FAQs for NIH 2023 Data Management and Sharing Policy

Why should I share my data?

NIH promotes data sharing to accelerate biomedical research discovery, enable validation of research results, provide access to high-quality data, and promote data re-use for future studies.

Where can I get help creating my NIH data management and sharing plan?

Request a consultation for NIH data management and sharing policy-related questions, or email Arcus Library Science supervisor Ene Belleh (**bellehe@chop.edu**) for assistance. A template with guidance and sample language is also available to help researchers write NIH-compliant plans (use this link).

I work with sensitive topics/populations – how do I protect my participants' privacy?

NIH strongly encourages researchers who work with sensitive topics and/or populations to address data sharing in the Informed Consent process. Researchers should also pay special attention to their de-identification process to ensure that all identifying information has been fully removed. Finally, researchers should consider depositing their data in restricted access repositories that require data use agreements and research plans to access the data.

NIH 2023 Data Sharing Policy

What is considered "Scientific data" for the purposes of this plan?

The final NIH Policy defines Scientific Data as: "The recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific community as of sufficient quality to validate and replicate research findings, regardless of whether the data are used to support scholarly publications. Scientific data do not include laboratory notebooks, preliminary analyses, completed case report forms, drafts of scientific papers, plans for future research, peer reviews, communications with colleagues, or physical objects, such as laboratory specimens." Even those scientific data not used to support a publication are considered scientific data and within the final DMS Policy's scope.

Can I make the data available upon request?

No. NIH prefers that scientific data be shared and preserved through repositories (such as **Arcus**) rather than kept by a researcher and provided upon request.

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How will plans be assessed?

NIH program staff will assess the DMS plans but peer reviewers may comment on the proposed budget for data management and sharing.

What repository should I use?

Arcus is positioned as CHOP's central research data repository to help researchers/investigators fulfill these recommended elements. Here is a list of NIH external approved repositories.

What is a standard? What standards are relevant to my research?

A standard specifies how exactly data and related materials should be stored, organized, and described. In the context of research data, the term typically refers to the use of specific and well-defined formats, schemas, vocabularies, and ontologies in the description and organization of data. However, for researchers within a community where more formal standards have not been well established, it can also be interpreted more broadly to refer to the adoption of the same (or similar) data management-related activities, conventions, or strategies by different researchers and across different projects.

When do I need to make my data available?

NIH encourages scientific data be shared as soon as possible, and no later than time of an associated publication or end of the performance period, whichever comes first.

What data management and sharing costs can I include in my grant?

Allowable costs can include:
1. data curation and developing documentation (formatting data, de-identifying data, preparing metadata, curating data for a data repository)
2. data management considerations (unique and specialized information infrastructure necessary to provide local management and preservation before depositing in a repository)
3. preserving data in data repositories (data deposit fees)

For additional information, see NIH supplemental information on allowable costs.

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What happens if I do not comply with the NIH policy or make my data available as described in the DMSP?

The NIH has said that NIH Program Staff will be monitoring compliance with the policy during the funding period. "Noncompliance with Plans may result in the NIH ICO adding special Terms and Conditions of Award or terminating the award. If award recipients are not compliant with Plans at the end of the award, noncompliance may be factored into future funding decisions."

See full NIH FAQ for more details.