SciLifeLab
DDLS Steering group

Dnr: HS-2026-0011,
k.s-kod 1.4

DDLS Steering group meeting no. 50, 2026

Date: September 30, 2026
Time: 13.00 - 16.00 at zoom

Attending members:

Erik Kristiansson (Chalmers/ Göteborg University)
Tuuli Lappalainen (KTH, Royal Institute of technology)
Janne Lehtiö (Karolinska Institutet)
Sara Hallin (SLU, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)
Gunilla Westergren-Thorsson (Lund University/WCMM)
Carolina Wählby (Uppsala University)

Members not attending:

Oliver Billker (Umeå University, MIMS director)
Matts Karlsson (Linköping University)
Erik Lindahl (Stockholm University)

Other participants:

Jan Ellenberg (Director of the DDLS research program), Chair of the meeting
Margit Mahlapuu (chair, DDLS research area expert group in Cell and molecular biology, §4 - §12)
Olof Emanuelsson (DDLS Research school director)
Peetra Magnusson (DDLS Research School director, §3 - §9)
Maria Thuveson (Vice Head of Operations Office SciLifeLab)
Johan Rung (Head of SciLifeLab Data Centre)
Wojtek Potrzebowski (Data Science Coordinator, SciLifeLab Data Centre)
Björn Nystedt (Manager Bioinformatics Support Peer Review track (WABI))
Hanna Kultima (Vice Head of SciLifeLab Data Centre)
Heidi Törmänen Persson (DDLS collaboration manager, Operations Office SciLifeLab)
Titti Ekegren (DDLS coordinator, Operations Office SciLifeLab)
Ulrika Wallenquist (DDLS coordinator, Operations Office SciLifeLab)
Mojgan Seraji (Collaboration manager, Operations Office SciLifeLab)
Elvan Helander (DDLS Controller, Operations Office SciLifeLab)
Nicholas Pearce (DDLS Fellow, Uppsala University, §1 - §2, §8 - §12)
Johan Henriksson (DDLS Cell and Molecular Biology Research Experts group, §10)

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Agenda 2026-09-30

All documents including presentations from the meeting can be found on NextCloud: https://nextcloud.dc.scilifelab.se/s/dwXR8TE6tA6dfD5

1	**Meeting formalities** Tuuli Lappalainen was chosen to attend the minutes. The DDLS Steering group **approved of** the previous minutes**.**	*Presenter:* *Jan Ellenberg* ***Appendix:*** ***1.*** *Previous minutes, 26-08-26*
2	**Update from Director** (see presentation DDLS SG_Sept.30, page 3 – 23 for details) An overview was given of the continuous work ongoing in SciLifeLab with AI strategies and the priorities to provide access to AI models and LLM's suited for biological and biomedical data. SciLifeLab now hosts open weights LLMs The evaluation committee for the midterm checkup of the SciLifeLab infrastructures visited Stockholm for a 2-day meeting at the end of September, highly appreciated by all attendees. The plans for Phase 2 surplus activities were presented and the DDLS Steering group commented on the; - importance of longsighted support for LLMs and agentic AI - importance of sustainability - need to heavily support and empower the research community regarding AI and data strategies with i.e. training, workshops and guidelines. The DDLS Steering group supports the proposed Phase 2 surplus activities. The SciLifeLab board decided at their last meeting to approve inclusion of two DDLS Fellows as full members of the DDLs Steering group from January 1st.	*Presenter:* *Jan Ellenberg*
3	**Role of DDLS National Reference Group and DDLS Steering Group review and renewal process** Presentation of plans to harmonize the organization and governance in SciLifeLab including DDLS. The role of the DDLS National Reference Group (NRG) was more crucial in the starting phase of the DDLS program when structures and collaborations were developed.	*Presenter:* Jan Ellenberg

	As DDLS now moves towards a stronger focus on the impact and outcomes of our work, the time is right for a restructuring to streamline the governance. The suggestion is to conclude the NRG and expand the current Strategic Management Group to serve as an overarching operational advisory group for all missions and the three areas of SciLifeLab/DDLS activity: research community, research infrastructure, and data services. The DDLS Steering group agree that NRG has fulfilled their initial function but emphasize the importance of keeping the information flow to and from the partners and especially with the assigned DDLS Fellow local contacts at each partner. The DDLS Steering group is an important group for strategic advice on program progress and will continue to meet 6 times a year as previously. Active participants in DDLS steering group are highly important, and the composition of the group will be revised to make sure all aspects of the DDLS program can be addressed in the discussions. The DDLS Steering Group mandate ends in December 2026, and the process has been initiated to review the current membership and define the principles and procedures for appointing members for the next mandate period.	

4	**RDCP status and future plans**
	
	Information was provided about the four ongoing RDCP projects funded in 2025. The discussion focused on options for the RDCP initiative:
	• Conclude the Initiative
	  ○ End DDLS funding when the current project period concludes.
	• Short-Term Extension
	  ○ Extend all four RDCPs using already budgeted funds
	• Long-Term Strategic Investment
	  ○ Extend the projects for an additional one to two years following a formal evaluation.
	
