

**OHBM BRAINHACK TRAINTRACK**

# **AN INTRODUCTION TO DATALAD**

Adina Wagner

 @AdinaKrik

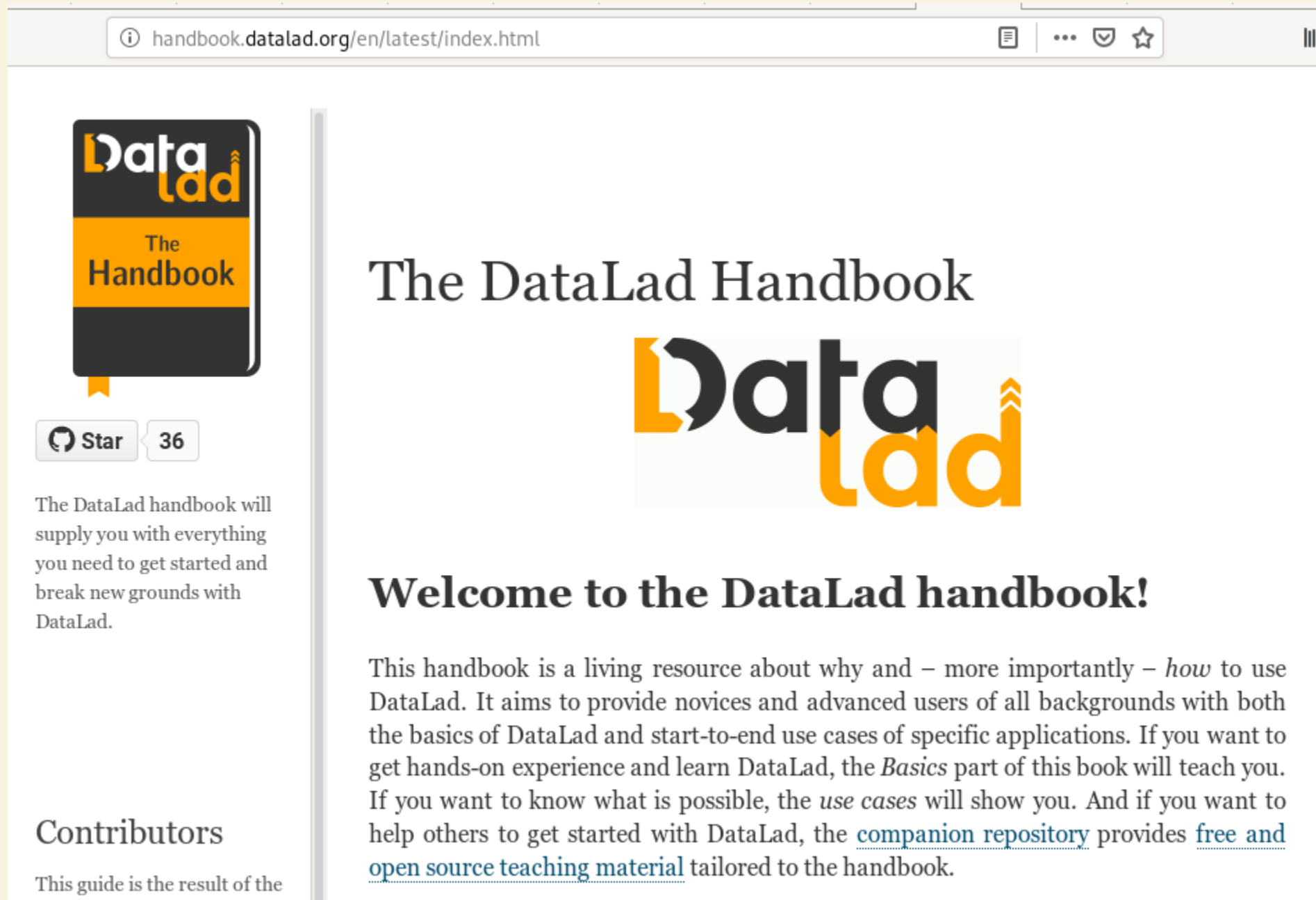


---

Psychoinformatics lab,  
Institute of Neuroscience and Medicine, Brain & Behavior (INM-7)  
Research Center Jülich

Slides: <https://github.com/datalad-handbook/course/>

# LEARN ALL ABOUT DATALAD AT HANDBOOK.DATALAD.ORG



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying `handbook.data-lad.org/en/latest/index.html`. The page features a sidebar on the left with a book cover titled "DataLad The Handbook", a GitHub star button showing 36 stars, and a "Contributors" section. The main content area has the title "The DataLad Handbook" with a large DataLad logo, followed by the heading "Welcome to the DataLad handbook!". The introductory text describes the handbook as a living resource for novices and advanced users, covering basics, use cases, and companion repository material.

handbook.data-lad.org/en/latest/index.html

**DataLad**  
The Handbook

Star 36

The DataLad handbook will supply you with everything you need to get started and break new grounds with DataLad.

**Contributors**

This guide is the result of the

## The DataLad Handbook

### Welcome to the DataLad handbook!

This handbook is a living resource about why and – more importantly – *how* to use DataLad. It aims to provide novices and advanced users of all backgrounds with both the basics of DataLad and start-to-end use cases of specific applications. If you want to get hands-on experience and learn DataLad, the *Basics* part of this book will teach you. If you want to know what is possible, the *use cases* will show you. And if you want to help others to get started with DataLad, the [companion repository](#) provides [free and open source teaching material](#) tailored to the handbook.

# DataLad IN BRIEF

- A command-line tool with Python API
- Build on top of **Git** and **Git-annex**
- **Allows...**
  - ... version-controlling arbitrarily large content,
  - ... easily sharing and obtaining data (note: no data hosting!),
  - ... (computationally) reproducible data analysis,
  - ... and *much* more
- Completely domain-agnostic
- available for all major operating systems (Linux, macOS/OSX, Windows)

# STEP 1: INSTALL DATALAD

handbook.datalad.org/en/latest/intro/installation.html



Star 36

## Table of Contents

### Installation and configuration

- Install DataLad
  - Linux: (Neuro)Debian, Ubuntu, and similar systems
  - Linux: CentOS, Redhat, Fedora, or similar systems
  - Linux-machines with no root access (e.g. HPC systems)
  - macOS/OSX
  - Using Python's package manager `pip`
  - Windows 10
- Initial configuration

## Linux: (Neuro)Debian, Ubuntu, and similar systems

For Debian-based operating systems, the most convenient installation method is to enable the [NeuroDebian](#) repository. If you are on a Debian-based system, but do not have the NeuroDebian repository enabled, you should very much consider enabling it right now. The above hyperlink links to a very easy instruction, and it only requires copy-pasting three lines of code. Also, should you be confused by the name: enabling this repository will not do any harm if your field is not neuroscience.

The following command installs DataLad and all of its software dependencies (including the git-annex-standalone package):

```
$ sudo apt-get install datalad
```

The command above will also upgrade existing installations to the most recent available version.

