WUPOL Research Data Management

WU Policy on Research Data Management

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1. Purpose

This Policy defines conditions and regulations for state-of-the-art research data management at WU.

2. Scope

The WU Policy on Research Data Management governs the collection, processing, use, storage, and reuse of research data and applies to everyone who carries out research activities at WU. If the research activities in question receive third-party funding and the funding agreement includes special regulations regarding ownership of, access to, and the storage of research data, the specific regulations included in the research contract prevail over the regulations specified in this Policy. The same applies for cooperation agreements with external research partners.

3. Definitions

Researchers are all WU employees who carry out research activities at WU. In addition, the term also includes people who are not affiliated with WU (e.g. visiting researchers or cooperation partners) but use WU facilities for research purposes based on a written agreement (e.g. research funding agreements, contract research agreements, consortium agreements, cooperation agreements, etc.).

Research means any creative and systematic work aimed at expanding the body of knowledge and applying this knowledge in new areas.

Third parties are natural or legal persons, authorities, institutions, or other entities unaffiliated with WU.

Research data means any information on which an academic publication is based or which is required for replicating the research in question (regardless of the form this information may take and the way it is presented). This also includes contextual information required to document, corroborate, or verify the development, results, observations, or insights of research activities. Research data are created in the course of academic research activities, e.g. through digitization, the keeping of notes and records, experiments, the study of sources, measurements, surveys, or interviews. Research data can pass through various stages during the research data life cycle (raw data, processed data, published data).

A **research data management plan** is a structured guideline that covers the entire research data life cycle and can be updated, if necessary. The research data management plan describes which data are collected or generated in the course of the research activity in question and how they will subsequently be used and processed (stored, deleted, published, etc.).

4. Regulations

4.1.   Preamble

WU recognizes that research data management is of fundamental importance for high-quality research and academic integrity. Accurate research data that can be easily accessed are fundamental for any data-based research. They are necessary for reviewing and defending the research process and its results. WU makes every effort to meet the latest standards for state-of-the-art research data management.

4.2. Usage rights

As a rule, the author holds the copyright to any copyright-protected works he or she has created. The researcher's right to freely decide on the publication of his or her research work pursuant to § 106 (1) of the Universities Act 2002 (*Universitätsgesetz*) is not restricted in any way. Which rights are held by the author and which by WU is determined by the applicable employment law regulations or any further contract terms that may apply. Usage rights may also be assigned based on other agreements (e.g. funding agreements as part of cooperative projects or contract research agreements). Such agreements may contain provisions regarding the publication of research results. WU's Intellectual Property Strategy (*Strategie zum Umgang mit geistigen Eigentum – IP-Strategie*) applies to all inventions and intellectual property created at WU that are eligible for copyright protection, e.g. software, databases, etc.

4.3. Managing research data

Research data must be stored in full and without any alterations. They should be stored electronically and in accordance with state-of-the-art security standards. The storage location chosen must guarantee that it is possible for authorized people to access the research data, both technologically and organizationally. For this reason, storing research data only on a local storage drive is usually not sufficient. When publishing research data, care should be taken to make the data identifiable, locatable, accessible, reusable, and interoperable.

WU recommends publishing research data in a freely available form, if this is possible without violating any rights of third parties, legal regulations, ethical standards, or property rules. It is up to the researchers to decide if and to which extent they want to make their research data freely available, in accordance with the applicable legal regulations and ethical standards.

Research data and records must be stored in the manner and for the length of time required by the applicable statutory or contractual provisions or the guidelines of the funding body. The minimum storage period for research data and research records is 10 years from the date of publication of the data or the corresponding academic contribution, or from the end of the research project.

If research data or records are deleted or destroyed, this must be done in accordance with all relevant legal regulations and ethical standards. All actions taken and the underlying reasons must be justifiable and documented. All activities must be carried out in accordance with the interests of the relevant stakeholders (e.g. funding bodies) and the appropriate confidentiality and security requirements.

4.4. Responsibilities, rights, and obligations

Researchers are responsible for managing their research data in accordance with the principles and requirements defined in this Policy. In particular, this includes:
   a. Recording, collecting, documenting, storing, using, reusing, managing access to, archiving, and deleting or destroying research data related to each researcher's research activities. If necessary, this also includes defining protocols and responsibilities as part of cooperative research activities.
   b. Planning the use of research data during the research and after its completion, e.g. by means of a data management plan. This includes making plans for the use of data in the event that a researcher drops out of a project and establishing procedures for data storage and archiving in case a researcher leaves WU.
   c. Compliance with all of WU's internal regulations (e.g. IT security directives, WULABS directives, WU Code of Conduct) and other applicable statutory and contractual obligations regarding research data.

WU is obligated to ensure that the necessary preconditions are in place for fulfilling the requirements of this Policy. WU is also responsible for providing a secure storage location for research data that are sensitive or require special protection, and for establishing a central point of contact with the following responsibilities:

a. Taking measures to raise awareness of the importance of research data management
b. Providing training courses, support, and advisory services on research data management and templates for research data management plans
c. Providing information on and access to services and infrastructure for storing and archiving research data and records. These services are also available to people doing research at WU who are not WU employees, e.g. visiting researchers or cooperation partners.

4.5. Subsidiary additions by WU academic units

In coordination with the Rector's Council, departments, research institutes, competence centers, and the WU Executive Academy can expand or further specify the WU Policy on Research Data Management to account for any special needs that may arise in the context of their respective field of research. Any such additions must not run counter to the provisions of this Policy.

5. Data Protection

Personal data may only be processed in compliance with the applicable data protection laws, in particular the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Austrian Data Protection Act (*Datenschutzgesetz*, DSG), and the specific regulations on data processing for research purposes included in the Act on the Organization of Research (*Forschungsorganisationsgesetz*, FOG).

6. Quality Assurance

This Policy will be subject to evaluation by April 30, 2024, to ensure that it is up to date.

Pichler, Stefan; Vizerektor für Forschung

7. Document Details

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[1] Examples of short/long titles:
- Short title = category and keyword, e.g. WUPOL Software
- Long title or subtitle = designation provided by the organizational unit, e.g. "Regulation on the use of WU Software"

[2] No more than 60 characters; do not use any diacritics, special characters, and spaces