	The key strategic question is whether RDCP should remain a DDLS-funded pilot initiative or become part of a broader SciLifeLab effort to develop and sustain community data resources.
	
	A self-evaluation questionnaire has been drafted and will be sent to the current RDCP's to better understand the project's progress, impact and challenges. This light evaluation will inform the continued discussions about the future of the RDCP initiative.
		Presenter:
		Erik Kristiansson

5	**Research School call (update)** Three calls for the DDLS Research School will be launched on October 1st: ● The DDLS Research School PhD Affiliate Program (the PhD Student Affiliate Program). Deadline November 30. ● Two separate calls for DDLS Research School PhD projects: one in academia and one in industry. Deadline November 16. ○ Academic track (Call for Academic PhD Projects in Data-driven Life Science 2026) ○ Industry track (Call for Industrial PhD Projects in Data-driven Life Science 2026)	*Presenter:* *Erik Kristiansson*
6	**DDLS Research School - unconscious bias** This item was postponed to a later meeting.	*Presenter:* *Mojgan Seraji*
7	**DDLS RS - Internship program** (see presentation DDLS SG_Sept.30, page 47 – 49 for details) Ideas for an internship program for the DDLS Research School were presented. The structure would be short internships of 1 – 3 months at a company or an organization/authority. Interested SG members are welcome to join the working group for the internship program. Some reflections from the DDLS SG: ● Need to figure out ways to make this offer attractive for companies ● Important to be flexible around the lengths of the internship ● DDLS CMB RA earlier presented ideas for a mobility program connected to AstraZeneca. CMB are happy to continue this discussion with the DDLS Research School ● Can internships be done at the SciLifeLab Research Infrastructure units or other large-scale infrastructure e.g. MAXIV or ESS?	*Presenter:* *Research School directors*
8	**Implementation of the Grant Management system** (see presentation DDLS SG_Sept.30, page 51 – 57 for details) Update about the Grant Management system and specifically the cost reporting portal currently tested by DDLS financial contacts and partners.	*Presenter:* Emma Hagby Kasholm

9	**DDLS Fellows update** A brief update about the ongoing DDLS Fellow recruitments and the recently launched DDLS Fellows alumni program. Following up on the discussion last meeting about challenges with access to (and processing of) large-scale clinical data. A Workshop on access to clinical/patient data is planned for December 2, 13-16 online.	*Presenter:* Carolina Wählby
10	**Update from Research Areas** <u>Cell and Molecular Biology RA:</u> (see presentation DDLS SG_Sept.30, page 69 – 72 for details) An idea for a collaboration with the WASP Research Arena (WARA) in the focus area of medicine was presented. The CMB RA believes in a strong potential synergy effect between WARA Medicine and DDLS CMB in applying data science and AI to nonclinical research. Collaboration will act as a bridge between WASP, DDLS & Swedish life science industry. And as a first action Ola Engkvist (AZ) and Ola S (SciLifeLab) are planning a joint WARA Medicine-DDLS CMB-SciLifeLab Agent Hackathon for PhD students and postdocs The DDLS Steering Group is in favour of this idea and encourages CMB to discuss this collaboration. Janne Lehtiö and Xenia Villalobos Alberu from the PMD RA wants to be in the loop for more information about the WARA project. A CMB workshop is planned April 6 – 8, 2027 focusing on the theme: *Toward a national imaging informatics strategy* Stakeholders (power users, software developers, HPC and core facility managers) will gather to identify present and future challenges in microscopy and imaging informatics (first day), followed by a 2-day hands-on hackathon and/or focus sessions to begin tackling the most pressing issues. Read more: DDLS Cell & Molecular Biology 2027 theme workshop: Toward a national imaging informatics strategy - SciLifeLab <u>Evolution and Biodiversity RA:</u> (see presentation DDLS SG_Sept.30, page 73 – 78 for details) The new EB RA expert Group was presented. The RA experts group meets four times a year and in addition to RA expert group members all DDLS Fellows and Henrik Lantz (NBIS) are also invited. The planned meeting on October 27 in Uppsala will also invite speakers, postdocs and PhD students.	*Presenters:* *Margit Mahlapuu,* *Johan Henriksson (CMB RA experts' group),* *Sara Hallin*

	The 4th BioSyst EU meeting held in Uppsala in August was highly appreciated and held a DDLS session and a DDLS Fellows in the organizing committee. The next big supported scientific meeting will be at Karlstad University on January 11-13, 2027, and will have one DDLS-sponsored speaker and DDLS EB RA expert group representation.	
11	**Emerging items** The next DDLS Steering group meeting will be on site at Aula Magna, Stockholm in connection with the DDLS Annual conference. Suggestions for agenda topics are welcome.	*Presenter:* *Jan Ellenberg*
12	**Other issues** No further issues. The chairman thanked all participants for a nice meeting.	*Presenter:* *Jan Ellenberg*

2026-10-20

Jan Ellenberg, chair of the meeting

Tuuli Lappalainen, Attending minutes

Signature page

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