## Linux: CentOS, Redhat, Fedora, or similar systems

For CentOS, Redhat, Fedora, or similar distributions, there is an rpm git-annex-standalone available [here](#). Subsequently, DataLad can be installed via `pip`.

Alternatively, DataLad can be installed together with [Git](#) and [git-annex](#) via `conda` as outlined in the section below.

## Linux-machines with no root access (e.g. HPC systems)

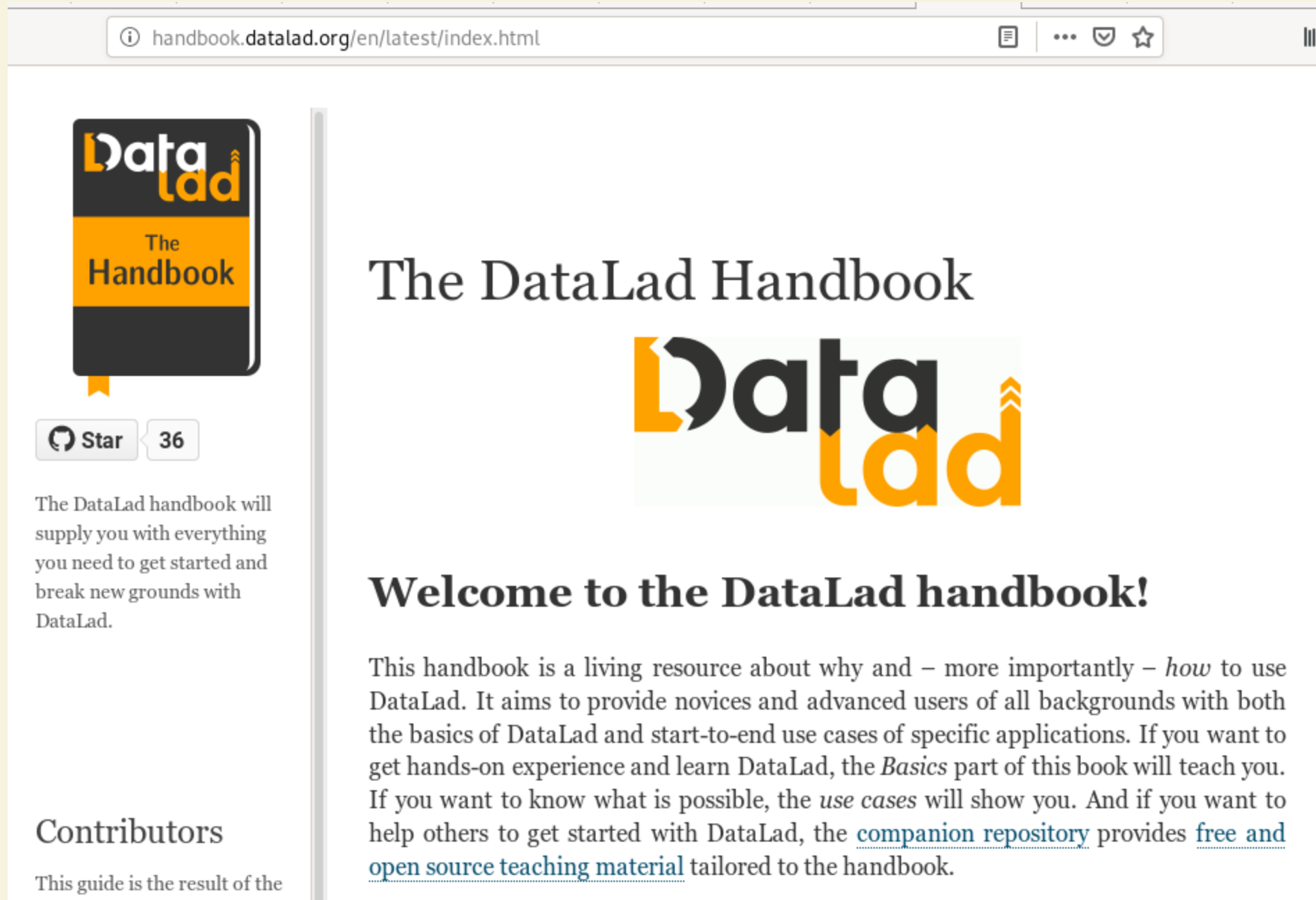
## STEP 2: CONFIGURE YOUR GIT IDENTITY

>

```
git config --global --add user.name "Firstname Lastname"  
git config --global --add user.email "some@email.com"
```

**LET'S START!**

# FOLLOW ALONG!



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying `handbook.datalad.org/en/latest/index.html`. The page features the DataLad logo and the title "The DataLad Handbook". On the left sidebar, there is a book icon with the DataLad logo and the text "The Handbook", a "Star" button with a count of 36, and a "Contributors" section. The main content area has the heading "The DataLad Handbook" followed by a large DataLad logo. Below this is the heading "Welcome to the DataLad handbook!" and a paragraph of text: "This handbook is a living resource about why and – more importantly – *how* to use DataLad. It aims to provide novices and advanced users of all backgrounds with both the basics of DataLad and start-to-end use cases of specific applications. If you want to get hands-on experience and learn DataLad, the *Basics* part of this book will teach you. If you want to know what is possible, the *use cases* will show you. And if you want to help others to get started with DataLad, the [companion repository](#) provides [free and open source teaching material](#) tailored to the handbook."

handbook.datalad.org/en/latest/index.html

**DataLad**  
The Handbook

Star 36

The DataLad handbook will supply you with everything you need to get started and break new grounds with DataLad.

**Contributors**  
This guide is the result of the

## The DataLad Handbook

# DataLad

## Welcome to the DataLad handbook!

This handbook is a living resource about why and – more importantly – *how* to use DataLad. It aims to provide novices and advanced users of all backgrounds with both the basics of DataLad and start-to-end use cases of specific applications. If you want to get hands-on experience and learn DataLad, the *Basics* part of this book will teach you. If you want to know what is possible, the *use cases* will show you. And if you want to help others to get started with DataLad, the [companion repository](#) provides [free and open source teaching material](#) tailored to the handbook.

