Why Data-Centric Philosophy of Science?
Scientific Data as an Epistemically-Salient Artefact

The word data is increasingly present in the public sphere, from discussions in the media to policy reports and all the way to academic debates, often in connection with the phrase ‘big data’. This phrase is used to refer to the increase in the amount of data collected as a result of the use of digital devices, software and online platforms that have the production of data as one of their main steps, if not their endpoint. In discussions on big data, a certain rhetoric associates the increase in the volume of data with revolutionary changes and paradigm shifts. In this context, scientific research has often been mentioned as a prime example of the revolutionary power of big data.

But why is scientific (big) data something that we should care about?
And why should we discuss data from a philosophical standpoint?
In this talk, I intend to answer these questions in the context of philosophy of science. I claim that philosophical analyses of scientific epistemology should take data into account, independently of its volume. I position my claim in continuity with responses to the big data rhetoric, in the interdisciplinary debate known as critical data studies and recent work in the philosophy of scientific practice.
Using examples from philosophical research on data in the life and health sciences, I argue that data is an epistemically-salient artefact of scientific research, much like theories, models, and experiments.

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Interessenten sind herzlich eingeladen!

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