

WUPOL Research Data Management

Policy on Research Data Management at WU

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Please note: This translation is provided **for your information only**. In case of discrepancy, the German original shall prevail.

1. Purpose

This policy specifies regulations for research data management at WU.

2. Scope

This policy applies to everyone conducting research at WU. For research financed through external third-party funding or WU in-house research funding that is subject to funding guidelines which contain specific provisions regarding usage rights and access to, the storage of, archiving of, or the cataloging of research data, the provisions of these funding guidelines shall take precedence over the provisions of this policy. The same applies to cooperation agreements with external research partners.

3. Definitions

If no specific, broader definitions are stated (cf. section 4.2 below), **research data** within the meaning of this policy are defined as the data that form the basis of an academic publication or are necessary to replicate its findings (regardless of their form or the way in which they are presented), including any contextual information needed to document, support, or validate the development, results, observations, or findings of research activities. It is irrelevant whether this data is generated through digitization, measurements, experiments, primary source research, or other data collection methods. Research data can go through different phases during the data life cycle (raw data, processed data, published data). Within the meaning of this policy, an academic publication exists if there is a corresponding entry in the Publications section of WU's research information system¹.

A **data management plan** (DMP) provides a framework for structuring the way in which research data are managed and is one of the central pillars of an organization's research data management system. A DMP specifies what data are collected or created as part of a research project and how these data are to be used in the course of the research activities (storage, publication, long-term availability, pseudonymization, anonymization, deletion, etc.). A DMP helps to ensure compliance with the standards of good academic practice and the long-term transparency of research findings. A DMP should be adapted over the course of the corresponding research project if circumstances change and if these changes have consequences for the management of research data.

Data stewards assist researchers in data management. They help optimize data collection and storage, hold training courses on research data management, answer questions, provide support with regard to data management plans, and, if necessary, put researchers in touch with the appropriate contacts at WU.

The **FAIR principles** serve as important guidelines in research data management. They are aimed at improving the **F**indability, **A**ccessibility, **I**nteroperability, and **R**eusability of digital resources. These principles are intended to ensure that data and metadata are described and structured in such a way that both humans and machines can easily find, access, integrate, and reuse them. Data that complies with the FAIR principles does not necessarily have to be freely available. In many cases, it may be reasonable or even necessary to restrict access to research data.²

¹ <https://research.wu.ac.at/admin/workspace.xhtml> (for adding entries) or <https://research.wu.ac.at/> (presentation of entries).

² Further information about the FAIR principles is available on the web pages of the GO FAIR Austria office: <https://fair-office.at/>.

4. Regulations

4.1. Preamble

WU recognizes the important role that research data management plays with regard to high-quality research and academic integrity. Correct research data that complies with the FAIR principles is fundamental to and essential for any type of data-based research. Data is necessary for reviewing and defending the research process and the results generated. Compliance with the FAIR principles is required from the perspective of good academic practice, and the principles also provide essential guidelines for research data management at WU.

4.2. Usage and publication rights

Usage rights for research data: In principle, the university has a non-exclusive, permanent, and comprehensive right to use any research data generated, created, or collected within the scope of a researcher's employment at WU. This applies both to raw data and to processed data. This right of use extends to all research data, regardless of whether the data have already been published or are still in the development phase ("work in progress"). To ensure permanent access, the right of use remains in full effect even after the researcher in question leaves WU. In particular, this usage right entitles WU to use the research data for research, teaching, and documentation purposes. There is no intention on the part of WU to use any research data for commercial purposes. If a researcher wishes to use research data for commercial purposes, they must first consult with WU to ensure compliance with all obligations that apply within the university and any third-party funding restrictions that may apply. In this context, the provisions of WU's strategy paper on intellectual property management ("Strategie zum Umgang mit geistigem Eigentum – IP-Strategie"³) must also be observed. As research data in their pure, data-like form are not considered to constitute a copyright-protected work, copyright law only applies if the data have been processed in an artistic or creative manner.