Code to follow along:

[http://handbook.datalad.org/en/latest/code\\_from\\_chapters/OHBM.html](http://handbook.datalad.org/en/latest/code_from_chapters/OHBM.html)

# DATALAD DATASETS

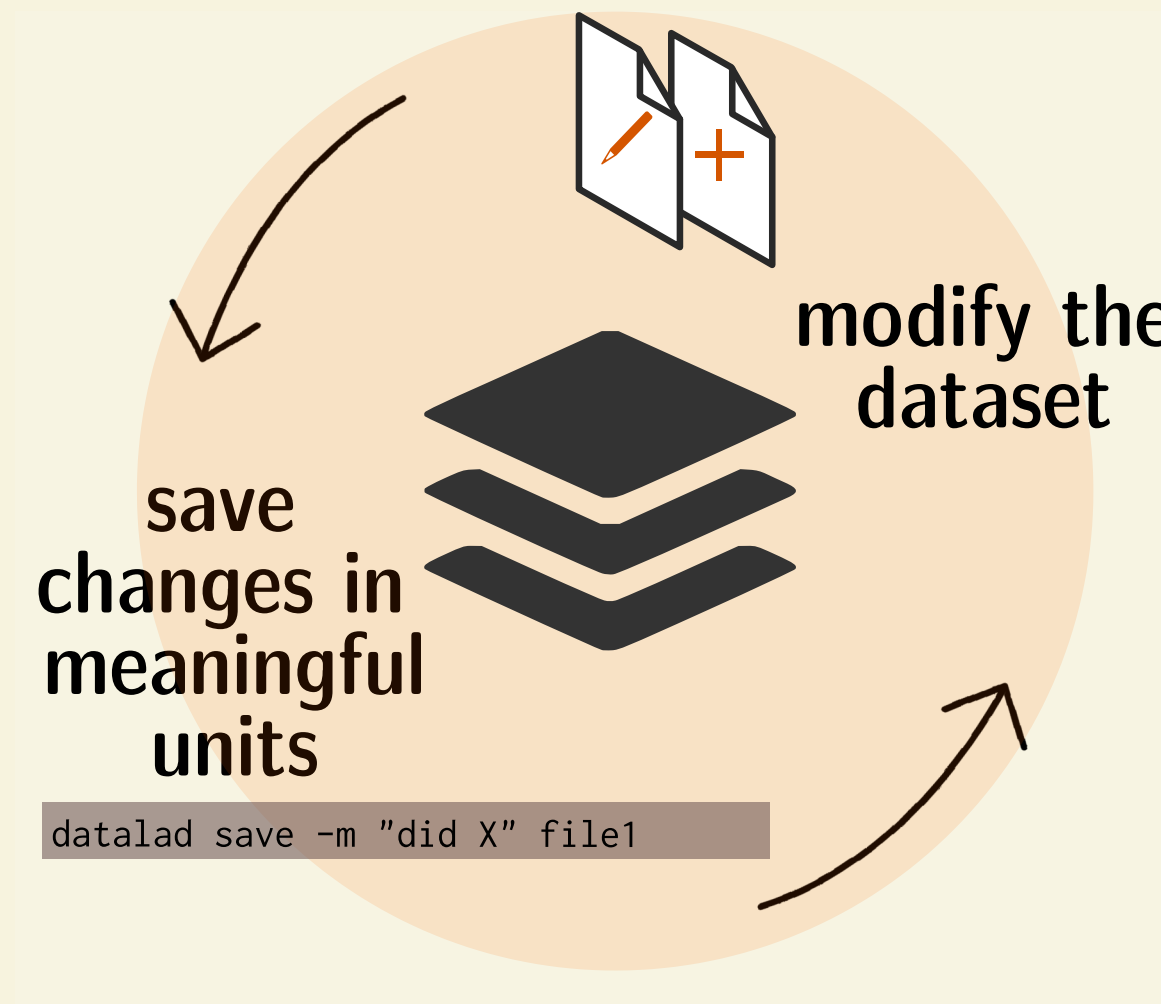
- DataLad's core data structure
  - Dataset = A directory managed by DataLad
  - Any directory of your computer can be managed by DataLad.
  - Datasets can be *created* (from scratch) or *installed*
  - Datasets can be nested: *linked subdirectories*



# LOCAL VERSION CONTROL

# LOCAL VERSION CONTROL

Procedurally, version control is easy with DataLad!



- Advice:**
- Save *meaningful* units of change
  - Attach helpful commit messages

## SUMMARY - LOCAL VERSION CONTROL

**datalad create** creates an empty dataset.

Configurations (-c yoda, -c text2git) are useful.

A dataset has a *history* to track files and their modifications.

Explore it with Git (**git log**) or external tools (e.g., **tig**).

**datalad save** records the dataset or file state to the history.

Concise **commit messages** should summarize the change for future you and others.

**datalad status** reports the current state of the dataset.

A clean dataset status is good practice.

# FROM HERE

# TO THIS:

## "FINAL".doc



FINAL.doc!



