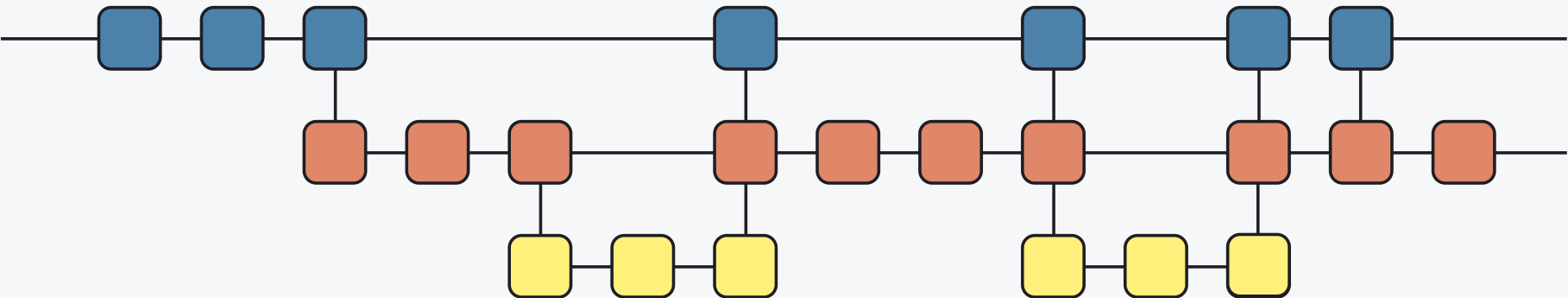




start your lab

# Best practices for modern social science



# Today's Agenda

1. What does modern social science look like?
2. Why are we here today?
3. What are best practices and why are they important?
4. How do we get our lab started with best practices for teams?

What does modern social science look like?



# Open science is increasingly emphasized

- Collaboration between teams and fields
- Reusing others' materials and reproducing findings
- Public accessibility
- Many powerful drivers
  - Journals, funders, individuals, scientific societies



# Complex problems need computing resources

- Experiments are more powerful, creative, and complex
- Analyses increasingly rely on computationally-intensive approaches



# Global networks are more common

- Academics are increasingly working with people outside their lab, department, university, or even academia itself.
- If people leave academia for the private sector, *wherever they go*, the best possible practices are used and expected.
  - Facilitating better research practices is good for academics, increasingly common in academia, and crucial outside of academia

# Modern social science looks like...



Open Science



Complex Problems



Global Networks

# Modern social science looks like...



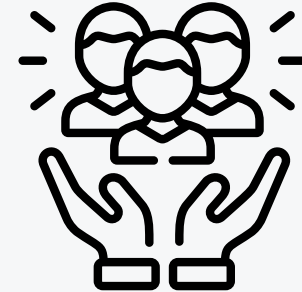
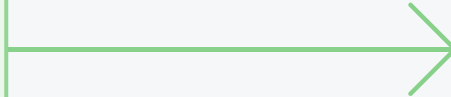
Open Science