Publication rights in connection with research data: Academic publications based on research data are not restricted in any way by the university's right to use the research data. The author retains copyright to any copyright-protected works they have created. This means that the decision to publish their own academic work lies entirely with the individual researchers, in accordance with § 106 (1) of the Universities Act 2002. Usage rights are governed by the provisions of employment or civil service law and other contractual agreements. In addition, usage rights may also be assigned to persons under additional agreements, for example funding agreements for collaborative projects or research contracts.

4.3. Responsibilities, rights, and obligations

Researchers are responsible for managing their research data in accordance with the principles and requirements set out in this policy. WU, in turn, offers support services and infrastructure to enable compliance with this policy.

³ https://www.wu.ac.at/fileadmin/wu/h/research/IP-Strategie_WU_Endfassung.pdf (currently available only in German)

4.3.1. Planning the use of research data

WU recommends that researchers prepare a data management plan for the collection, use, and handling of research data during and after every research project and that they keep this data management plan up to date throughout the duration of the research project in question.

4.3.2. Archiving and cataloging research data

WU expects its researchers to archive any research data collected or created in the course of their employment at WU in a repository for at least 10 years, in accordance with the FAIR principles and the standards of good academic practice. Researchers can choose from a wide range of general-purpose and discipline-specific repositories that make research data available to the public or a restricted group of users on a long-term basis, ensuring that the data can be cited and reused. Through its membership in the AUSSDA – Austrian Social Science Data Archive⁴ consortium, WU gives its employees access to various services related to the archiving of social science research data in this repository.

If there are any legal, technical, or other obstacles that might prevent archiving, WU's data stewards are available to provide appropriate advice. It is expected that any data archived in repositories will subsequently also be entered into WU's research information system.

4.3.3. Storage of non-archived research data

If it is not possible to archive research data in accordance with section 4.3.2 or if data is not archived for other reasons, researchers must retain the data unaltered and in their entirety for at least 10 years after publication of the corresponding academic work. Wherever possible, the data should be stored within WU's centralized IT infrastructure, in digital form and in accordance with the latest backup standards. Storing research data exclusively on local storage media or private cloud services is therefore not a permissible storage option. Researchers are responsible for ensuring appropriate documentation of the storage of research data (storage location, access options, and regulations in the event that the researcher responsible for the data leaves WU before the end of the retention period, etc.).

If research data and records are deleted, this must be in compliance with all applicable legal and ethical requirements. This step must be made fully transparent and documented appropriately. The interests of any other parties involved (e.g. funding bodies) and confidentiality and security considerations must be taken into account in this connection.

4.3.4. WU research data management services

WU provides the following research data management services for its researchers:

- Establishment of a central point of contact for research data management, which will also be responsible for further developing WU's range of services in this field and for coordinating WU's data stewards
- Measures for raising awareness of the importance of research data management
- Training courses and assistance in research data management, with a special focus on data management plans and repositories

⁴ <https://aussda.at/>

- Services and advising related to the Austrian Social Science Data Archive (AUSSDA), where research data can be described, archived, and published, if required
- WU IT infrastructure for the secure storage of research data
- If required, advice on ethical and legal issues related to research data
- Advice on cataloging research data into WU's research information system

5. Data protection

When processing personal data – including data collection, storage, and publication – WU employees must comply with the applicable data protection regulations. In particular, this includes the following:

- The European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Austrian Data Protection Act (*Datenschutzgesetz*, DSG)
- Specific provisions of the Act on the Organization of Research (*Forschungsorganisationsgesetz*, FOG) governing the processing of personal data for purposes of archiving and scientific, historical, and statistical research (Art. 89 [1] of the GDPR)

Stricter requirements apply when dealing with special categories of personal data (Art. 9 of the GDPR).

If an employee leaves WU, steps must be taken to ensure that WU and its employees have full access to all personal data so that the university can comply with any disclosure obligations that may arise in a timely manner.

6. Quality assurance

This policy will be evaluated by August 31, 2030, to ensure that it stays up to date.