

Data Management Plan

Managing your data throughout the life cycle of your research is essential to ensure usability, preservation, and access. In addition, some federal granting agencies are now requiring data management plans as part of the grant proposal package. While it is not feasible to develop a comprehensive framework for a data management plan that would apply to all disciplines, the information below provides some general guidance.

A Data Management Plan (DMP) should:

- Be as simple as possible
- Describe the data. Identify the data that will be measured, recorded, calculated, or modeled as well as the manner in which these tasks will be performed.
- Present the context of the data. Explain the rationale for collecting or producing the data, as well as what insights could be gleaned from the data.
- Explain the nature of the data and identify the type of data collected. Note that data can include numerous types of information, including, but not limited to: field survey reports, laboratory notebook entries, computer files created by data acquisition software, and images produced via microscopy. When explaining the nature of the data, give an estimate of the amount of data, and provide the necessary metadata, such as laboratory notebook entries, software codes, etc., that are required to properly interpret the data.
- Describe the method for preserving and/or curating the data. Indicate how data will be backed up, as well as how it will be stored both on- and off-site.
- Discuss the approach for accessing the data, if relevant. Be aware that when requested, data should be available for sharing within a reasonable period of time; understand that different communities may define the term “reasonable” in different ways.
- State how long the data will be preserved and/or curated. NSF requires data to be preserved at a minimum three years beyond the end of the award.
- Clarify ethical and/or privacy issues associated with the data, if relevant. Explain how these issues will be addressed.
- Detail intellectual property concerns associated with the data, if relevant. Explain how these concerns will be addressed.

The following resources may be helpful in drafting a Data Management Plan:

NIH Data Sharing Policy and Implementation Guide:

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/data_sharing/data_sharing_guidance.htm

NIH Data Sharing Workbook (pdf and MS word samples):

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/data_sharing/

NSF Overview of the Dissemination and Sharing of Research Results (including Directorate-level guidance): <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp>

NSF Data Sharing Policy:

http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/aag_6.jsp#VID4

NSF Data Management Plan Requirements:

http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp#dmp

NSF Data Management Plan “Frequently Asked Questions”:

<http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmpfaqs.jsp>

MIT Library Guide to Data Management Planning:

<http://libraries.mit.edu/guides/subjects/data-management/>

For information on data repository options, please visit the UNLV Lied Libraries at <http://digitalcommons.library.unlv.edu/>