

# Open access to research data

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The Research Council's Policy on Open Access to Research Data aims to ensure that research data are accessible to relevant users, on equal terms, and at the lowest possible cost. Projects that receive funding from the Research Council are to assess whether the need to draw up a data management plan.

Better access to research data enhances the quality of research in that results can more readily be validated and verified, and datasets can be used in new ways and in combination with other datasets. Open access to research data also helps to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts and may pave the way for more interdisciplinary research.

[The Research Council's Policy on Open Access to Research Data \(pdf\)](#).

The guidelines in the policy apply to all data generated by projects funded by the Research Council – with a few exceptions. The principles and guidelines in the Research Council's policy conform to the [National Strategy on access to and sharing of research data](#).

## Requirements relating to data storage

As a general rule, R&D-performing institutions themselves are responsible for determining which archiving solution to use. Under certain circumstances, the Research Council is entitled to stipulate storage of data and/or metadata in specific national or international archives.

Any requirements on the use of a specific archive will be set out in the text of the call for proposals and incorporated into the contract for project funding.

In connection with certain relevant projects in the fields of social science, humanities, medicine and health, and environmental and development research, we will ask you to archive data at the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD).

## All projects awarded funding must assess the need for a data management plan

The R&D-performing institution must assess the need to develop a data management plan in relation to all projects awarded Research Council funding. If you decide that a data management plan is not needed, you must provide an explanation.

- This plan must be delivered in connection with the revised grant application.
- You will not be asked to report on changes to the plan during the project period.
- We will request a final version of the data management plan in connection with the final report of the project.

The plan is a living document that follows the research project and specifies the following:

- the kind of data that will be generated;
- how the data will be described;
- where the data will be stored;
- whether and how the data can be shared.

The purpose is to plan how to safeguard the research data, not just during the project period, but also for future reuse of the data. A data management plan is an effective means of identifying costs associated with data management and storage, and can also help you to plan how to cover these costs.

Data management plans are to be made public and openly accessible. This will promote greater openness and enable scientific groups to follow peer practice.

## Help in preparing data management plans

[Science Europe has developed a guide that outlines six core requirements for data management plans \(pdf\)](#).

The purpose of the guide is to harmonise requirements relating to data management plans in Europe.

There are several providers of tools that generate data management plans for research projects. The solutions make it possible to update the data management plan during the project period. Here are examples of tools for generating data management plans currently available:

- [Norwegian Centre for Research Data \(NSD\)](#)
- [Digital Curation Centre](#)
- [easyDMP \(data management plan\)](#)

## Data quality

The research data that are stored must be of quality that makes them possible to find and reuse. The Research Council recommends that you follow the international FAIR principles (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable).

[The FAIR principles are a set of guidelines that show how to facilitate reuse of research data.](#)

In keeping with the FAIR principles, research data must be accessible, findable and reusable. The concept interoperable entails that both data and metadata must be machine-readable and that a consistent terminology is used.

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