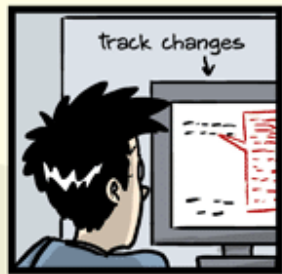
FINAL\_rev.2.doc



FINAL\_rev.6.COMMENTS.doc



FINAL\_rev.8.comments5.  
CORRECTIONS.doc



FINAL\_rev.18.comments7.  
corrections9.MORE.30.doc

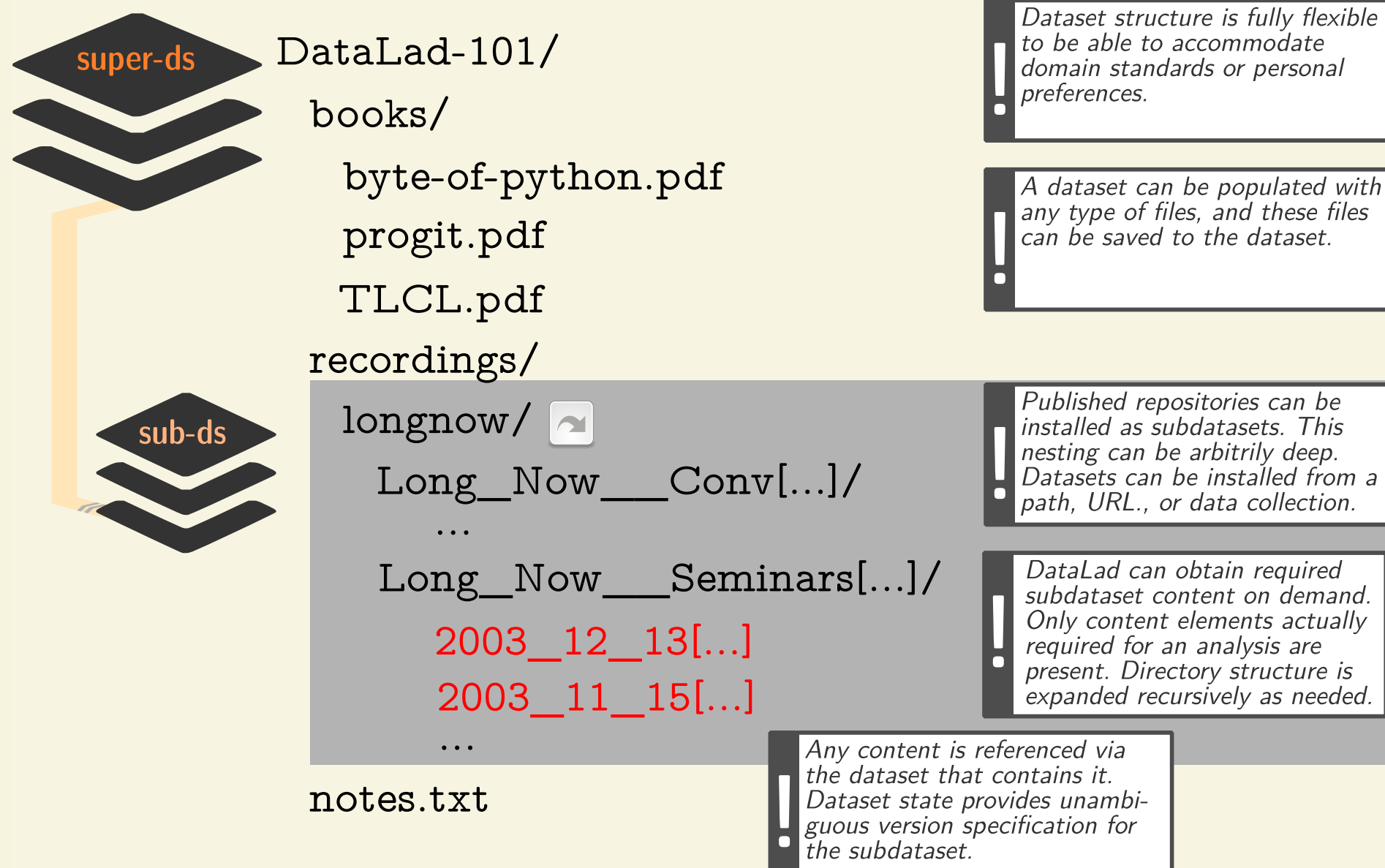


FINAL\_rev.22.comments49.  
corrections.10. #@\$%WHYDID  
ICOMETOGRADSCHOOL?????.doc



# **CONSUMING DATASETS AND DATASET NESTING**

# CONSUMING DATASETS



- Datasets are light-weight: Upon installation, only small files and meta data about file availability are retrieved.
- Content can be obtained on demand via `data lad get`.

https://github.com/datalad-datasets/human-connectome-project-openaccess

rch or jump to... Pull requests Issues Marketplace Explore

datalad-datasets / human-connectome-project-openaccess

Unwatch 4 Unstar 4 Fork 1

<> Code

Issues 3

Pull requests 0

Actions

Projects 0

Wiki

Security 0

Insights

WU-Minn HCP1200 Data: 3T/7T MR scans from young healthy adults twins and non-twin siblings (ages 22-35) [T1w, T2w, resting-state and task fMRI, high angular resolution dMRI] <https://db.humanconnectome.org/data/p...>

14 commits

1 branch

0 packages

0 releases

3 contributors

Branch: master

New pull request

Create new file

Upload files

Find file

Clone or download


mih Merge pull request #6 from yarikoptic/enhs

Latest commit 1dccc09 on Apr 9

.datalad	Let DataLad find subdatasets in the main dataset store by default	4 months ago
HCP1200	Replace participants broken participant sub(sub)datasets	4 months ago
.gitmodules	Replace participants broken participant sub(sub)datasets	4 months ago
.noannex	Turn into an actual DataLad dataset (no annex, though)	4 months ago
DATA_USE_AGREEMENT.md	add copy of Data Usage Agreement from the HCP	4 months ago
README.md	Reworded a bit -- authentication will be happening, it just will not ...	3 months ago

README.md

# Get data from the Human Connectome Project Open Access dataset with DataLad

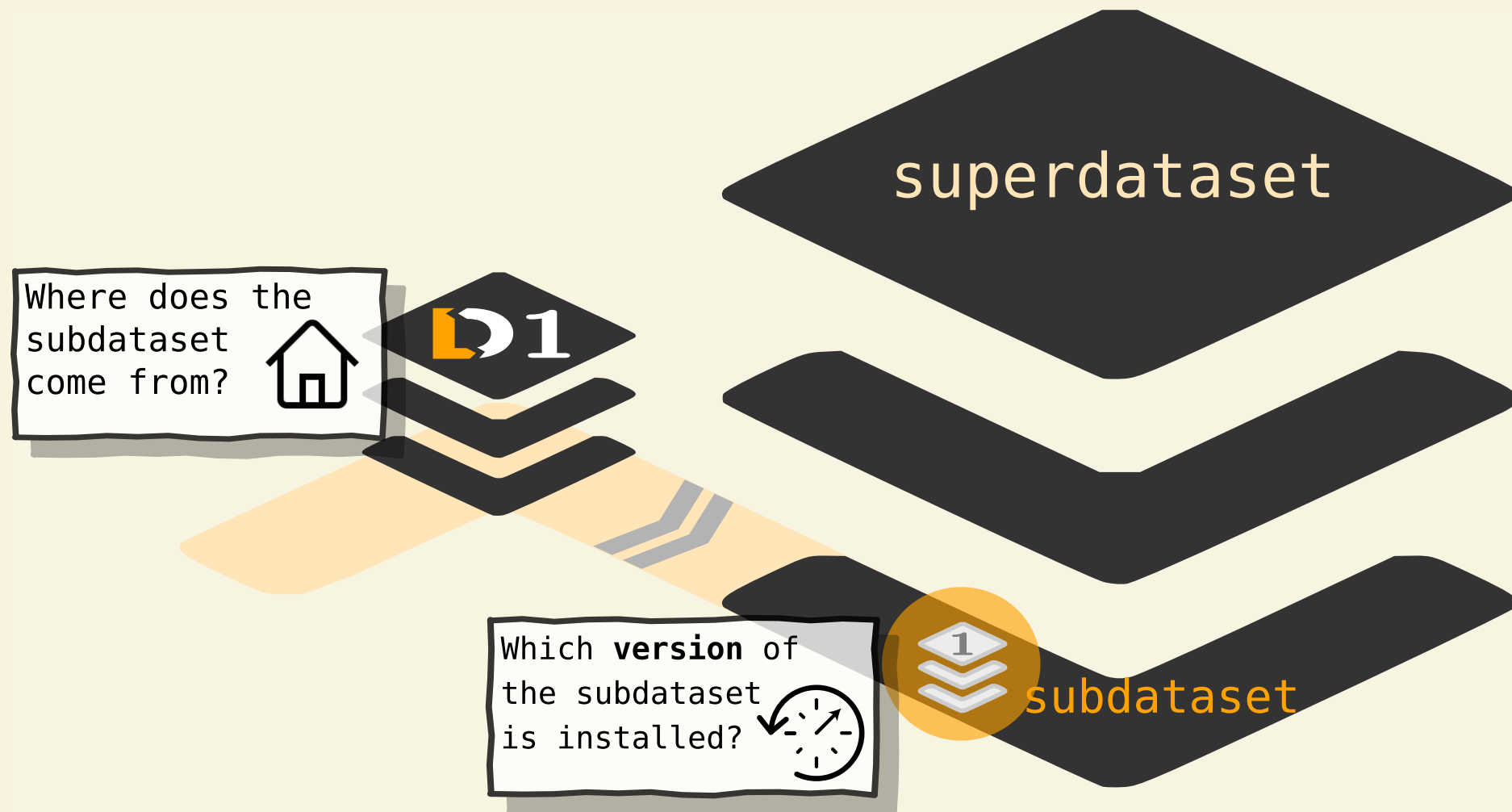
Made with 

This dataset enables data retrieval with DataLad (0.12.2 or later) from the [HCP Open Access dataset](#) for users that accepted the WU-Minn HCP Consortium Open Access Data Use Terms and obtained valid AWS credentials via [db.humanconnectome.org](https://db.humanconnectome.org).

