



## **POLICY No. 22**

# **RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **MODIFICATIONS**

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Adopted April 2024

BG-24-004-510

Through a partnership, TAV College applied Vanier College's *Institutional Strategy: Research Data Management*. With the college's permission, TAV has adapted and partially rewritten its policy for its specific needs. TAV College wishes to thank Vanier College for their partnership, contribution and generosity.

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## Introduction

The [Canadian Institutes of Health Research \(CIHR\)](#), the [Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada \(NSERC\)](#), and the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada \(SSHRC\)](#) (the agencies) are federal granting agencies that promote and support research, research training, knowledge transfer and innovation within Canada. According to the [Tri-Agency Research Data Management \(RDM\) Policy](#), as of March 1, 2023, all postsecondary institutions eligible to administer Tri-Agency funds must have an institutional RDM strategy.

The agencies expect the research they fund to be conducted to the highest professional and disciplinary standards, domestically and internationally. These standards support research excellence by ensuring that research is performed ethically and makes good use of public funds, experiments and studies are replicable, and research results are as accessible as possible. Research data management (RDM) is a necessary part of research excellence.

The agencies believe that research data collected through the use of public funds should be responsibly and securely managed and be, where ethical, legal and commercial obligations allow, available for reuse by others. To this end, the agencies support the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) guiding principles for research data management and stewardship.

The objective of this policy is to support Canadian research excellence by promoting sound RDM and data stewardship practices. This policy is not an open data policy.

## Definitions<sup>1</sup>

### Data

Data are facts, measurements, recordings, records, or observations collected by researchers and others, with a minimum of contextual interpretation. Data may be in any format or medium taking the form of text, numbers, symbols, images, films, video, sound recordings, pictorial reproductions, drawings, designs or other graphical representations, procedural manuals, forms, diagrams, workflows, equipment descriptions, data files, data processing algorithms, software, programming languages, code, or statistical records.

### Research data

Research data are data that are used as primary sources to support technical or scientific enquiry, research, scholarship, or creative practice, and that are used as evidence in the research process and/or are commonly accepted in the research community as necessary to validate research findings and results. Research data may be experimental data, observational data, operational data, third party data, public sector data, monitoring data,

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<sup>1</sup> All definitions come from the [Tri-Agency Research Data Management Policy government website](#).

processed data, or repurposed data. What is considered relevant research data is often highly contextual, and determining what counts as such should be guided by disciplinary norms.

## **Research data management**

Research data management (RDM) refers to the processes applied through the lifecycle of a research project to guide the collection, documentation, storage, sharing and preservation of research data.

RDM is essential throughout the data lifecycle—from data creation, processing, analysis, preservation, storage and access, to sharing and reuse (where appropriate), at which point the cycle begins again. Data management should be practiced over the entire lifecycle of the data, including planning the investigation, conducting the research, backing up data as it is created and used, disseminating data, and preserving data for the long term after the research investigation has concluded.

## **Data management plan**

A data management plan (DMP) is a living document, typically associated with an individual research project or program that consists of the practices, processes and strategies that pertain to a set of specified topics related to data management and curation. DMPs should be modified throughout the course of a research project to reflect changes in project design, methods, or other considerations.

DMPs guide researchers in articulating their plans for managing data; they do not necessarily compel researchers to manage data differently.

## **Data deposit**

“Data deposit” refers to when the research data collected as part of a research project are transferred to a research data repository. The repository should have easily accessible policies describing deposit and user licenses, access control, preservation procedures, storage and backup practices, and sustainability and succession plans. The deposit of research data into appropriate repositories supports ongoing data-retention and, where appropriate, access to the data.

Ideally, data deposits will include accompanying documentation, source code, software, metadata, and any supplementary materials that provide additional information about the data, including the context in which it was collected and used to inform the research project. This additional information facilitates curation, discoverability, accessibility and reuse of the data.

## **Scope**

The RDM strategy applies to all research projects funded by CIHR, NSERC and SHRC. More specifically, it pertains to:

- all categories of researchers (faculty, non-teaching staff, corporate and community partners, etc.);
- research that uses primary data and/or secondary data;
- research conducted by TAV researchers, regardless of whether or not research activities take place at TAV or with members of the TAV community (in whole or in part); and
- research conducted by researchers external to TAV, where research activities take place at TAV or with members of the TAV community (in whole or in part).