Complex Problems



Global Networks



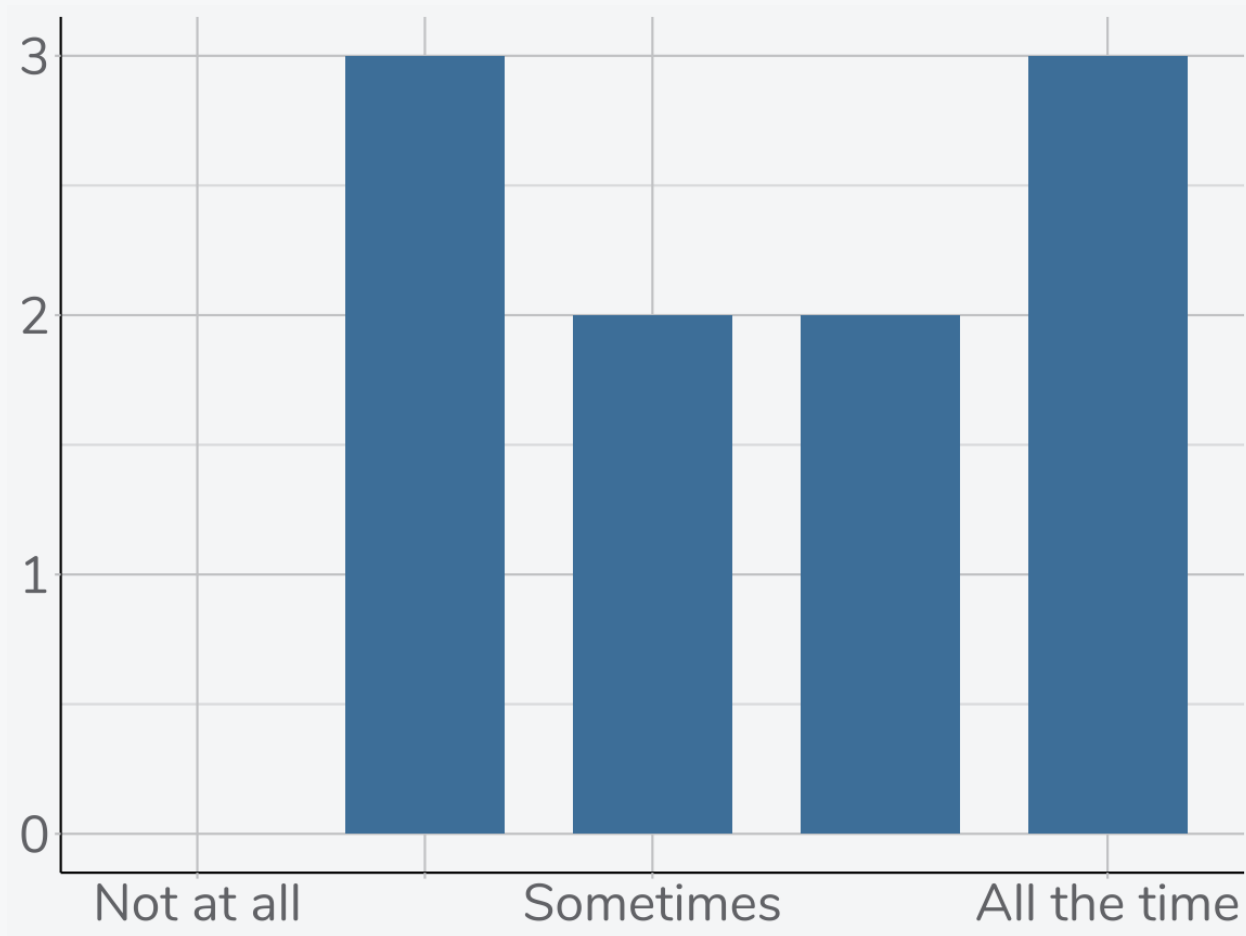
Team Science



Why are we here today?

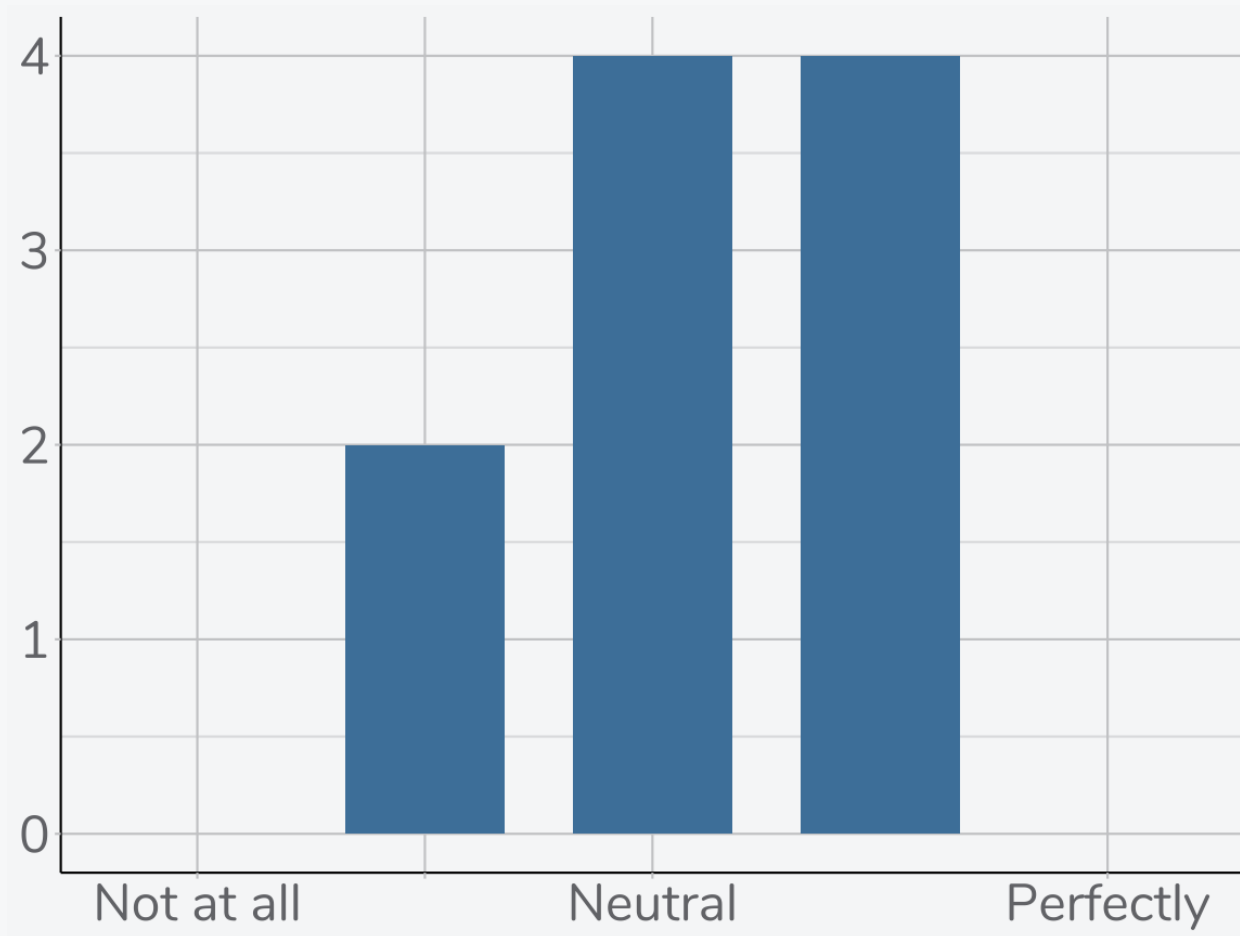
# We can't keep track of different versions

