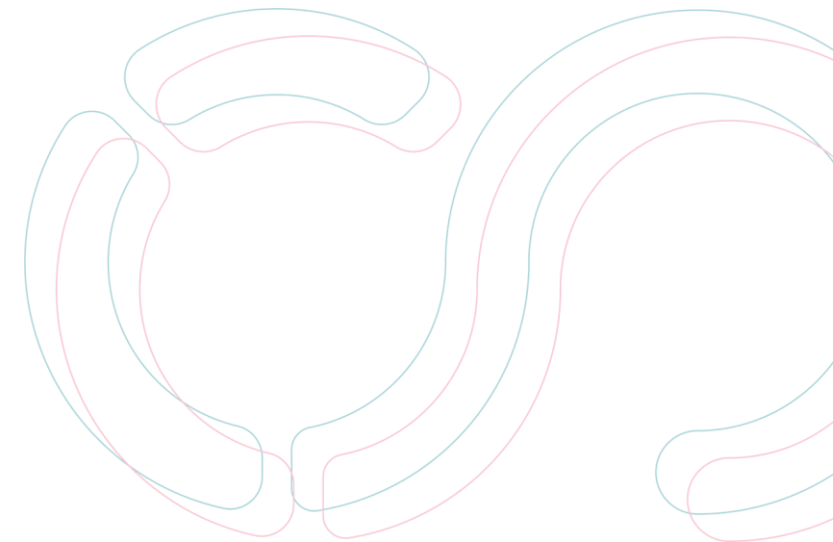


# What is ELN?

... definitions ...

*Imperial College London:*

Easy, real-time collaboration and data sharing. Custom and template experiment records. Protocol library. Version-controlled repository (datasets) ...



# What is ELN?

... definitions ...

## *Harvard Medical School:*

Some ELNs can also manage inventories of samples, reagents, and other supplies, as well as keeping track of equipment and equipment maintenance schedules (LIMS functions). Additionally, some ELNs provide specialist scientific tools for chemical drawing or molecular biology.



# What is ELN?

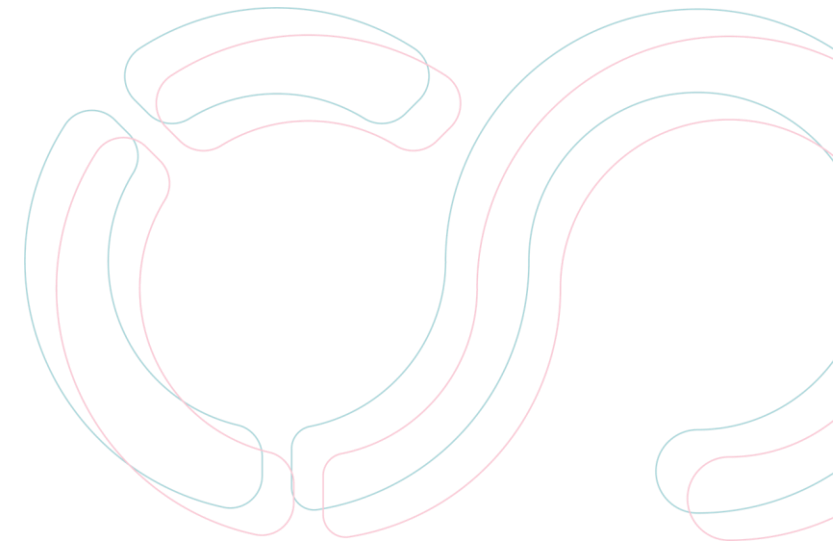
... definitions ...

*Research.com:*

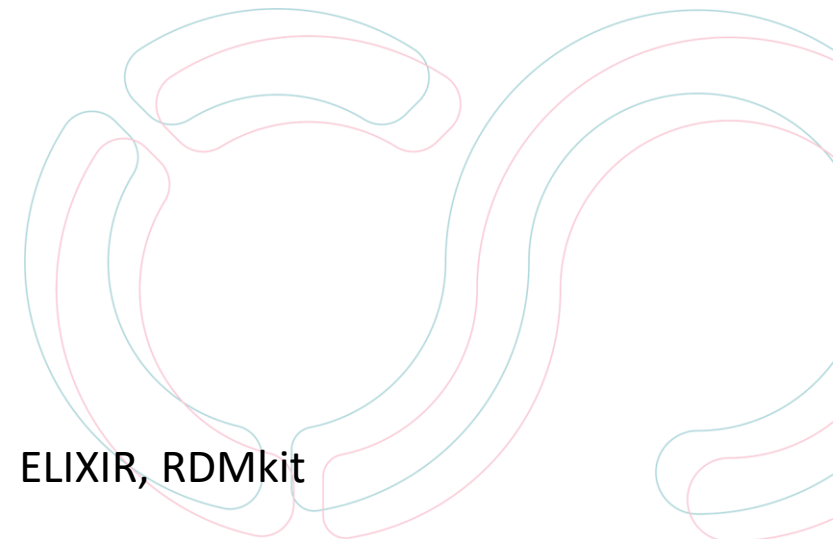
An ELN can automate many of the manual elements of laboratory note-taking. In laboratory processes, automation simplifies experimental procedures and helps researchers save more time for other tasks such as data analysis. ELNs also use advanced technologies to automate different data input and acquisition processes.

