

## Data Management Plans

The National Science Foundation has implemented revised guidelines for data management and sharing plans effective with proposals due on or after January 18, 2011. The [NSF Award and Administrative Guide Chapter VI D. 4](#) states that investigators are expected to share in a timely fashion and at minimal costs the primary data, samples, physical collections and other supporting materials created or gathered in the course of work under NSF grants. All proposals must now include a supplementary document of no more than two pages labeled "Data Management Plan" that describes how this requirement will be met. Additional information on the requirement can be found in the [NSF Grant Proposal Guide Chapter ii.C.2.j](#). The NSF website also contains [Frequently Asked Questions](#) related to Data Management & Sharing. The FAQs answer questions such as "What constitutes data covered by a Data Management Plan?" and "Is a plan for Data Management required if my project is not expected to generate data or samples?" As part of the proposal the plan will be peer reviewed under Intellectual Merit or Broader Impacts or both, as appropriate for the scientific community of relevance.

Some individual NSF Directorates have developed specific data management and plan requirements. Links to specific directorates including Engineering, Geological Sciences, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, and Social, Economic and Behavioral Sciences can be found on the [NSF Dissemination and Sharing of Research Results website](#). If guidance specific to the program is not provided, then the requirements established in the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) apply.

The NSF Grant Proposal Guide states that the supplement should describe how the proposal will conform to the NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and may include:

1. "The types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;
2. The standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies);
3. Policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements;
4. Policies and provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
5. Plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of access to them."

Things to keep in mind:

The goal of the data management plan is to show how data will be made available and shared externally. Include in the plan how the data should be used and how it should not be used. Citations should also be included.

Storage of the data on University servers provides security and provisions for backup and recovery. If University sites are not used then the provisions for security, backup and recovery should be described.

Since these plans may require review by library and IT staff they should be submitted 5 days in advance of the submission dates to ORA. That will provide adequate time for the review and any subsequent revisions prior to the deadline date.

Additional Resources:

[Council on Government Relations, Access to and Retention of Research Data: Rights and Responsibilities, March 2006](#)

MIT Data Management Website <http://libraries.mit.edu/guides/subjects/data-management/>

Rice University Data Management Website <http://osr.rice.edu/dataManagementPlans.cfm>