*How often do you store and spend time searching for file versions?*



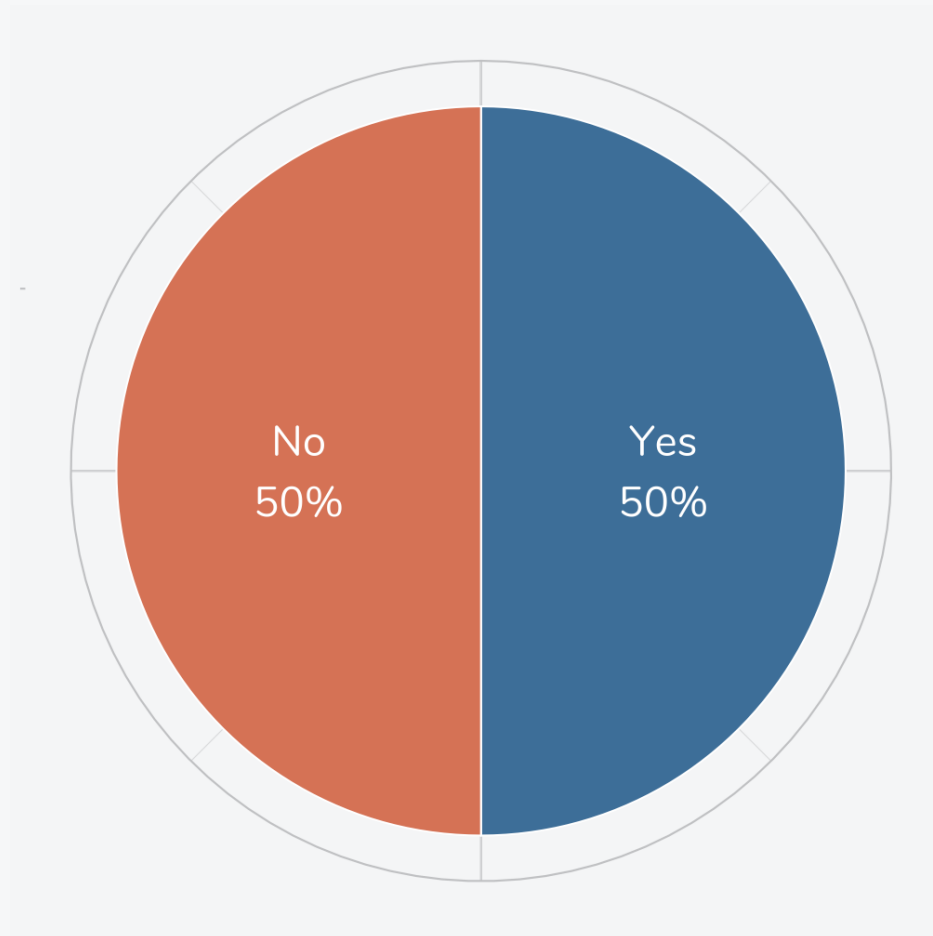
# We can't find files confidently

*How organized do you feel your project files are?*



# We can't share without extra effort

*Are you able to share analysis files with collaborators with one or two clicks without doing any editing to the file?*



# Continuing current research practices has costs

1. They are expensive in both time and effort

- This is **hours of your time and others' time, wasted.**

2. They lead to risk of serious errors

- This is **mistakes in publications and unnecessary confusion.**

3. They make collaboration harder than it needs to be

- This is **lost opportunities and lost innovation.**

We can do better by using *best practices*

What are best practices and  
why are they important?