# Why to use ELN? ... Summary

- Records of experiments with relevant annotation and comments – structured/templates/links
- Register of digital objects including digital representations of physical and abstract entities
- Versioning
- Access control to (meta)data. Collaborative functions.
- Protocols/procedures/workflows
- Links to the relevant data
- Optional: Data storage
- Optional: Inventory (samples, supplies, literature, data files)
- Optional: Instrument booking/scheduler
- Optional: Offline functions (electronic filed notebook)
- Optional: Timestamps (e.g., legal support)
- Optional: Signatures/witnesses
- Optional: Scientific tools (e.g. data visualisation, schemas)
- Optional: Automatisations of RDM processes



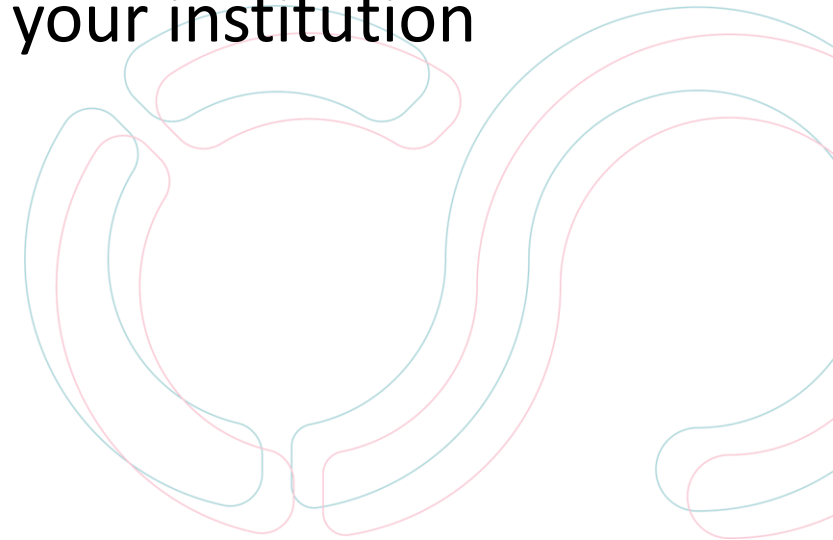
# Why to use ELN? ... Summary




ELIXIR, RDMkit

## Which ELN?

- **Avoid 'one size fits all' solution**
- Personal preferences – the principal investigator's (PI) responsibility
- Provide recommendations and support – the PIs have to make the decision whether to use ELN or other tools.
- Offer more solutions (ideally diverse) for the RDM in your institution

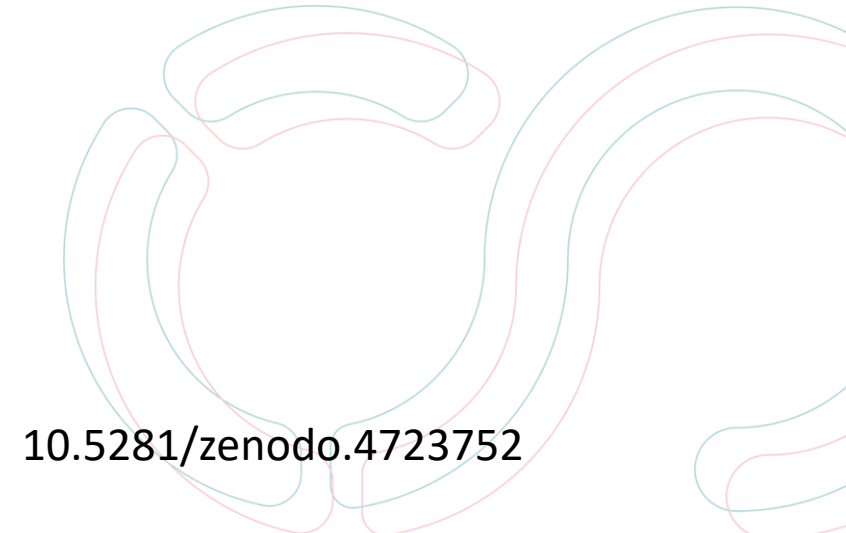


# 120 ELN solutions (or more)


✓ Yes  
✗ No  
 Additional information available on the ELN subpage  
 Page last updated: 2021-04-19

**Features**

Specifications	Asspion	Beehive	BIOVA	Chemotion	Confluence	DocuLab	eLabNote	eLabFTW	eLabJournal	ELOG	Evernote	Eesmlar	Findings	IBS	LabArchives	LabCollector	LabGuru	LabLog	LabVantage	LabWare	Labfolder	Labii	Labstep	MBook	OneNote	OpenWeWare	OSF	ParkinEmr-Signals	Pillar Science	RRelease	Rifyn	RidScience	SoNote	
<b>Interactivity</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Support for Researcher Documentation</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Adaptability to Lab workflows</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Storage</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Hosting</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Support</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Security</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Other</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



10.5281/zenodo.4723752

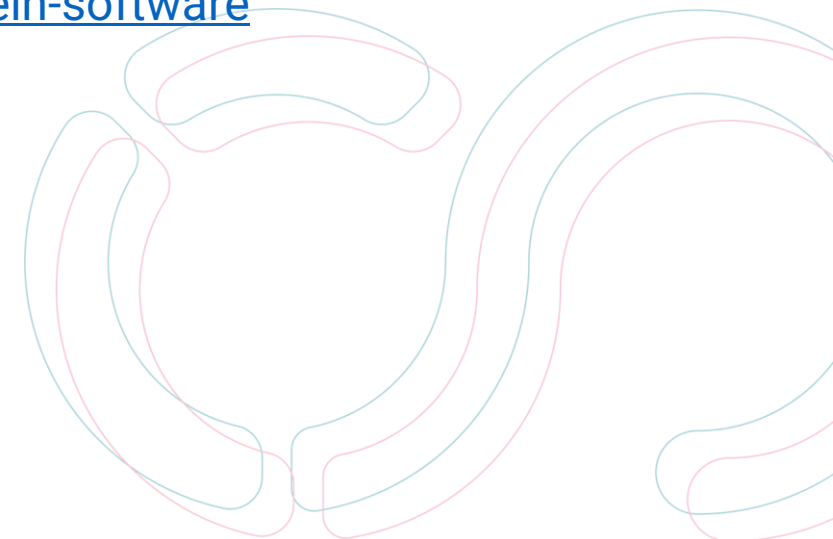
# Find the right ELN for you.



<https://eln-finder.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/home>



<https://research.com/software/best-eln-software>



# RDM tool selection/Which ELN?



- Simple vs. complex
- Commercial vs. open-source
- Institutional instance vs. cloud version
- Does it support the export of FAIRified data?
- Sharing/collaborative options
- With LIMS vs. w/o LIMS (including scheduler and sample/equipment manager)
- Are specific scientific tools essential/needed?
- Integration with external scientific tools essential/needed?
- Is offline functionality essential/needed?
- Advanced functions: timestamping, signing, witnessing ... legal issues.

