

AAU standard Data Management Plan

Introduction and plan overview

This is the AAU standard Data Management Plan template provided by Aalborg University. It is based on the [Digital Curation Centre \(DCC\) checklist](#) [and Science Europe's Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management](#). The template is useful for all research areas at AAU.

A DMP can help you consider important aspects of the data handling in your research activity throughout the data lifecycle – from collection, processing, organizing, documenting to storage and data sharing.

The template and guiding questions will guide you through key aspects of how you will handle your research data, as well as help you make your data FAIR; Findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable. The chronology is aimed at the life cycle of your research data.

The template consists of the following topics:

1. Data Collection
2. Documentation and Metadata
3. Ethics and Legal Compliance
4. Storage, Backup and Access
5. Selection and Preservation
6. Data sharing
7. Responsibilities and Resources

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Project Details

Project tittle	
Project abstract	<i>5-10 lines</i>
Project start	<i>Expected date</i>
Project end	<i>Expected date</i>
ID	
Funder	
Funder status	
Grant number/url	

1. Data Collection

1.1 How will you collect or reuse existing data?	
<i>Guidance:</i> Describe how your data is collected or produced and/or if existing data are reused in the research project. Specify, if your data comes from a third party, such as external partners, collaborators, public databases, repositories and/or publications. Consider how you control and document the consistency and quality of your data.	<i>Questions to consider:</i> • Which methodologies or software is used to collect new data? • Are you reusing any existing data? If so, where does it come from and what will you reuse it for? • How does the new data complement and integrate with existing data? • How is data's provenance documented? • What processes will you use to ensure consistency and high-quality data and how is it documented? E.g., processes such as calibration, repeated samples or measurements, standardised data capture, data entry validation, peer review of data, or representation with controlled vocabularies • Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?
<i>Description:</i>	

1.2 What are the main characteristics of your data?

Guidance:

Describe what kind of data is used in the research project. Outline data's format and volume and elaborate your choices of format.

Questions to consider:

- What kind of data are generated in the project? E.g., survey data, experimental measurements, models, images, audio-visual data, samples etc.
- Which format(s) are the data in? E.g., plain text (.txt), comma-separated values (.csv), PDF etc. (give preference to open formats, standards accepted by data repositories or widespread usage within the research community)
- What is the expected volume of the data? E.g., MB, GB, or TB.
- Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?

Description:

2. Documentation and Metadata

2.1 What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?	
<i>Guidance:</i> When working with FAIR data, documentation and metadata are crucial in order to support other researchers' interpretation and reuse of the data. Consider what information is needed to understand the data - for example methodology of data collection and the way data are organised and structured.	<i>Questions to consider:</i> • What data and metadata standards, vocabularies or formats are you using to make your data interoperable and allow data reuse within and across disciplines? It's recommended to use community metadata standards where these are in place. Find inspiration at; DCC disciplinary metadata or FAIRsharing.org. • What should be included in your documentation and other supporting materials for others to interpret the data correctly and enable reuse? E.g., information on the methodology used to collect the data, analytical and procedural information, definitions of variables, units of measurement etc. • How will you create this documentation and where will it be saved? E.g., in a 'readme' text file, in a database with links to each item, file headers, code books, or lab notebooks. • How will you structure data in the project? E.g. by using naming conventions, structuring files and folders and version control (consistent and well-ordered research data makes it easier to find, understand og reuse. • Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?
<i>Description:</i>	

3. Ethics and Legal Compliance

3.1 How will you manage working with ethical perspectives and personal data?	
<i>Guidance:</i> If data in your research project contains ethical perspectives and/or personal data, this affects how you handle the data, e.g. storage solutions, who may view and/or use the data, and how long it is kept. Read more about the ethics committee at AAU: Sustaining good Research Ethics at AAU or learn about how to handle personal data at AAU: GDPR - Help and guidelines for Researchers. Describe how you intend to comply with these regulations.	<i>Questions to consider:</i> • Do your research data involve ethical aspects? If so, remember to apply your research activity at the research committee at AAU. ○ Please note that research activities that fall under the National Scientific Ethics Committee system, the Danish Medicines Agency or the Animal Experimental Inspectorate are exempt. In those cases, you should use the application options they have. ○ Be aware that there can be special requirements in relation to the handling of data with ethical perspectives, e.g. storage and access conditions, transfer, sharing of data, preservation and so on. Indicate how these are managed. • Do your research data involve personal data? If so, remember to register your research activity at: Register your research online ○ Be aware that there can be special requirements in relation to the handling of personal data, e.g. storage and access conditions, transfer, sharing of data, preservation and so on. Indicate how these are managed. • Which safety measurements do you intend to take in the handling of the research data, to comply with the legislation? • Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?
<i>Description:</i>	

3.2 How will you manage working with copyright and other legal issues?

Guidance:

When working with data (existing as well as newly collected) there can be various legal rights and agreements that you need to be aware of when handling the data e.g. Copyright, Intellectual Property Rights, ownership, contracts, patents, usage rights and so on. State what agreements there are around the various data that you are working with and if it has any implications on how you handle the data.

Questions to consider:

- If you are reusing existing data; are there any constraints on the data usage you need to be aware of? E.g., copyright, specific conditions about data sharing or usage rights (licence) etc. How will you follow these?
- If you are collecting new data; are there any legal issues regarding the data that you need to be aware of? E.g. If you want to patent and commercialise an invention, data confidentiality etc. ([Commercial utilization of research results](#)).
- Have you signed an agreement or contract, that describes conditions about the use of data? If so, how will you follow those?
- Do you have an agreement with your project partners on who has the data ownership and the rights to control access to the data? (For multi-partner projects, IPR and ownership may be covered in a consortium agreement)
- Do any involved funders, institutions, departments, or others have policies about the handling of the data that is worth considering?
- Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?

