

Avoiding Confusion When Using Collaboration Features

ezEML’s **collaboration** features let you collaborate with colleagues and/or with EDI’s data curation team in editing your data package. (See “Collaborating with Others in ezEML” and “Submitting Your Package to EDI” in this User Guide.)

When using collaboration, it’s important to be mindful of whose account contains the package being shared – i.e., in ezEML’s terminology, who is the package’s *owner*. When looking at the collaborations table, it’s helpful to notice both the package name and the owner to help ensure you’re looking at the intended package, since it’s entirely possible that two different users own a package with the same name. I.e., think of a package as being designated by the combination of package name and owner, together.

Why is this important? The files that comprise a package reside in the owner’s file storage area on the ezEML server. Ordinarily, users cannot access files in other users’ accounts, but collaboration lets multiple users work with the files that are in the owner’s file storage area. These collaborating users should not create copies under their own accounts – i.e., in their own file storage areas. Creating copies invites confusion, as there will then be multiple packages with the same name but different owners, and changes made to one such package will not be carried over to the others. Paying attention to who owns a package helps guard against unintentional duplications.

Note, though, that if you establish more than one *collaboration* for a package, you will see multiple entries for the package on your collaborations page. That is to be expected. For example, suppose user_1 has established collaborations with colleagues user_2 and user_3 for package “Collaboration test”, owned by user_1. Suppose further that user_1 has submitted the package to the EDI data curation team, who are currently working on the package. Then user EDI’s collaborations table will look like:

Collaborate ?

My Collaborations

Show entries

Package	Owner	Collaborator	Start Date	Status	Action
Collaboration test	user_1	EDI Curators	2023-10-16	In use by EDI Curators	
Collaboration test	user_1	user_2	2023-10-16	In use by EDI Curators	
Collaboration test	user_1	user_3	2023-10-16	In use by EDI Curators	

Showing 1 to 3 of 3 entries

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These three entries are for the three *collaborations* for a single package, not three packages. Notice that all three entries have the same package name and owner, so they all refer to the same package.

Now suppose, in this example, user_1 invites colleague user_4 to collaborate on this package and user_4 happens already to own a package also named “Collaboration test.” ezEML will allow user_4 to accept the invitation, but it will display the following warning:

You own a package with the same name as the one you're being invited to collaborate on. This often indicates some confusion about how collaboration is meant to be used. You may want to contact support@edirepository.org for assistance.

It may well be in such a case that the package duplication is unintentional, and it would be wise to clarify the situation with your collaborators before proceeding further. You will want to be clear on whether you are collaborating on the correct version of the package – i.e., on the version with the correct owner.