# Selection of ELNs for NRP/MATECH

- From simple to more complex
- Open-source
- Institutional/national instances
- Must support the export of FAIRified and machine-actionable data?
- Sharing/collaborative options
- With LIMS and w/o LIMS
- Specific scientific tools: non-essential/favourable?
- Offline functionality: non-essential/favourable (expenses)?
- Optional: Advanced functions (timestamping, signing, witnessing ...)
- Automatisatation processes: ready or not?
- Team of developers







## Simple ELN for NRP/MATECH

- Basic functionalities: Records, Collections, Groups, Templates
- Open-source
- Easy to install and maintain institutional instances
- Supports the export of FAIRified/MA data: RO-Crate, RDF, JSON
- Sharing/collaborative options - limited
- No extra LIMS functions
- No additional scientific tools: as off Sept 2024
- Offline functionality: NO
- Advanced functions: Publishing in ZENODO (simplistic version 😊), workflows
- Prepared for automatisation: YES, advanced
- Prepared for integration with external scientific tools: YES, very advanced



# Intermediate ELN for NRP/MATECH

- Basic functionalities: Projects, Experiments, Users, Protocols, Templates
- Open-source
- Standard installation and maintenance of institutional instances
- Supports the export of FAIRified/MA data: RO-Crate (ELN), JSON
- Sharing/collaborative options – within an instance
- Limited LIMS functions, equipment registry and booking
- Specific scientific tools: drawing chemical structures
- Offline functionality: NO
- Advanced functions: scheduler (calendar), timestamping (legally: extra charge)
- Prepared for automatisisation: Partially
- Prepared for integration with external scientific tools: Limited

# Complex ELN for NRP/MATECH I.

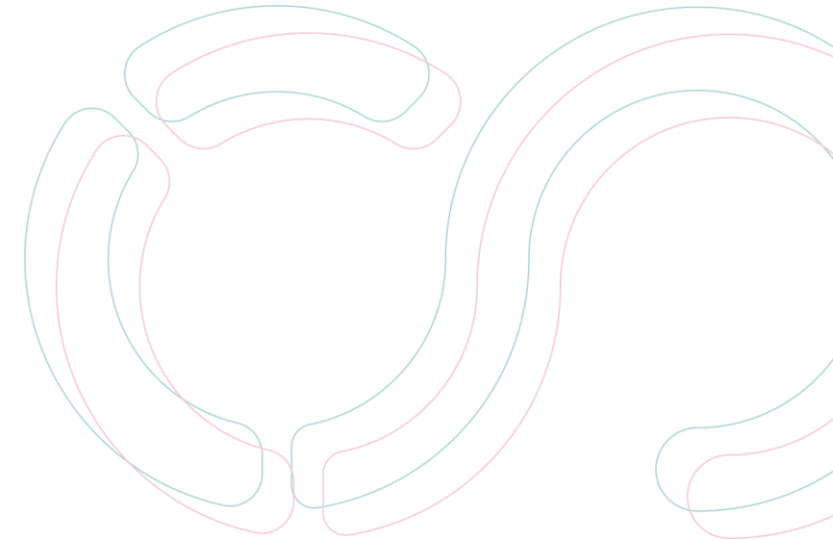
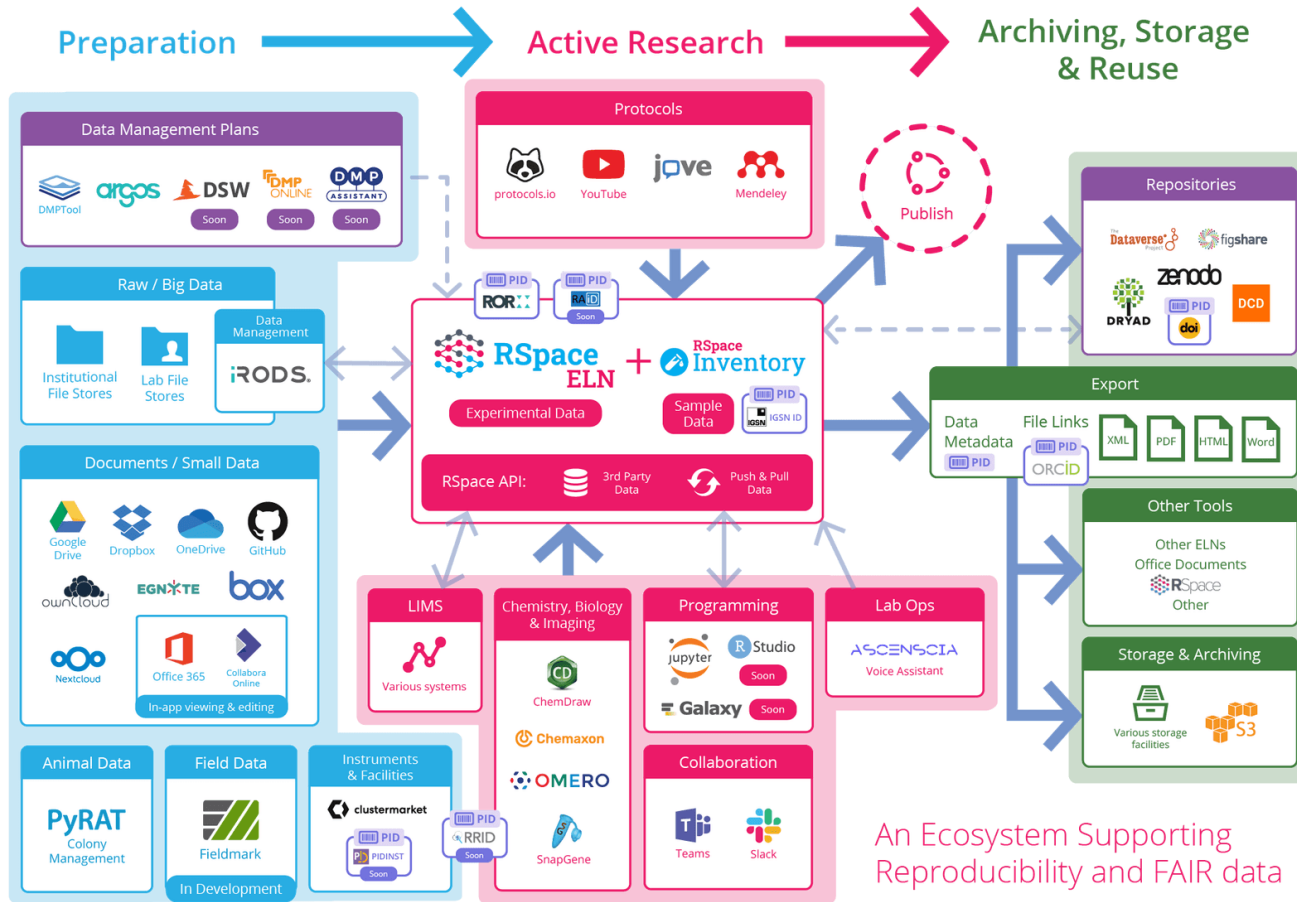
- Functionalities: Spaces/users, Projects, Objects, Protocols, Publications, Templates
- Open-source
- Standard installation and maintenance of institutional instances
- Supports the export of FAIRified/MA data: JSON
- Sharing/collaborative options – supported
- Advanced LIMS
- Specific scientific tools: molecular biology tools, big data, ...
- Offline functionality: NO
- Advanced functions: publish to ZENODO, scheduler (calendar), timestamping (extra charge)
- Prepared for automatisation: YES
- Prepared for integration with external scientific tools: YES, very advanced