The RDM strategy does not apply to non-research activities that have traditionally employed methods and techniques similar to those employed in research (see [TCPS 2 2018, Chapter 2](#)), such as:

quality assurance and quality improvement studies, program evaluation activities, and performance reviews, or testing within normal educational requirements when used exclusively for assessment, management or improvement purposes; and creative practice activities.

## Responsibilities

As a research institution, our responsibilities include:

- a) providing our researchers with an environment that enables world class data stewardship practices
- b) providing, or supporting access to, repository services or other platforms that securely preserve, curate and provide appropriate access to research data;
- c) supporting researchers in their efforts to establish and implement data management practices that are consistent with ethical, legal and commercial obligations, as well as tri-agency requirements, including the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – 2<sup>nd</sup> edition](#), the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#), and other relevant policies;
- d) providing their affiliated researchers with guidance to properly manage their data in accordance with both the principles outlined above and research community best practices, including the development of data management plans;
- e) recognizing data as an important research output and fostering excellence in data management;
- f) promoting the importance of data management to researchers, staff and students;
- g) guiding their researchers on how to properly manage data in accordance with the principles outlined in the [Tri-Agency Statement of Principles on Digital Data Management](#), including the development of data management plans;

- h) committing to the adoption of established best practices when developing institutional standards and policies for data management plans;
- i) recognizing that data created in the context of research by and with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, collectives and organizations will be managed according to principles developed and approved by those communities, collectives and organizations, and in partnership with them;

## **Data Management Plan**

Researchers will be required to prepare DMPs for certain CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC funding opportunities. When indicated in the corresponding call for proposals, DMPs will need to be included with the grant application, and will be considered in the adjudication process. Nonetheless, modifications to DMPs can be made throughout the course of a research project, in order to accommodate changes. Although different projects can have DMPs of different lengths and content, they must all describe:

- how data will be collected, documented, formatted, protected and preserved;
- how existing datasets will be used and what new data will be created over the course of the research project;
- whether and how data will be shared;
- where data will be deposited;
- who is responsible for managing the project's data (and a succession plan should that person leave the research team);
- the data-related roles and responsibilities of other team members; and
- ethical, legal and commercial constraints the data are subject to, and methodological considerations that support or preclude data sharing.

For research conducted by and with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, collectives and organizations, DMPs must be co-developed with these communities, collectives and organizations, in accordance with RDM principles or DMP formats that they accept.

## **Data Deposit**

CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC grant recipients must deposit their data into a digital repository by the time of publication of the research. The type of data to be deposited and what is considered appropriate access to the data may be guided by the grant recipient's own judgement, and by the disciplinary, ethical, cultural, legal and commercial requirements associated with the research in question. However, for all research, the chosen repository must ensure safe storage, preservation and curation of the data. For research conducted by and with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, collectives and organizations, these communities, collectives or organizations will guide and ultimately determine how the data are collected, used and preserved, and have the right to repatriate the data. This could result in exceptions to the data deposit requirement.

## Stakeholders

To implement this strategy, an RDM Strategy Development Committee was established, in order to guide the creation of this document. Committee members were selected to represent relevant offices, departments or bodies at the institution, as follows:

- Dean of studies
- Science program coordinator and Director of research
- Associate Dean of studies

Collectively, and as it pertains to their individual areas of expertise and responsibility (to be determined at a later date), the members of the RDM Strategy Implementation Committee will ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are in place for DMPs and Data Deposit to be executed with respect to disciplinary and ethical standards, following the FAIR guiding principles, and according to a distinctions-based approach (when appropriate).

## Compliance and Policy Review

- The implementation of TAV College's RDM strategy will be overseen by the Dean of studies and the Director of Research.
- TAV College will review and revise this policy as appropriate with stakeholder communities as RDM services, infrastructure and practices evolve.
- By accepting agency funds, institutions and researchers accept the terms and conditions as set out in the agencies' policies, agreements and guidelines. In the event of an alleged breach of agency policy, agreement or guideline, the agency may take steps outlined in accordance with the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#) to deal with the allegation.

## Other Relevant Strategies and Policies

This strategy will comply with all applicable privacy regulations and requirements, including:

- the [Tri-Agency Research Data Management Policy](#);
- the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 \(2022\)](#);
- the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research \(2021\)](#);
- the [Tri-Agency Statement of Principles on Digital Data Management](#);
- the [CIHR Health Research and Health-Related Data Framework and Action Plan](#);
- the [Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#);
- the [Loi sur l'accès aux documents des organismes publics et sur la protection des renseignements personnels](#); and
- all relevant [TAV College internal policies and procedures](#).