

25-06-21

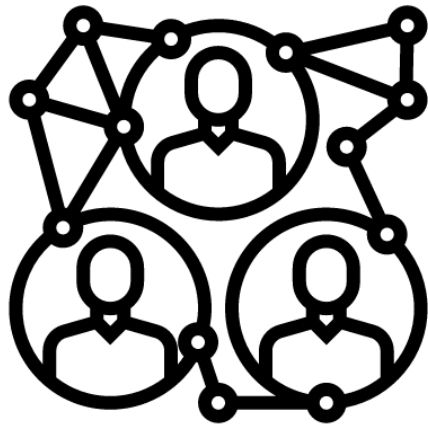
# How to make personal data usable for the common good

Exploring the Real Value of Personal Data Sharing @Data Week

# Common good

## What does that mean in the context of data?

- Data is never only about one person
  - Correlation adds a collective dimension
- Starting point: Common good = individual benefits + collective benefits



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- Challenge: Individual data sets are useless, the magic comes from big data
- But: each person only has a say about data about them
- ➔ Need some form of collective action!
- Currently being discussed:
  - data cooperatives,
  - data trusts,
  - data unions etc.
- Privacy (collective and/or individual) is a prerequisite for beneficial data sharing

# Common good

## How to drive it with data?

- Forms of value from data:
  - information!
  - money
  - better products and services
  - new research
- But value for individuals does/should not (primarily) come from paying them
  - amounts tend to be very small
  - pay people to give up privacy?
  - pay wealthy people more for data about them?



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- Data Governance Act picks up non-monetary motivation with Data Altruism
- ➔ Good for the common good!
- But could there be projects for the common good that the current DA criteria exclude?

# Legal

## What should we do about regulation?

- DGA does NOT make it easier for data altruism to become more widely adopted
- regulation mainly targeted at preventing abuse, not at enabling data use
  - e.g. lowering burden for (broader) consent



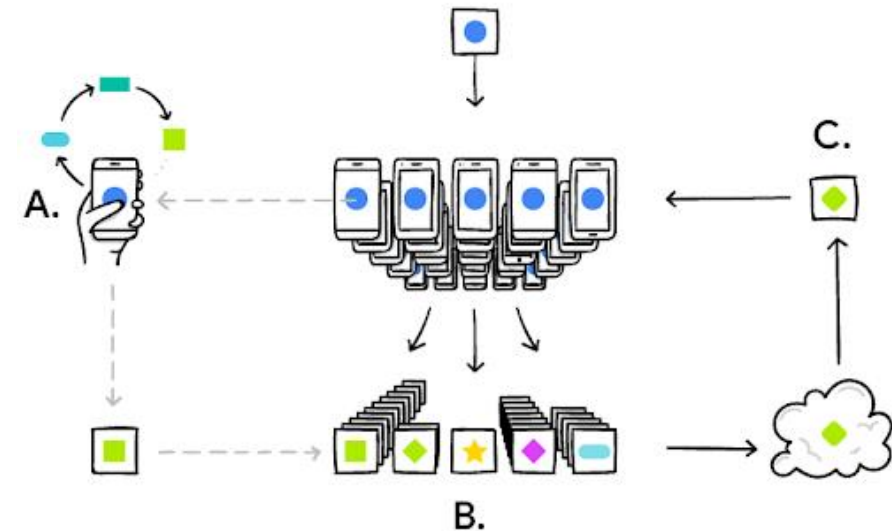
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- GDPR currently only thought as an individual right
  - individual decisions about consent
  - often perceived as a burden instead of actionable data rights
  - first step: allow delegation
- collective instruments: e.g. voting procedures, focus groups, consumer/user committees
- but: with additional/collective safeguards need to think about which safeguards to lower
  - “less” GDPR required

# Technical

## What is the role of PETs such as FL?

- Privacy-enhancing technologies can bridge individual and collective interests
  - encryption (SMPC, FHE) and adding noise (Differential Privacy) allow for obtaining insight without disclosing actual individual-level data
- Considerable ongoing research, necessary to make PETs more easily customisable/scalable
- Can provide basis to make personal data more widely accessible
  - Wide scope of data-using actors: academic research, companies, civil society etc.



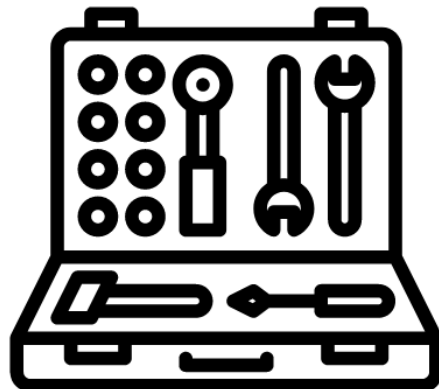
Source <https://ai.googleblog.com/2017/04/federated-learning-collaborative.html>

- Federated Learning (FL) very promising but also to be treated with caution:
  - e.g. is aggregation done the right way? Do individuals have an option to escape tracking?

# Summary

## In search of good tools for consumers

- Data economy currently often not working in the best interest of consumers
- They need easily usable tools that create value for them in order to motivate them to participate
  - Money should not be the whole answer
  - Real choice and real insights more valuable
- Experimentation is important
  - Broad range of business models, approaches, value propositions
- Regulation tends to be over-prescriptive at the moment
  - GDPR: risks putting excessive burden on individuals
  - DGA: only adding more requirements, not enabling new activities
- Balancing data-driven risks and regulatory requirements seems sensible



Supporting research into PETs is helpful

- Could also provide avenue to add collective dimension to privacy debate

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