## Complex ELN for NRP/MATECH II.

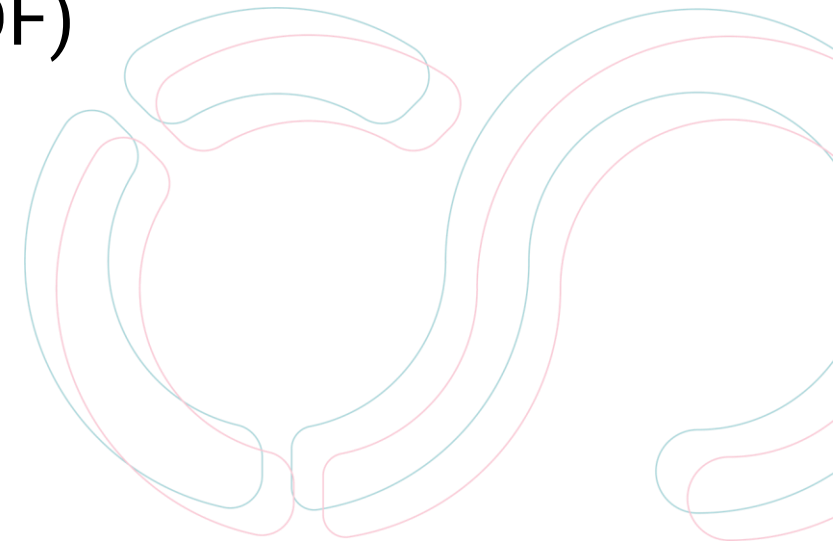
- Basic functionalities: Notebooks, Experiments, Users/Groups, Forms and Templates
- Open-source (from July 1, 2024)
- Standard installation and maintenance of institutional instances
- Supports the export of FAIRified/MA data: RO-Crate (ELN), XML
- Sharing/collaborative options – within an instance
- Advanced LIMS, including IGSN registration
- Specific scientific tools: extensive integration with RDM tools, chemical structures
- Offline functionality: NO
- Advanced functions: scheduler (calendar), signing/witnessing, Dataverse and Protocols.io integration
- Prepared for automatisation: ??
- Prepared for integration with external scientific tools: YES

# Complex ELN for NRP/MATECH II.



# Common features

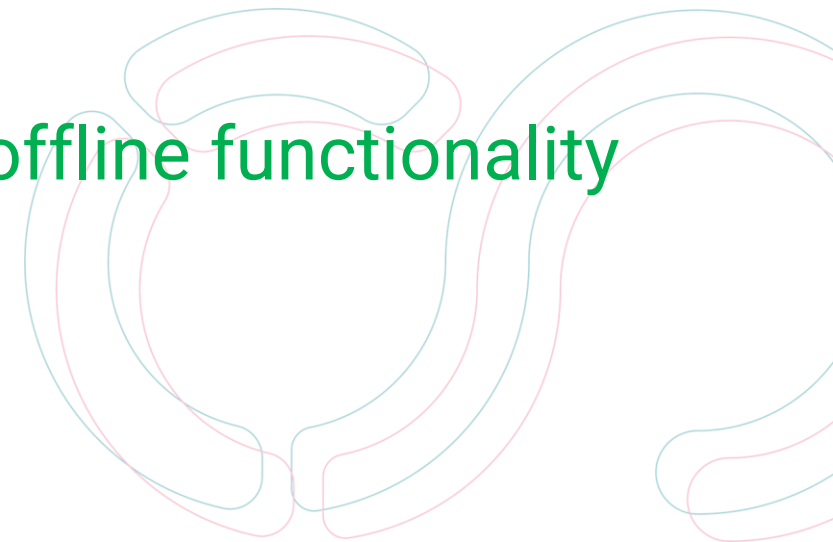
- Creation of user groups and projects
- Access control (individual experiments, collections, (meta)data)
- Mandatory\*/Recommended metadata fields
- A panel formats of metadata export (including human and machine-readable formats (PDF, XML, JSON, RDF))
- **Customisable templates**
- Python scripts/APIs



