

ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

Research Data Management



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Pioneering research
and skills

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Underpinning Philosophy

- **Data is a critical output of the research process which should be shared:**
 - ❖ to reinforce the integrity, transparency and robustness of the research record
 - ❖ to increase its potential value through aggregation
 - ❖ to enable new research questions to be addressed
 - ❖ to support the wider exploitation of data



RCUK Principles – an overview

■ Research Data...

- is a *Public Good* – to be made available responsibly
- has *long-term value* – the need for preservation
- should be *Discoverable* and *Citeable*
- is subject to *legitimate constraints* – it cannot all be shared equally

■ Researchers should have a period of *privileged access* to ‘their’ data

■ *Data users should cite their sources* – and abide by terms of access!

The Bottom Line: looking after and sharing research data is...

- ✓ **part of the research process**
- ✓ **a legitimate use of research budgets**

How EPSRC Policy affects...

Research Organisations

Research Organisations have **primary responsibility** for *ensuring that researchers manage their data effectively*.

They need established infrastructure and processes to ensure:

- ✓ *retained* EPSRC-funded research data preserved for a minimum of 10-yrs
- ✓ effective data curation provided throughout full data lifecycle
- ✓ knowledge of publicly-funded research data holdings
- ✓ discoverability; recording of 3rd party access requests
- ✓ notice/ justification of access restrictions, e.g. 'commercially confidential'
- ✓ awareness/use of relevant law e.g. FOI
- ✓ awareness/compliance with research data policies
- ✓ adequate RDM resource allocation (e.g. from QR/Research Grants)



How EPSRC Policy affects...

Researchers/Grant-holders

They have a responsibility to understand - and adhere to - EPSRC's principles and expectations for research data management. They should:

- ✓ make EPSRC-funded research data freely/openly available with as few restrictions as possible
- ✓ comply with the RDM policies of their Research Organisation
- ✓ have project specific RDM plans in place
- ✓ have appropriate agreements, if relevant, with collaborators
- ✓ ensure published research describes how to access supporting data (*also a requirement of the RCUK Policy on Open Access*)
- ✓ be aware/make use of relevant legislation and available exemptions as needed to justify withholding research data



How EPSRC Policy affects...

Non-Academic Partners

Non-Academic Partners in research collaborations need to be aware of:

- ✓ the general principle - publicly-funded research data is expected to be made freely and openly available with as few restrictions as possible
- ✓ the relevant legal requirements such as the Freedom of Information Acts
- ✓ the need to ensure issues of data ownership, confidentiality etc. are adequately addressed in RDM plans and collaboration agreements - *before the start of a collaborative research project!*

Data sharing agreements may be appropriate



Growing awareness of the importance of RDM - but more comms required!

75% of EPSRC research grant holders are **aware of EPSRC's policy** (25% know it in some detail)

BUT researchers' have lower awareness of their own institutional policies in this area:

55% know their institution *does* have an RDM policy, *but only about half of them know their policy in some detail*

42% don't know if their own institution *has* an RDM policy

70% don't know if their institution offers training or services to support RDM

Source:

EPSRC survey of 2526 current research grant and fellowship holders in January 2014; 782 respondents (30% response rate), Figures quoted are proportions of respondents.



Who is telling us this?

- 80% of participants were willing to identify their institution
- 64 institutions were specifically identified (*incl. all Russell Group*).
- Overall average: 9.75 respondents per identified institution
- *Russell Group average*: 18.75 respondents per identified institution

Some striking differences

(though care needed because of self-selection)

Institutions where the number of respondents...			All Identified	Avg. # of responders	# of Russell Group Identified	Avg. # of responders at RG
...who know their inst. has an RDM policy	>	number who do not know	39	10	15	17.3
	=		8	4.5	3	6.7
	<		9	20.4	6	28.3

In almost 70% of *all* identified ROs, more people knew than did not by over 2:1 (drops to 62% , 1.6:1 for the Russell Group)

12 who stated their institution has no formal policy on RDM were contradicted by at least other person at the same institution!



Clear signs of progress

167 indicated how long some aspects of training/support have been available:	Less than a year.	More than a year.
help with preparing a data management plan.	40	63
help with preparing appropriate metadata for any research data I choose to deposit.	27	41
other general RDM training.	37	59
regular backup of all my research data.	32	74
less than 1 Terabyte (1000 Gigabytes) of storage.	17	21
over 1 Terabyte of storage.	17	52

Some bizarre comments...

“The nature of my work is such that it generates no data that doesn't end up in my papers, so I'm unlikely to know about these policies.”

“This is irrelevant to me. I deal with no sensitive data.”

“As I do not work with empirical data I am not affected by RDM.”

“I am on the point of retiring so taking less interest in these things”

“RDM sounds like a gigantic waste of time and I intend to spend as little time on it as possible”



What funding is available?

All costs associated with research data management are eligible expenditure of research grant funds, but...

- *no expenditure can be 'double funded'* (an institutional service centrally supported by the indirect costs paid on all research grants cannot also be included as a direct cost on a grant)
- *all* directly incurred expenditure of a grant *must* be incurred before the end date of the grant.
- Further guidance available at <http://bit.ly/1hhXu0u>



Currently, in RCUK...

- The RCUK Research Outputs Network (RCUK-RON) is actively developing shared guidance on interpreting the RCUK Principles
 - *individual council policies still stand.*
- No major philosophical differences identified – it's the nature of the data itself that is most often behind differences in policy wording/approach
- Common position on funding for RDM already adopted

A related development...

- The status of Research Data is under active consideration by Parliament.

- The proposed Intellectual Property Bill introduces an amendment to the *Freedom of Information Act 2000*:

“Information obtained in the course of, or derived from, a programme of research is exempt information if—

- (a) the programme is continuing with a view to the publication... ..of a report of the research (whether or not including a statement of that information), **and**
- (b) disclosure of the information... ..before the date of publication would, or would be likely to, prejudice—
 - (i) the programme,
 - (ii) the interests of any individual participating in the programme,
 - (iii) the interests of the authority which holds the information, or
 - (iv) the interests of the authority mentioned in paragraph (a) (if it is a different authority from that which holds the information).”

- ‘Public Interest’ test still applies

- The Bill is now at the ‘Ping Pong’ stage (*amendments considered 02-Apr-14*)



Do's and Don'ts

DO

- ✓ Ensure researchers know and understand their responsibilities
- ✓ Disseminate information about support for RDM at your institution
- ✓ Ensure you have an RDM policy in place
- ✓ Ensure your collaborators are aware of RDM requirements
- ✓ Ensure resource for RDM (time and £££) in your grant applications
- ✓ Consider including resource for RDM in collective response to forthcoming consultation on capital investment needs

DON'T

- ✗ Delay addressing RDM – research data is too valuable **not** to look after



Thank You

Find the full policy and expectations on EPSRC website:
[Home](#) > [About us](#) > [Our service standards](#) > [EPSRC Policy Framework on Research Data](#)

please direct any enquiries to

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