## Human Connectome Project

The Human [Connectome Project \(HCP\)](#) aims to construct a map of the complete structural and functional neural connections in vivo within and across individuals.

# DATASET NESTING





# SUMMARY - DATASET CONSUMPTION & NESTING

**data`lad` clone** installs a dataset.

It can be installed “on its own”: Specify the source (url, path, ...) of the dataset, and an optional **path** for it to be installed to.

**Datasets can be installed as subdatasets within an existing dataset.**

The **--dataset/-d** option needs a path to the root of the superdataset.

**Only small files and metadata about file availability are present locally after an install.**

To retrieve actual file content of larger files, `datalad get` downloads large file content on demand.

- Content can be dropped to save disk space with `datalad drop`.  
Do this only if content can be easily reobtained.

**Datasets preserve their history.**

In nested datasets, the superdataset records only the *version state* of the subdataset.

# EXAMPLE: REPRODUCIBLE RESEARCH OBJECTS

The screenshot shows the GitHub repository page for `psychoinformatics-de/paper-remodnav`. The browser address bar displays the URL `https://github.com/psychoinformatics-de/paper-remodnav/`. The repository page includes a navigation bar with links for Pull requests, Issues, Marketplace, and Explore. Below the repository name, there are statistics: 7 Unwatch, 0 Star, and 2 Fork. The main content area shows the repository description: "Code, data and manuscript for <https://doi.org/10.1101/619254>". A summary bar indicates 420 commits, 8 branches, 0 packages, 2 releases, 3 contributors, and CC-BY-4.0 license. Below this, there are buttons for "Branch: master", "New pull request", "Create new file", "Upload files", "Find file", and "Clone or download". The commit history table shows the following entries:

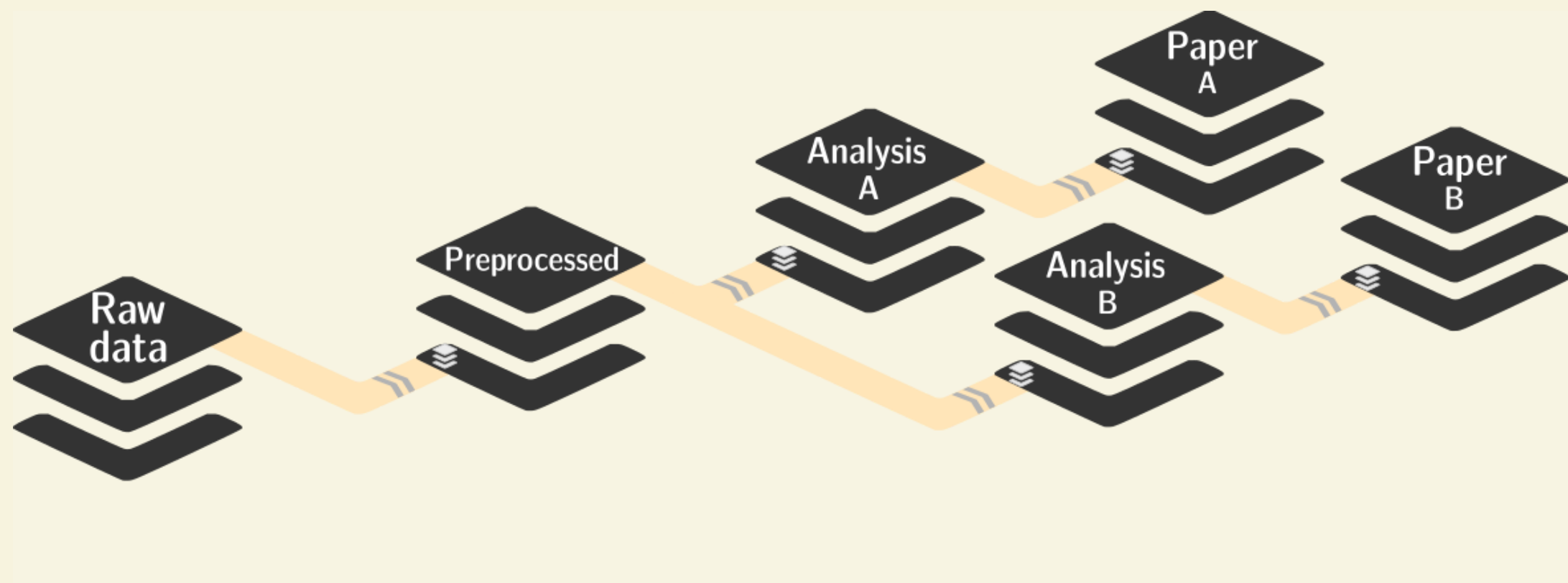
Commit	Description	Time
adswa	Merge pull request #14 from psychoinformatics-de/bf-data	Latest commit 12752d4 yesterday
code	One-time datalad import	yesterday
data	Point to latest label dataset	13 months ago
img	Label panels in flowchart	2 months ago
remodnav @ d289118	Update remodnav with latest test dataset	13 months ago

Find this repo at [github.com/psychoinformatics-de/paper-remodnav](https://github.com/psychoinformatics-de/paper-remodnav)