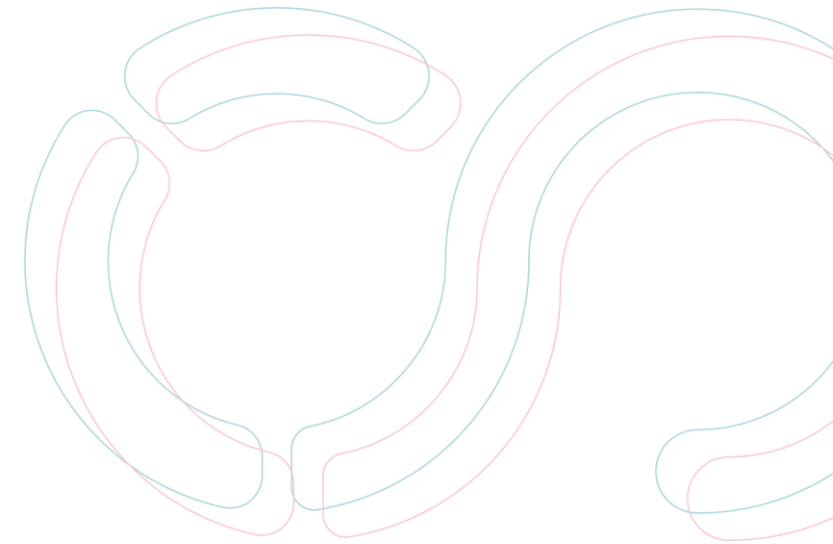
# Distinguishing features – focusing on



- Kadi4Mat: simple, workflows
- eLabFTW: protocols, scheduler
- RSpace: sample management/EOSC integration
- openBIS: professional RDM tool, domain-specific tools
- **FAIMS3/Fieldmark: electronic field notebook – offline functionality**



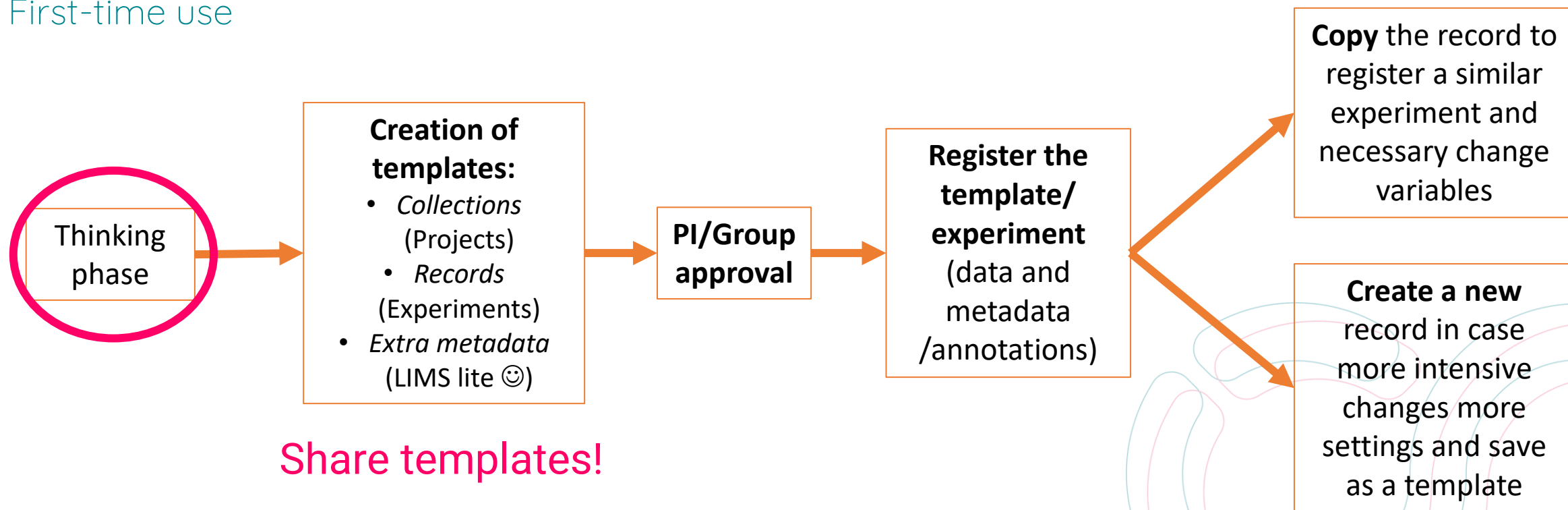
## ELN in praxis





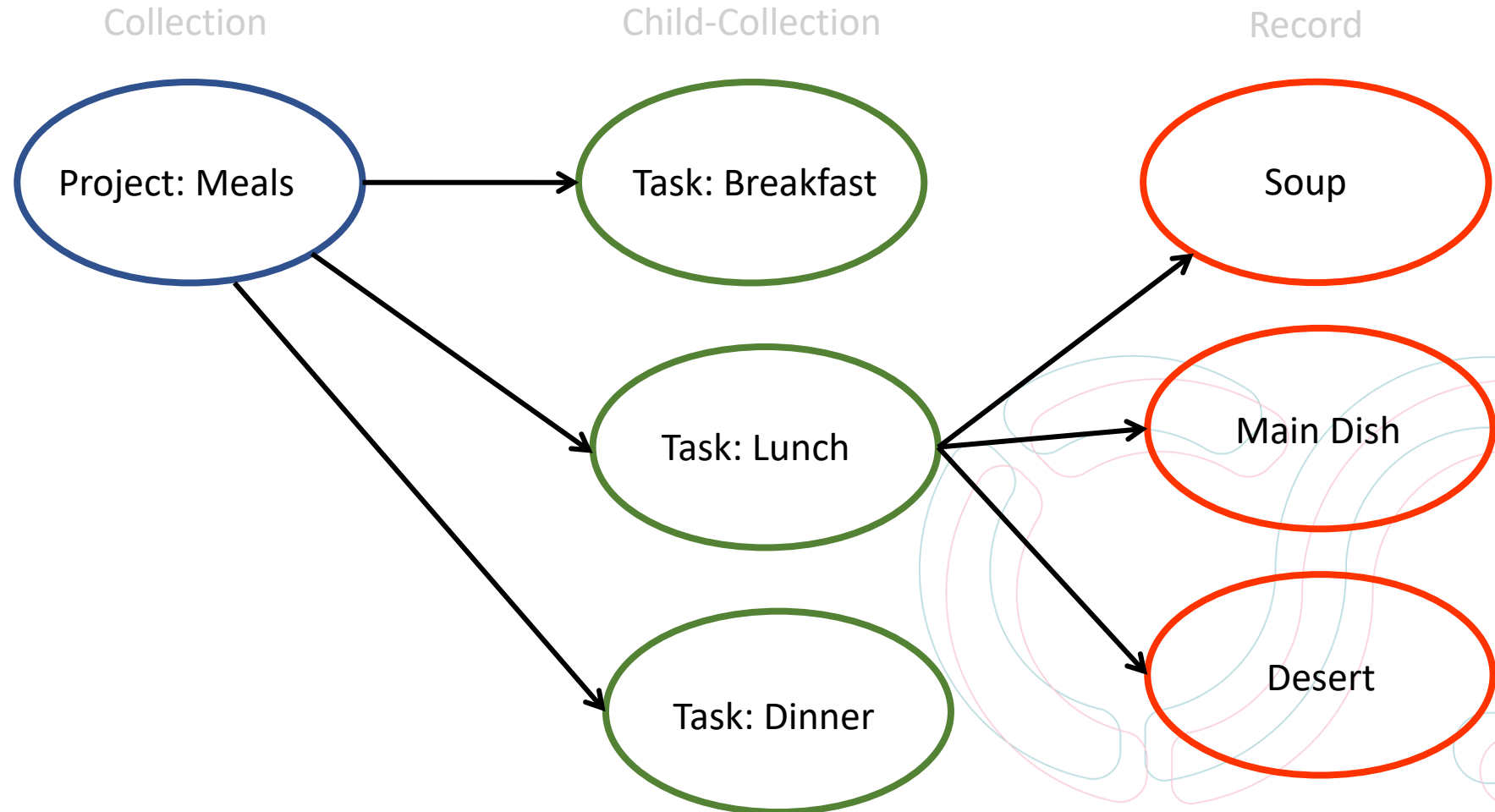
# How to use ELNs?

