

Research Data Management Policy of the University of Graz

Adopted on 14 February 2019



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1. Preamble

The University of Graz, in line with the direction and aims of EU science policy, acknowledges the fundamental importance of managing research data and other records in ensuring high-quality research, research integrity and good scientific practice, and is committed to pursuing the highest standards. The University of Graz recognises that correct and easily retrievable research data are integral to and provide the foundation for any kind of research activity. Furthermore, research data have a long-term value for research and academia and the potential for widespread use in society.

2. Scope

This Policy for the management of research data applies to all researchers working at the University of Graz. In cases when research is funded by a third party, any agreements made with that party concerning intellectual property rights, exploitation rights, access rights and the storage of research data will take precedence over the provisions of this Policy. This Policy will be reviewed every three years under the supervision of the Vice Rector for Research and updated as necessary.

3. Rights Ownership

Intellectual property rights (IPR) are defined in the Copyright Act (UrhG) and the University Act 2002 (UG 2002) and may be further elaborated in researchers' employment contracts with the University of Graz. IPR may also be further defined in additional guidelines and agreements (e.g. grant or consortium agreements). In cases where the IPR belong to the University of Graz, the University has the right to choose how data are published and shared.

4. Principles of Research Data Management

Research data should be stored in and made available for use through a suitable repository or archiving system and should be provided with persistent identifiers. When depositing data in a repository, researchers are requested to declare their affiliation in accordance with the Affiliation Guidelines of the University of Graz.

Preserving the integrity of research data requires that these be stored in a correct, complete, unadulterated and reliable manner. Furthermore, they must be findable, accessible, traceable, interoperable and available for subsequent reuse in accordance with the FAIR principles whenever possible. The stored data shall be dated and, where possible, subsequent changes should be stored separately from the original data.

When dealing with personal data, the applicable data protection regulations must be observed. Provided this is not prohibited by any third party rights, legal obligations, ethical considerations or rights of ownership, research data should be assigned a licence for open use.

The minimum period for which research data and records must be archived is 10 years after the assignment of a persistent identifier or the publication of related work after completion of the research activity, whichever is later. The administrative documents accompanying the research activities must also be archived.

All legal and ethical considerations must be taken into account whenever research data or records are earmarked for deletion or destruction and this must then proceed in a standardised manner. Principal Investigators or their legal successors must be informed and an offer must be made to transfer the data to them. Any action taken must be documented and be accessible for future audit.

5. Responsibilities

Responsibility for research data management during and after a research activity lies with the University of Graz and its researchers.

5.1 Responsibilities of the University

The University of Graz is responsible for:

- a) the provision and operation of a repository for storing, safeguarding and providing access to research data.
- b) empowering organisational units (especially IT services, the University Library, Research Management and Service, Law and Organisation) and providing appropriate financial means and resources for services related to the storage, retrieval and registration of research data and for staff training.
- c) providing templates for data management plans and offering training and support to researchers.
- d) long-term archiving and backup of research data (for at least 10 years).

e) enabling access to stored data in consultation with the researchers and in accordance with relevant legal provisions. Where possible, research data should be available on an Open Access basis.

5.2 Responsibilities of Researchers

Researchers are responsible for:

a) submitting and updating data management plans (DMPs) for research activities and ensuring registration of and compliance with these. DMPs should describe the following aspects in particular: collecting data, documenting, assigning metadata, archiving, access to and storage of or proper deletion of research data and research-related records. The Principle Investigators are primarily responsible for research data management based on a sound research data management plan.

b) planning for possible future uses of the data. This includes defining usage rights and assigning appropriate licences. In particular, rights to re-use or publish research data should not be transferred to third parties, such as commercial publishers or agents, without preserving the rights for open access to and free use of the data.

c) storing research data in a repository by no later than the date of completion of the research project.

d) complying with all organisational, regulatory, institutional and other contractual and legal requirements.

e) managing research data and data sets in accordance with the principles and requirements expressed in this Policy.

Annex: Definitions

Research is defined as any creative and systematically performed work that is carried out with the goal of advancing knowledge, including gaining insights about people, culture and society, and applying this knowledge in new ways.

Researchers are individuals who perform research activities at the University of Graz. This includes members of the University as defined in Section 94 of the Universities Act 2002 (UG), i.e. employed staff and doctoral students in their role as early career researchers, as well as individuals who are not affiliated with the University of Graz. Guest researchers and collaborators are also expected to comply with this Policy.

Research data, as used in this Policy, refers to all data produced by researchers in the context of their work that would be considered by members of the profession to be relevant for the replication of results, suitable for reuse by fellow researchers, and for which the University of Graz has curatorial responsibility. In a broader sense, research data includes all information (regardless of form or presentation) that is required to support or validate the development, outcome, observations or findings of a research project and its context. This includes materials of any type created in the course of academic activities, e.g. through digitisation, recordings, studies of source materials, experiments, measurements, surveys or interviews. This also includes software and code. Research data may exist in a range of different forms. Data can pass through various phases over the course of their lifecycle: from raw data, processed data (including “negative” or “inconclusive results”) and shared data to published data and Open Access published data. They can also have different degrees of accessibility (Open Data, Restricted Data, Closed Data).

(Research Data) Repositories are managed servers for storing, describing, archiving and publishing digital objects and data. One global registry of research data repositories across all academic disciplines is re3data.org.

A **persistent identifier** is a permanent reference to a document, file, web page or other object. It allows access to a digital object via a persistent link. Examples of persistent identifiers include Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) and Uniform Resource Names (URN).

The “**FAIR Data Principles**” lay down guidelines that sustainably reusable research data must fulfil and that research data infrastructures should implement within the framework of the services they provide. According to the FAIR principles, data should be "Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable".

A **Principal Investigator** is an individual responsible for taking binding decisions and who oversees the funding and expenditures for a particular research project or activity, or a project's lead researcher.

Free licences: A licence is a set of legal terms attached to an original work that serve as an extension of copyright. It defines what may and may not be done with a work, grants permissions, and specifies restrictions. An open or free licence, such as a Creative Commons licence, essentially allows access, reuse and redistribution of a work with few or no restrictions. The precise permissions depend on the full text of the licence being applied.

A **Data Management Plan (DMP)** is a structured guideline (document or online tool) which depicts the entire lifecycle of the data and which can be updated as needed. Data management plans must ensure that research data are traceable, available, authentic, citable and properly

stored and that they comply with clearly defined legal parameters and appropriate measures for subsequent use. Ideally, DMPs should be delivered in a machine-actionable format.

Metadata are data about data that describe characteristics and properties of objects, works and information.

Scientific integrity and good scientific practice: Scientific integrity is understood as a comprehensive ethical awareness in the sense of a culture of honesty and responsibility for quality in science. According to the *Austrian Agency for Research Integrity Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice* (2015), the standards of good scientific practice include, among other things, precise recordkeeping and documentation of the scientific process as well as the results to ensure that the research is reproducible. This includes the collection of primary and original data (processed raw material), in a manner that is transparent, seamlessly recorded and documented. Where they serve as the basis for publications, these data and documents (e.g. laboratory notes) are to be stored on durable, backed-up data media in the research institution where they were generated, with due attention paid to the retention periods applicable to the specific field of research wherever necessary for the purpose of ensuring the verifiability of the method selected and the findings generated. This includes ensuring that access to data is as open as possible, as restricted as necessary and, where appropriate, in accordance with the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data management principles. Reference is also made to the University of Graz document *Grundsätze zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis und zur Vermeidung von Fehlverhalten in der Wissenschaft* [Principles for Ensuring Good Scientific Practice and Avoiding Misconduct in Science] (2004).