Description:

4. Storage, Backup and Access

4.1 How will data be stored and backed up during the research process?	
<i>Guidance:</i> Describe how data are stored and backed up securely during the project phase. In this, consider the implications of the data formats and volumes in terms of storage and backup. The use of managed systems provided by AAU, is preferable. Have a look at the AAU Data classification model for more information about data type and recommended systems to use.	<i>Questions to consider:</i> • Where will data be stored during the research project? (Storing data on laptops, stand-alone hard drives, or external storage devices such as USB sticks is not recommended). • How will data be backed up? And how often? • Do you have sufficient storage, or will you need more? Additional charges? • Do you have an overview over the systems that you use for data handling during your project? If not, try to map your dataflow. This is a way to follow which systems your data are handled in from the start of the research project to the end of the project. • Have you checked if your research data must be reported to the Danish National Archives? • Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?
<i>Description:</i>	

4.2 How will you manage access and security during the research process?

Guidance:

If your data is confidential or sensitive in any way, explain how you will apply appropriate security measurements in the data handling process during the project phase.

Have a look at the [AAU Data classification model](#) for more information about data type and recommended systems to use.

Questions to consider:

- Describe who has access to the data during the research process and how access is controlled, especially in partnerships. E.g. password protection or access control models.
- How will you ensure that potential collaborators can access your data securely?
- If you are collecting data in the field, how will you ensure safe transfer into your main secured systems?
- If you use existing data, how will you access and transfer them?
- Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?

Description:

5. Selection and Preservation

5.1 How do you intend to preserve data at the end of the project?

Guidance:

At the end of the research project, you need to consider how you intend to preserve the data beyond the period of research.

AAU follows [The Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) that says that data should be preserved in accordance with disciplinary traditions, otherwise for a minimum of five years after publication or public release of the research. Note that agreements with external partners might contain other requirements.

Questions to consider:

- What is your procedure for preserving the data for later use after the project? E.g., conversion into common file formats, linking to related research outputs and resources such as instruments, using community standards of metadata descriptions including search keywords etc.
- Are there any of the data that must be retained or destroyed for contractual or legal purposes?
- At the end of the project, it's recommended to delete data from AAU platforms used to process/manage/analyse data. How do you proceed with this?
- Have you considered how and where you store your finalised data? Otherwise have a look at [AAU's storage system DataDeposit](#)
- Have you considered if data should be retained longer than five years? If so, how is data curation handled to support optimal data reusability.
- Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?

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6. Data Sharing

6.1 How will you share your finished data?

Guidance:

When working with FAIR data it should be possible for others to discover your data and in some cases access the data. Consider how other researchers will be able to find your data and metadata in collections or search engines.

The best place to preserve and publish open data or metadata is in an established data repository. Outline your plans to deposit and curate your metadata and data in a data repository.

If you do not anticipate using an established repository e.g. If you are working with sensitive or any kind of confidential data, please outline what resources and systems you will use to curate your data effectively, beyond the lifetime of the research project.

Find a suitable data repository at [re3data](#)
Have a look at [AAU's DataDeposit](#) for internal storage.

Questions to consider:

- Will all data in the project be made openly available? ([read more here](#)). If specific data can't be openly shared, describe what access conditions will apply to the data and how metadata about the data are shared.
- Will the data be deposited in a data repository, indexed in a catalogue etc.? Does the data get a Persistent Identifier?
- How will the data be licensed for reuse? E.g. Via the use of Creative Commons licenses.
- What metadata should accompany the data to optimize discovery and reuse of the data E.g., title, authors, keywords, publication year etc.
- Will data sharing be postponed or restricted? E.g., to publish articles, protect intellectual property, or seek patents?
- If data can't be published in a data repository, describe where and for how long data are curated and updated beyond the project's lifetime.
- Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?

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7. Responsibilities and Resources

7.1 Who will be responsible for data management in the project?	
<i>Guidance:</i> Outline the roles and responsibilities for all data handling activities. E.g., creating this data management plan and keeping it up to date, metadata production, data quality, storage, backup, data sharing and data curation.	<i>Questions to consider:</i> • Who is responsible for creating, reviewing, revising, and implementing the DMP? • Who will be responsible for creating metadata? • Who will be responsible for ensuring data quality? • Who will be responsible for storage and backup? • Who will be responsible for storing and sharing the data? • Who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with contracts, cooperation agreement etc. as well as determining the conditions for reuse? • Will there be a need for you or another person to be involved long-term in data curation beyond the project period? • Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?
<i>Description:</i>	

7.2 What resources will you require to carry out the research project?

Guidance:

Consider what resources you need to carry out your research project. E.g., software, hardware, technical expertise, guidance, personnel etc.

Questions to consider:

- Do you need resources for hardware or software e.g. funding or applying for compute hours at HPC facilities?
- Do you or anyone involved have sufficient technical expertise?
- Do you or anyone involved need guidance or education?
- Will charges be applied by data repositories or other storage solutions?
- Do you have sufficient personnel to fulfill all the tasks in the project? E.g., future tasks concerning data availability?
- Are there currently any uncertainties, risks or other concerns related to your data, which need particular attention?

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