First-time use



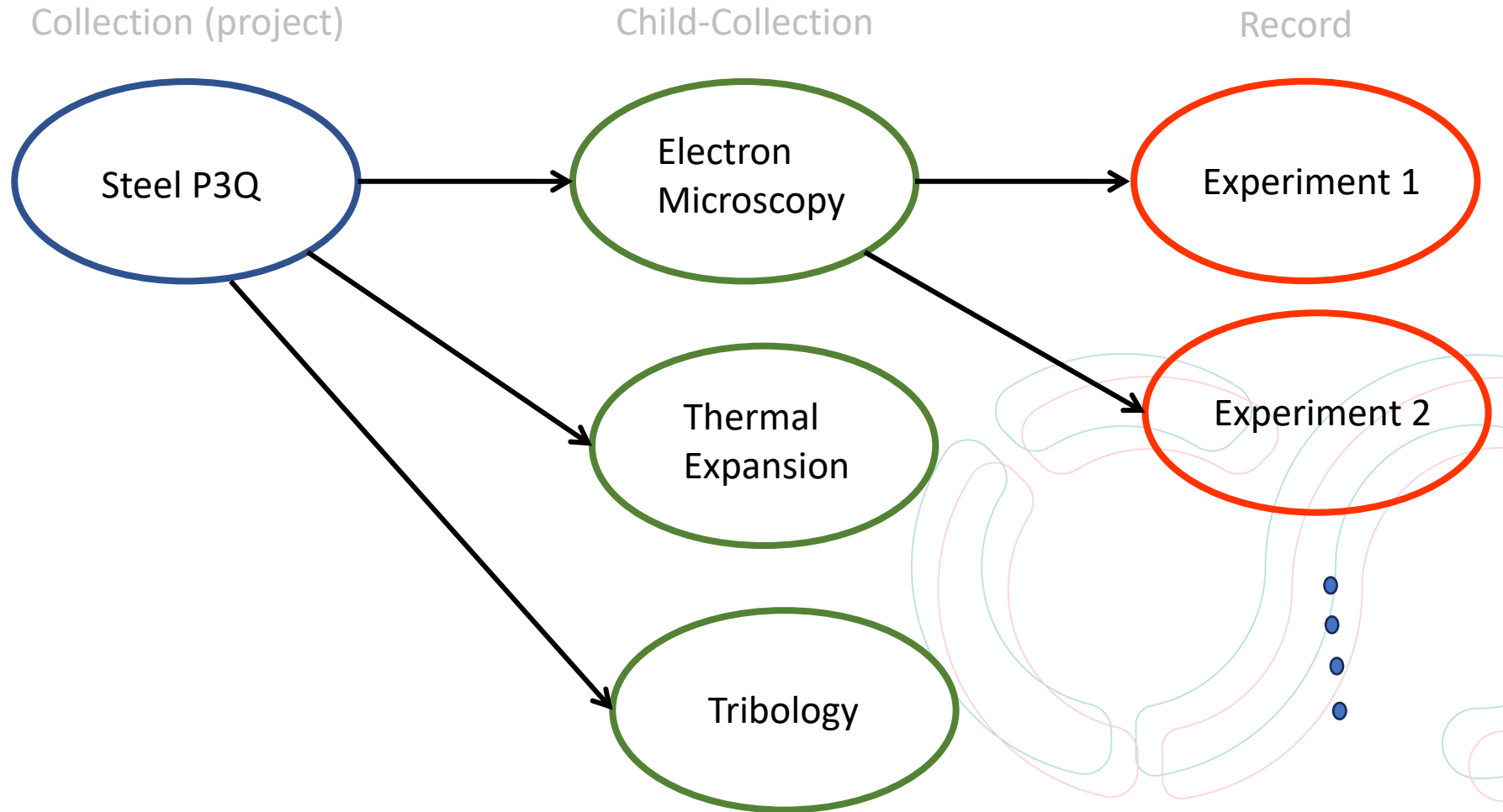
# How to use ELNs?