# Best practices are...

- methods
- strategies
- techniques
- procedures
- etc.

...that are generally agreed upon as the **most effective** or **most prudent** way to work.

Best practices are vital to successful collaboration with your team, projects, and code.



# Who agrees upon these "best" practices?

## The private sector

...especially those in [software and technology](#) who carry out their entire professional lives in this setting with tremendous incentives & desire to improve, streamline, and facilitate digital work.

# Who agrees upon these "best" practices?

## Other academics

Ram, 2013, Git can facilitate greater reproducibility and increased transparency in science, *Source Code for Biology and Medicine*

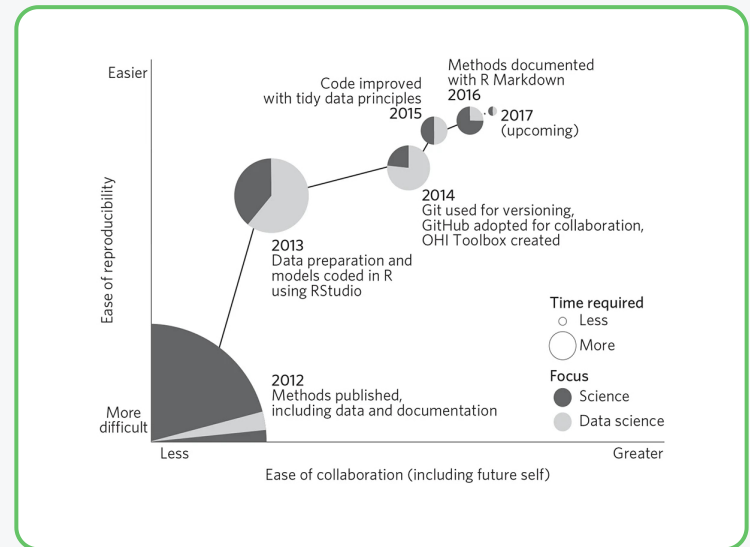
Wilson et al, 2014, Best practices for scientific computing, *PLoS Biology*

Gorgolewski & Poldrack, 2016, A practical guide for improving transparency and reproducibility in neuroimaging research, *PLoS Biology*

**Lowndes et al, 2017, Our path to better science in less time using open data science tools, *Nature Ecology & Evolution***

Wilson et al, 2017, Good enough practices in scientific computing, *PLoS Computational Biology*

Hesse, 2018, Can psychology walk the walk of open science?, *American Psychologist*



# What is the value of adopting best practices?

Best practices are consistent with **your scientific values**

- Better science
  - More reusability
  - More reproducibility
  - Fewer errors
- Transparency
- Efficiency
- More attractive collaborator
- Fast onboarding of new lab members
- Supports young scholars
- Intentional organization of digital lab materials

Future-proofing

This is and will be the standard for years to come

How do we get our lab started  
with best practices for teams?

**It starts with the best tools for teams**



# Start communicating with Slack

- As of 2019, Slack had **10+ million daily active users**, and 87% of users state that Slack improves their entire work process

## Why use Slack?

- Can be asynchronous, can be synchronous
- Designed for teams with multiple people coordinating unevenly across multiple projects in shifting ways over time
- Can be 1:1 private, shared within a small group, or shared with everyone, all within the same platform
- Stores your communication and makes it easy to find later
- Connects with nearly every other modern tool for teams



# Start **scheduling** with Google Calendar

- As of 2018, at least **500 million people** use Google Calendar

## Why use Google Calendar?

- Designed for teams with multiple projects and various meeting needs
- Both public and private calendar events to schedule weekly lab meetings and one-on-one meetings
- It is more accessible for external collaborators than Outlook



# Start **developing** with GitHub

- As of 2021, GitHub had **69+ million accounts** from across the whole world and 200+ million repositories

## Why use GitHub?

- Provides a shared interface for all digital materials in the cloud
- Relates ideas and conversation directly to code
- Tracks informative, detailed changes line-by-line, file-by-file, folder-by-folder
- Designed explicitly for teams who write code of *any* kind
- Resolves conflicts between different peoples' materials
- Facilitates discussion and planning about those digital materials



# Tools help us accomplish best practices



Slack

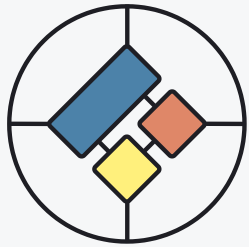


Google Calendar



GitHub

**How do we leverage these tools as  
a lab? a department? a field?**



# start your lab

[www.startyourlab.com](http://www.startyourlab.com)

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