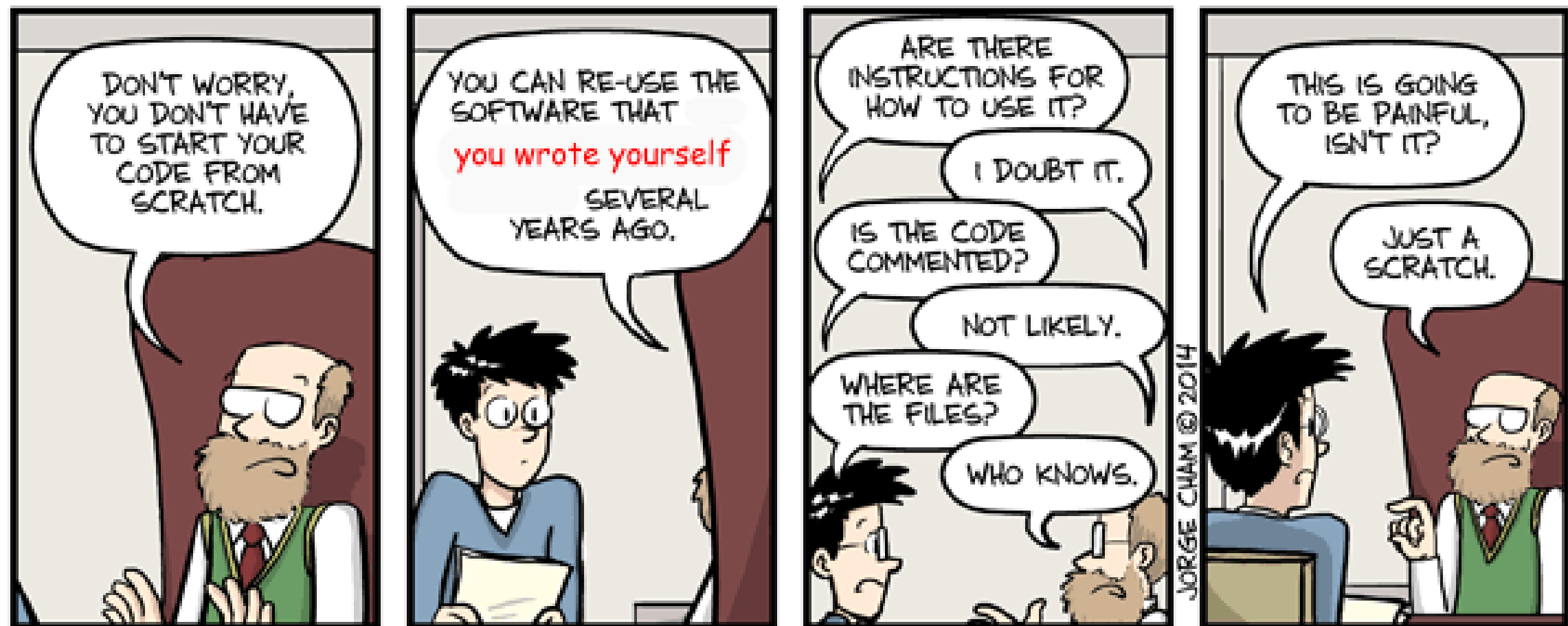
Read all about it at [handbook.datalad.org/en/latest/usecases/reproducible-paper.html](https://handbook.datalad.org/en/latest/usecases/reproducible-paper.html)

# ADVANTAGES OF NESTING

- A modular structure makes individual components (with their respective provenance) reusable.
- Nesting can flexibly link all components and allows recursive operations across dataset boundaries
- Read all about this in the [chapter on YODA principles](#)



# REPRODUCIBLE DATA ANALYSIS

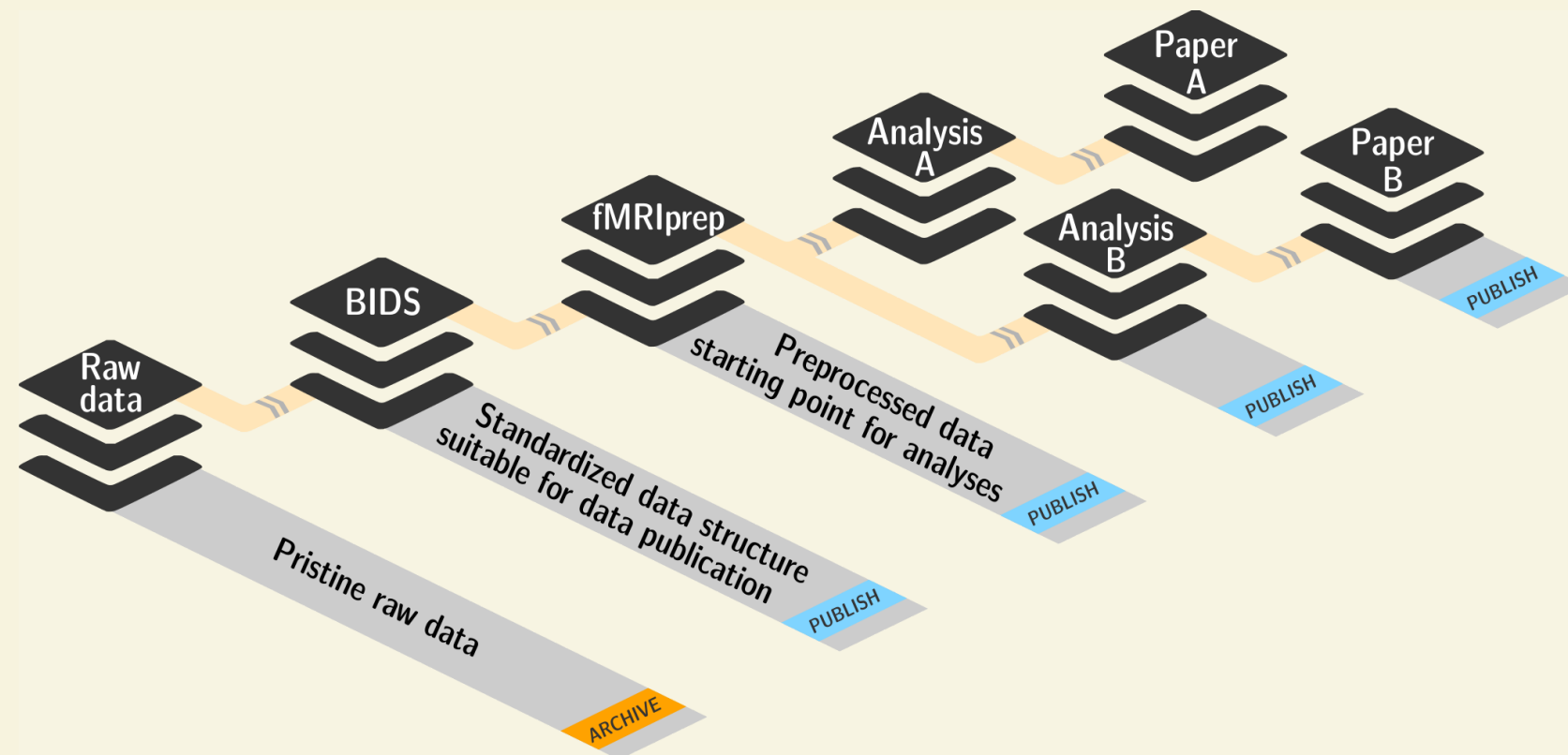


WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

# BASIC ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR DATASETS

Read all about this in the [chapter on YODA principles](#)