## Structure of my project



# How to use ELNs?

## Structure of my project



# Fields in the record – metadata schema

Mandatory

Recommended

Creator

Creator ID

..... ORCID

Owner

Owner ID

..... ROR

Date

..... Date of the measurement

Sample

Sample ID

..... IGSN

Instrument

..... Select from the list

Instrument ID

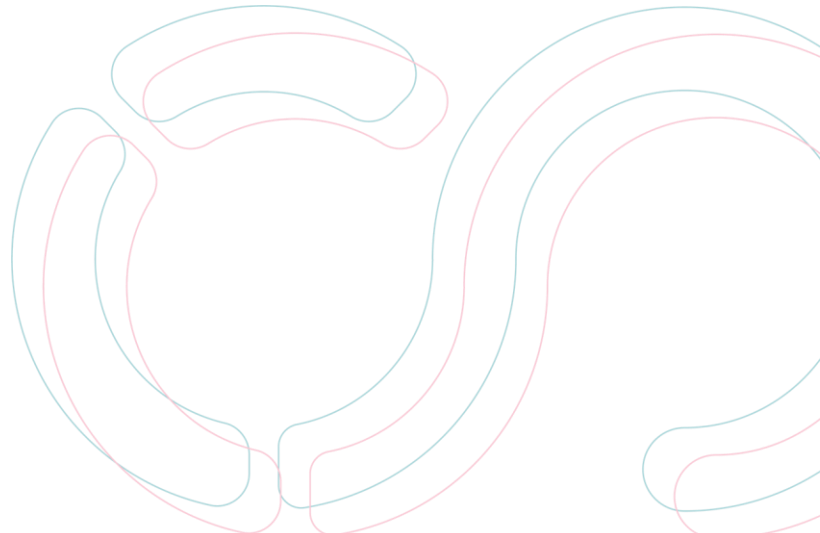
..... PIDINST

Temperature

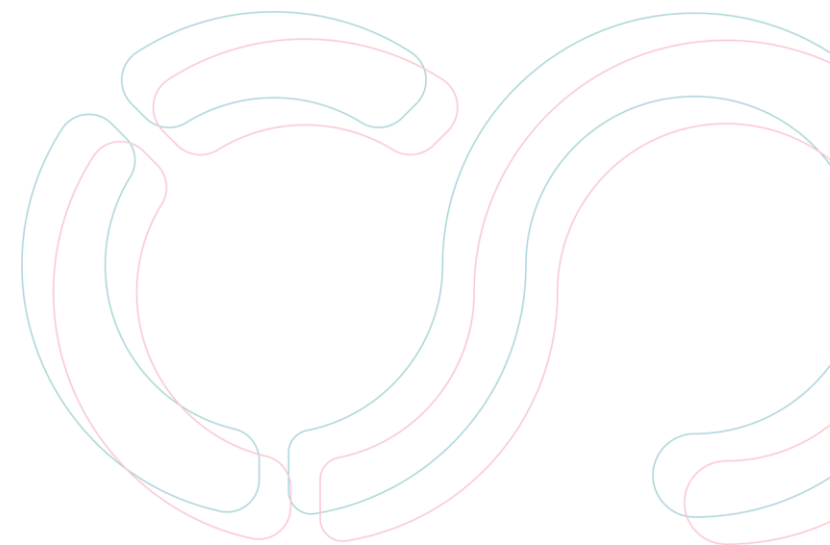
..... Integer: range 200-400 K

Pressure

..... Integer: value

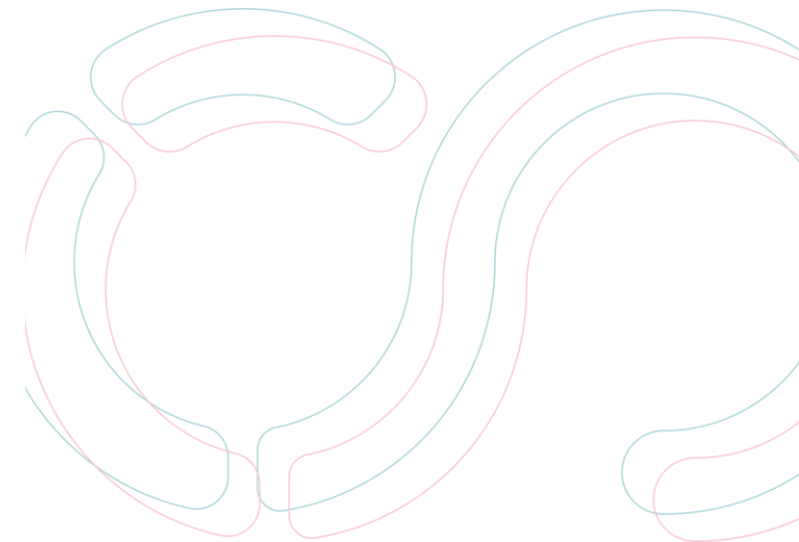


Live demo



# Collection

The screenshot shows the Kadi4Mat web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Kadi4Mat logo and menu items: Records, Collections, Templates, Users, Groups, Workflows, and Beta. A search bar is also present. On the left, a 'Recently visited' sidebar lists several collections and records. The main content area displays the 'Steel P3Q' collection page, which includes tabs for Overview, Links, Permissions, and Revisions. The Overview tab is active, showing options to edit, copy, or link the collection, along with export and publish buttons. The collection details include the name 'Steel P3Q', the user '@steel-p3q', a persistent ID, and a description 'bla'. It also shows creation and modification dates, tags ('props', 'steel'), and a list of records, including 'SteelP3Q\_EM\_clean' which is marked as a dataset. A filter input and a child collection 'Electron Microscopy' are also visible.



# Template

Kadi4Mat
Records
Collections
Templates
Users
Groups
Workflows
Beta
Quick search

**Steel P3Q** Collection

@steel-p3q

Last visited an hour ago

---

**Electron Microscopy** Collection

@electron-microscopy

Last visited an hour ago

---

**SteelP3Q\_EM\_clean** Record

@p3q\_em\_clear

Last visited an hour ago

---

**Electron Microscopy** Collection

@electron-microscopy-workshop

Last visited an hour ago

**Electronic microscopy experiment**

@electronic-microscopy-experiment

Persistent ID: 43

description of the method

Created by Test User

**Record**

Created at November 23, 2023 3:26:46 PM (9 months ago)

Last modified at September 4, 2024 3:47:46 PM (an hour ago)

**Template data**

Collections -

Description -

Identifier -

License -

Record links -

Roles -

Tags electron microscopy temperature

Title **Electron Microscopy**

Type **dataset**

Extras Hide null values

Creator (ORCID)	null	String	✎
Owner	null	String	✎
Date of experiment	null	Date	✎
Sample Name	null	String	✎
Temperature of treatment	null K	Integer	✎

06 September 2024

Electronic Laboratory/Field Notebooks (ELN)

39




# Record

🏠 / Records / SteelP3Q\_EM\_clean / Edit record











⬅ Back to record

Save changes and quit Save changes Delete record


**Title\***  
SteelP3Q\_EM\_clean

**Identifier\*** p3q\_em\_clear  **Type** dataset    
Unique identifier of this record. Optional type of this record, e.g. dataset, experimental device, etc.

