

## NSF DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN GUIDANCE

### NSF Data Management Plan Guidance

NSF is making changes to how data management plans are submitted as required components of a proposal. **All proposals submitted on or after January 18, 2011, must describe plans for data management and sharing of the products of research, or assert the absence of the need for such plans.** FastLane will not permit submission of a proposal that is missing a Data Management Plan. **Proposals must include the plan as a supplementary document of no more than two pages.** The Data Management Plan will be reviewed as part of the intellectual merit or broader impacts of the proposal or both.

- Investigators are expected to share with other researchers, at no more than incremental cost and within a reasonable time, the primary data, samples, physical collections and other supporting materials created or gathered in the course of work under NSF grants. Grantees are also expected to encourage and facilitate such sharing. Privileged or confidential information should be released only in a form that protects the privacy of individuals and subjects involved. General adjustments and, where essential, exceptions to this sharing expectation may be specified by the funding NSF Program or Division/Office for a particular field or discipline to safeguard the rights of individuals and subjects, the validity of results, or the integrity of collections or to accommodate the legitimate interest of investigators. A grantee or investigator also may request a particular adjustment or exception from the cognizant NSF Program Officer.
- Investigators are expected to promptly prepare and submit for publication, with authorship that accurately reflects the contributions of those involved, all significant findings from work conducted under NSF grants. Grantees are expected to permit and encourage such publication by those actually performing that work, unless a grantee intends to publish or disseminate such findings.
- Investigators and grantees are encouraged to share software and inventions created under the grant or otherwise make them or their products widely available and usable.
- NSF normally allows grantees to retain principal legal rights to intellectual property developed under NSF grants to provide incentives for development and dissemination of inventions, software and publications that can enhance their

usefulness, accessibility and upkeep. Such incentives do not, however, reduce the responsibility that investigators and organizations have as members of the scientific and engineering community, to make results, data and collections available to other researchers.

- NSF program management will implement these policies for dissemination and sharing of research results, in ways appropriate to field and circumstances, through the proposal review process; through award negotiations and conditions; and through appropriate support and incentives for data cleanup, documentation, dissemination, storage and the like.

The “Data Management Plan” should describe how the proposal will conform to NSF policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results (see prior bullet points), 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.

Data management requirements and plans specific to the Directorate, Office, Division, Program, or other NSF unit, relevant to a proposal are available at: <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp>. If guidance specific to the program is not available, then the requirements established in this section apply.

Simultaneously submitted collaborative proposals and proposals that include subawards are a single unified project and should include only one supplemental combined Data Management Plan, regardless of the number of non-lead collaborative proposals or subawards included. Fastlane will not permit submission of a proposal that is missing a Data Management Plan. Proposals for supplementary support to an existing award are not required to include a Data Management Plan.

A valid Data Management Plan may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed, as long as the statement is accompanied by a clear justification. Proposers who feel that the plan cannot fit within the supplement limit of two pages may use part of the 15-page Project Description for additional data management information. Proposers are advised that the Data Management Plan may not be used to circumvent the 15-page Project Description limitation. The Data Management Plan will be reviewed as an integral part of the proposal, coming under Intellectual Merit or Broader Impacts or both, as appropriate for the scientific community of relevance.

## **Additional Resources:**

### **Regis University**

- [Dayton Memorial Library](#)

### **National Science Foundation**

- [Data Management & Sharing Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Requirements by Directorate, Office, Division, Program, or other NSF](#)

#### **Unit**

[Biological Sciences Directorate](#)  
[Engineering Directorate](#)  
[Education & Human Resources Directorate](#)  
[Mathematical and Physical Sciences Directorate](#)  
[Division of Astronomical Sciences](#)  
[Division of Chemistry](#)  
[Division of Materials Research](#)  
[Division of Mathematical Sciences](#)  
[Division of Physics](#)

### **Other Resources**

- [Digital Curation Center, including links to a Checklist for a Data Management Plan and On-line Plan Development Tool](#)
- [MIT Data Management Website](#)
- [Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate](#)