- Keep everything clean and modular



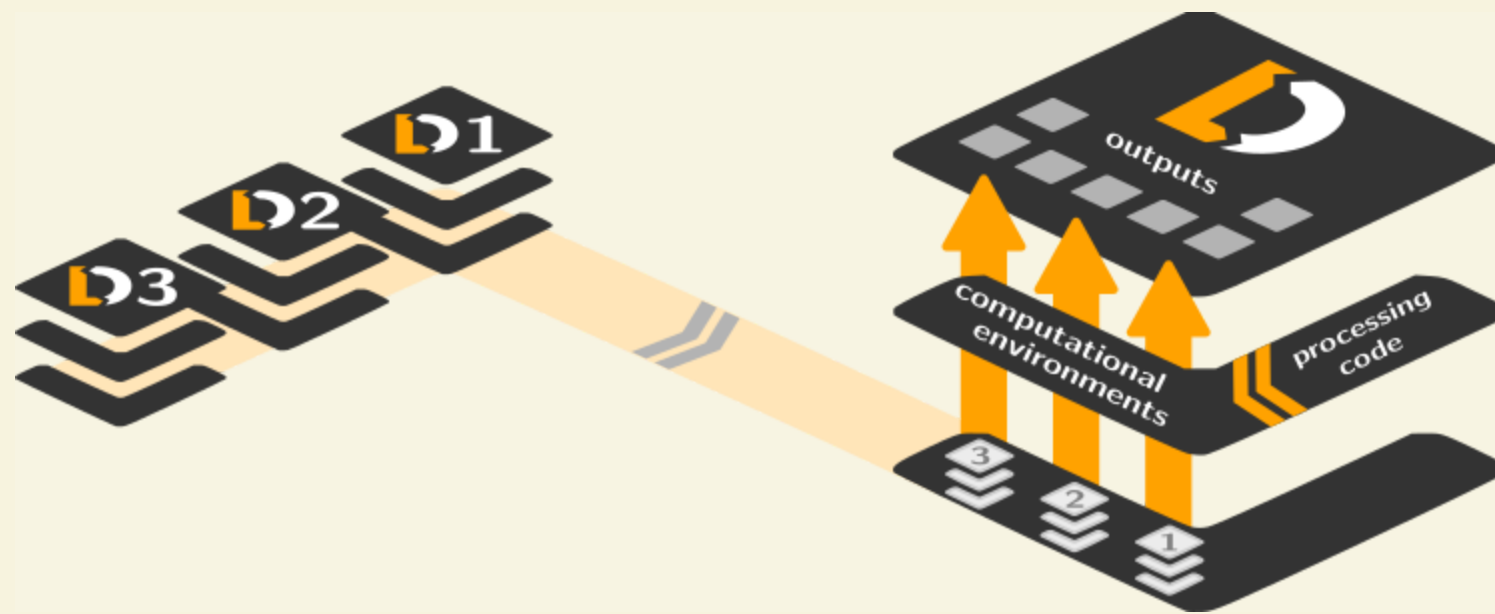
```
code/
├── tests/
└── myscript.py
docs
├── build/
└── source/
envs
└── Singularity
inputs/
└── data/
    ├── dataset1/
    │   └── datafile
    └── dataset2/
        └── datafile
outputs/
├── important_result
└── figures/
README.md
```

- do not touch/modify raw data: save any results/computations *outside* of input datasets
- Keep a superdataset self-contained: Scripts reference subdatasets or files with *relative paths*

# BASIC ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR DATASETS

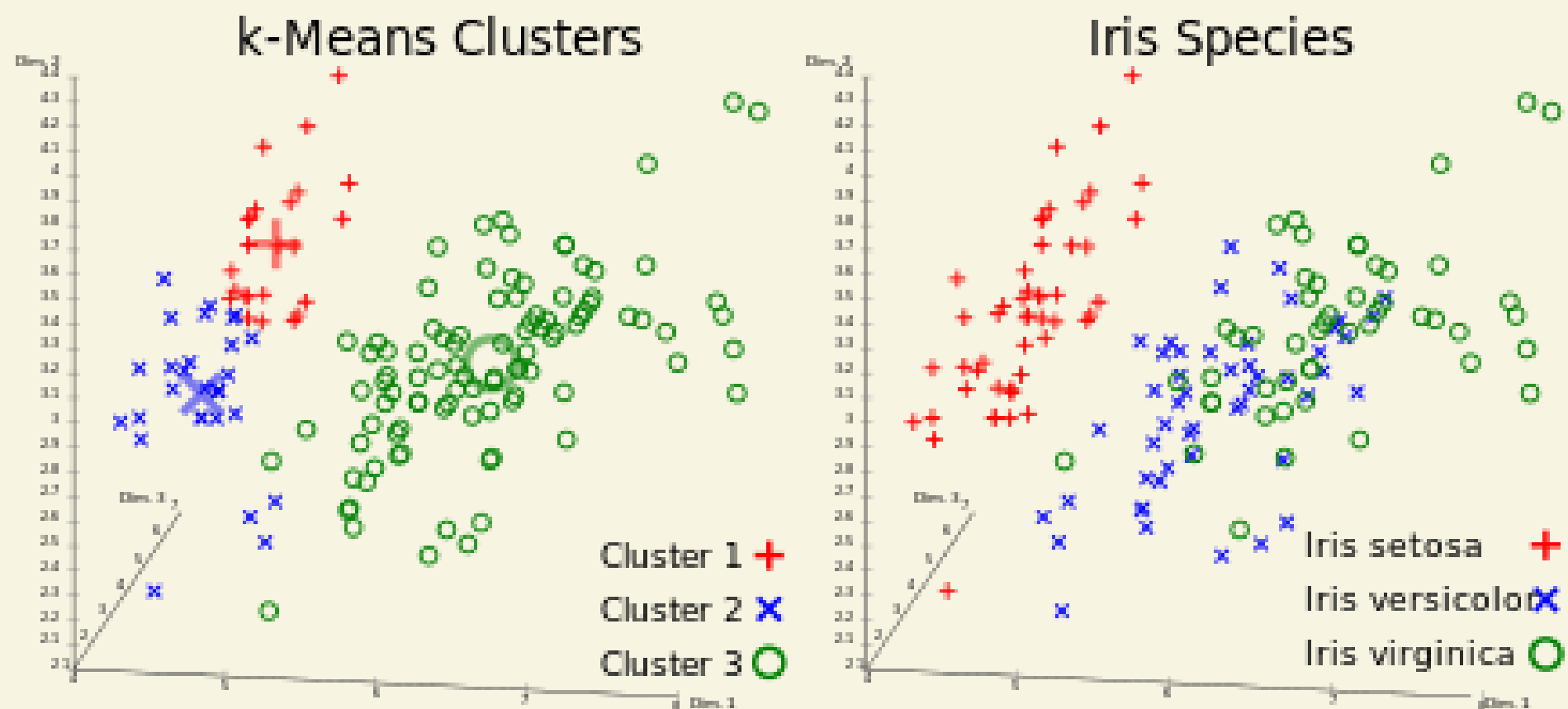
Record where you got it from, where it is now, and what you do to it

- Link datasets (as subdatasets), record data origin
- Collect and store provenance of all contents of a dataset that you create



- Record command execution: Which script produced which output? From which data? In which software environment? ...