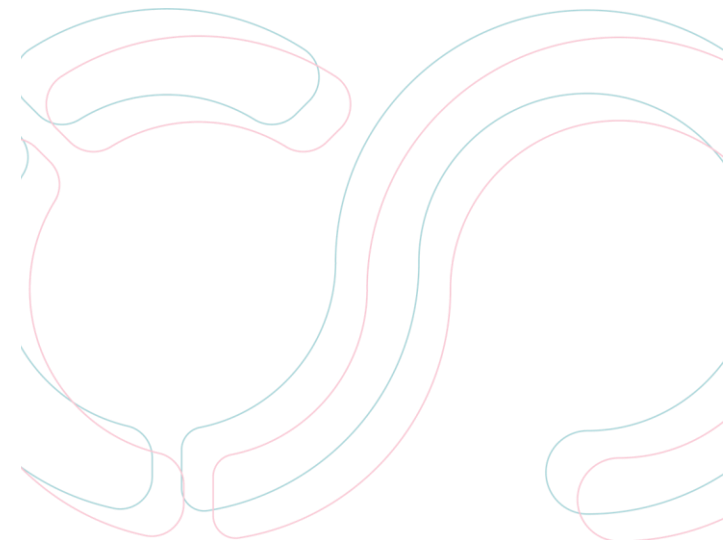
**Description**

Preview | H B I   $x^1$   $x_1$    $\sqrt{x}$    “ -      

Important measurement|


This editor supports Markdown, including math written in LaTeX syntax rendered with  KaTeX. Note that HTML tags and external images are not supported.

**Tags**





# Record – from template

This editor supports Markdown, including math written in LaTeX syntax rendered with  KaTeX. Note that HTML tags and external images are not supported.













**Tags**

steel x

An optional list of keywords further describing the record.

**Extra metadata**

Simple mode Tree view

Type	String	Key	Creator	Value*	Marek Cebecauer	+	x				
Type	String	Key	Creator ID	Value*	orcid 5555	+	x				
Type	Date	Key	Date of measurement	Value	November 16, 2023 12:00:00 AM	+	x				
Type	String	Key	Instrument	Value*	JEOL 333	+	x				
Type	Integer	Key	Temperature	Value	300	Unit	K	+	x		
Type	String	Key		Value		+	x				

+ Add extra

Select a template

**License**

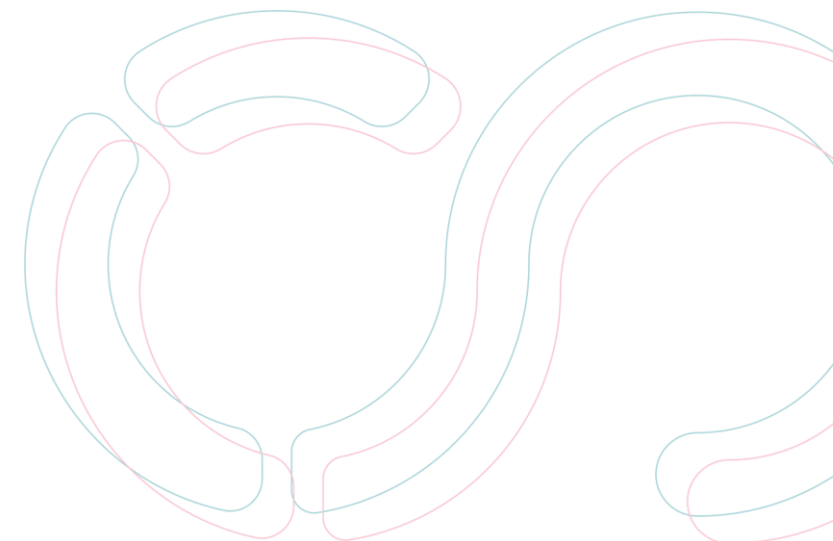
Search for a license

Specifying an optional license can determine the conditions for the correct reuse of data and metadata when the record is published or simply shared with other users. A license can also be uploaded as a file, in which case one of the "Other" licenses can be chosen.

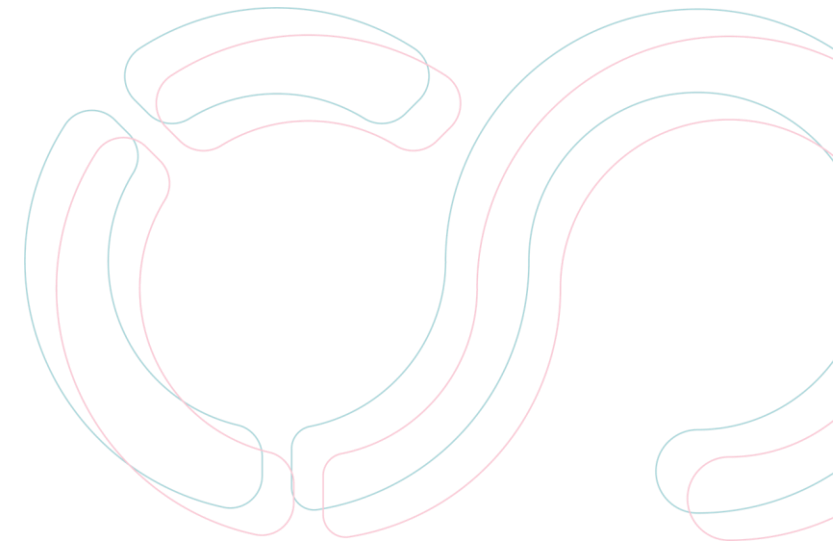
**Visibility**

Private

Public visibility automatically grants EVERY logged-in user read permissions for this record.



## Discussion



# Thank you for your attention.

marek.cebecauer@jh-inst.cas.cz



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CZ.02.01.01/00/22\_004/0007682