

# An Introduction to rmdplugr

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## 1 Motivation

The motivation for **rmdplugr** was first off to produce a cleaner latex output format for rmarkdown documents, given that the default settings modify standard latex template by introducing

- wide margins,
- compact titles, and
- paragraph spacing (instead of indentation).

All of these make changes to the, in my opinion, well-founded design choices and should be alternatives rather than the default. I understand the stance taken by the pandoc team that output should be made similar across different outputs, yet I believe that the vast majority of users—particularly of Rmarkdown—make use only of a single output format at a time.

As a secondary objective, I wanted to allow modifications of the standard latex template to allow for things such as headers and footers and author affiliations.

## 2 rmdplugr

I did not, however, want to produce *yet another* custom latex template needing to be continuously updated along with the default templates, nor having to cater to different versions of pandoc, having to keep separate templates for different versions (as rmarkdown does).

rmdplugr was created to avoid such issues and does so by instead modifying the default latex template in a version-agnostic fashion. The default template is pulled by calling

```
pandoc -D latex
```

The template is then modified with modifications in the form of *plugins*, which are merged into the latex template—sometimes replacing other material, but usually inserting new material, such as support for footers and headers.

In this way, `rndplgr` doesn't have to adapt to the pandoc version and can even be used with custom templates *provided* that some of the matter from the default template is left intact.

These *plugins* can be turned on and off via the `output` setting in the metadata block and their options are controlled by metadata settings.

## 3 Plugins

### 3.1 Marginal material

Headers and footers are provided using **fancyhdr** for standard latex document classes and **scrlayer-page** for KOMA-script classes. Simply adding

```
header: true
```

in the metadata block will invoke the default settings using the `automark` option in **scrlayer-page** and the default `\pagestyle{fancy}` for **fancyhdr**. More advanced settings can be provided by using

```
header:  
  l: Johan Larsson  
  c: Document title  
footer:  
  r: Date
```