# A CLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS ON THE IRIS FLOWER DATASET





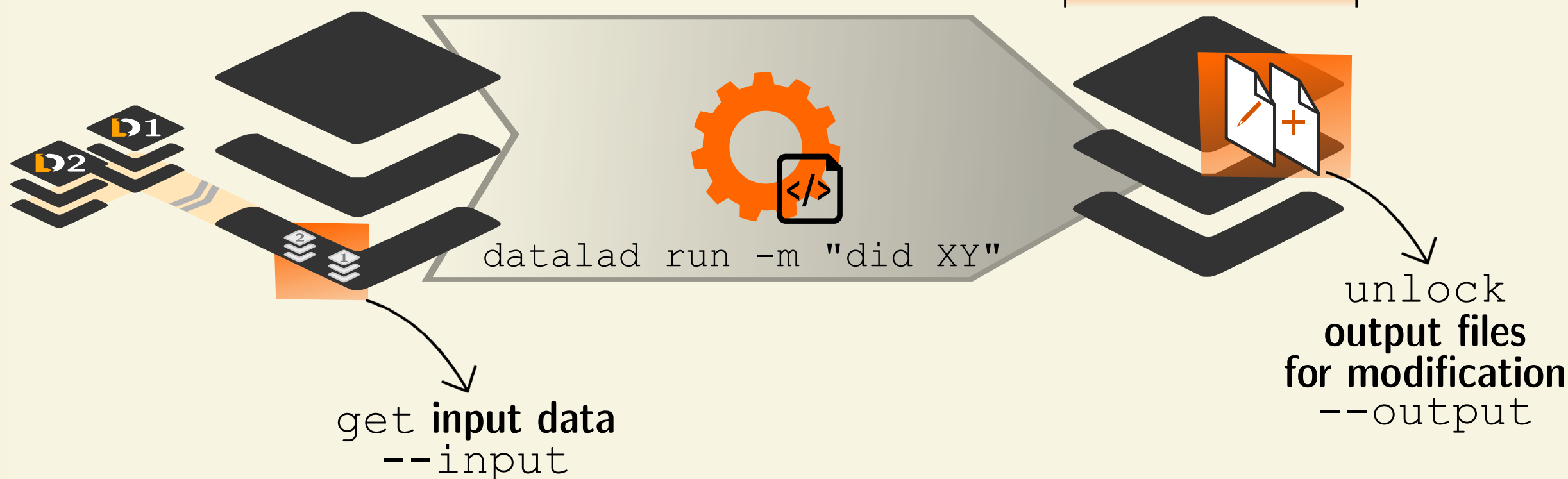
# REPRODUCIBLE EXECUTION & PROVENANCE CAPTURE

datalad run

**Reproducible execution:**  
link input, code, and output with  
datalad run

save all  
modifications  
of the dataset

- human-readable  
commit message
- machine-readable  
run-record





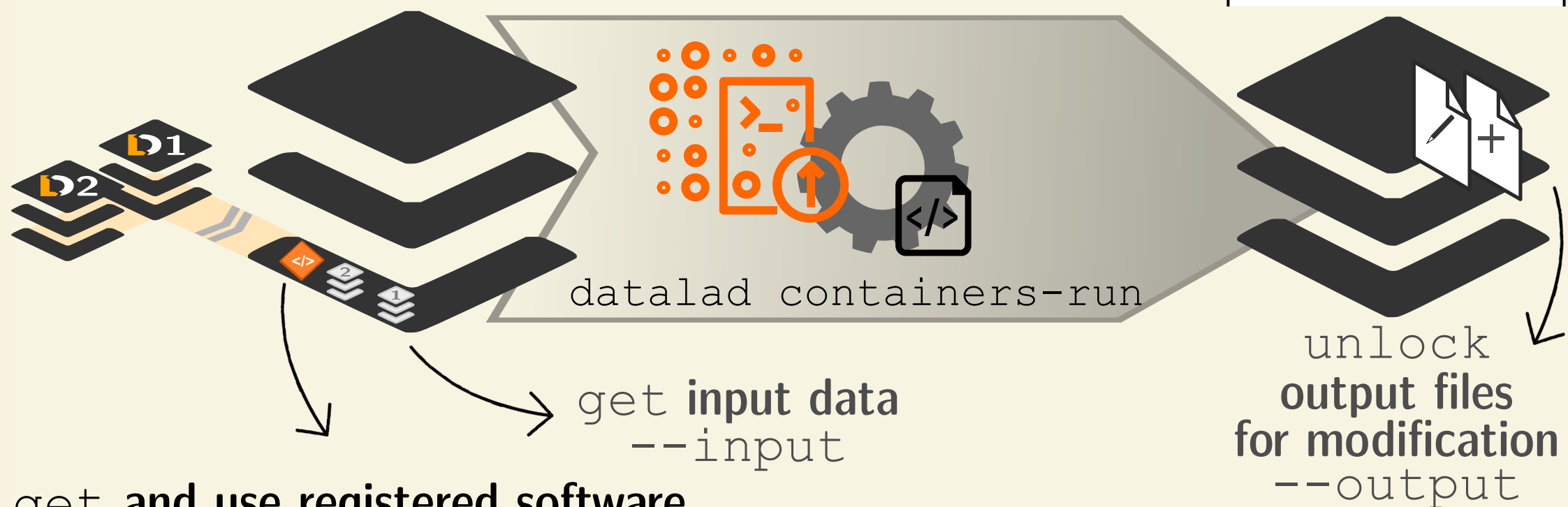
# COMPUTATIONAL REPRODUCIBILITY

- Code may produce different results or fail with different software
- Datasets can store & share software environments and execute code inside of the software container
- DataLad extension: datalad-container

`datalad-containers run`

link input, code, output, **and software** with  
`datalad containers-run`

save all  
modifications  
of the dataset



get and use registered software  
container for computation  
`--container-name`





# HOW TO GET STARTED WITH DATALAD

Read **the DataLad handbook**

An interactive, hands-on crash-course (free and open source)

Check out or used public DataLad datasets, e.g., from OpenNeuro

```
$ datalad clone ///openneuro/ds000001
[INFO   ] Cloning http://datasets.datalad.org/openneuro/ds000001 [1 other candidates] into '/tmp/
[INFO   ] access to 1 dataset sibling s3-PRIVATE not auto-enabled, enable with:
|           datalad siblings -d "/tmp/ds000001" enable -s s3-PRIVATE
install(ok): /tmp/ds000001 (dataset)

$ cd ds000001
$ ls sub-01/*
sub-01/anat:
sub-01_inplaneT2.nii.gz  sub-01_T1w.nii.gz

sub-01/func:
sub-01_task-balloonanalogrisktask_run-01_bold.nii.gz
sub-01_task-balloonanalogrisktask_run-01_events.tsv
sub-01_task-balloonanalogrisktask_run-02_bold.nii.gz
sub-01_task-balloonanalogrisktask_run-02_events.tsv
sub-01_task-balloonanalogrisktask_run-03_bold.nii.gz
sub-01_task-balloonanalogrisktask_run-03_events.tsv
```

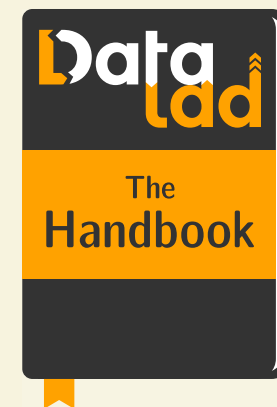
# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



- Michael Hanke
- Yaroslav Halchenko
- Joey Hess (git-annex)
- Benjamin Poldrack
- Kyle Meyer
- 22+ additional contributors

## The DataLad Handbook

- Laura Waite
- Michael Hanke
- 17+ additional contributors



Reach out, get to know the team, contribute:

DataLad on Riot,  
DataLad Handbook @ Github

**THANK YOU!**

**QUESTIONS?**