

# Research Data Management Policy of the University of Münster

## Preamble

Research data represents a central element of both academic activity and the ensuing acquisition of knowledge, and thereby serves as an essential tool for acquiring knowledge. In the following, 'research data' is defined as all data collected, mined, simulated or derived in connection with a research process. The University of Münster (WWU) regards research data, therefore, as an academic product, to which it attaches great importance. In order to acquire, disseminate and substantiate scientific findings, it is therefore absolutely vital that University staff manage research data in a responsible and academically appropriate manner.<sup>1</sup> Handling such data requires early implementation of a research data management policy. This comprises all phases of planning and execution, i.e. generation and collection, as well as the processing, application and storage of research data. It also includes the documentation of the context and tools used for collecting this data, as well as provisions detailing its subsequent use, reproducibility and quality assurance.

## Principles

Based on "The German Research Foundation's (DFG) Recommendations on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice"<sup>2</sup>, the "Rules of Good Scientific Practice of the University of Münster"<sup>3</sup> and the "DFG Guidelines on the Handling of Research Data"<sup>4</sup>, the University of Münster provides the following principles to serve as a guideline for its researchers. The University faculties are to tailor these principles to correspond to their subject-specific requirements.

1. Researchers at the University of Münster are called upon to manage and document their research data responsibly and in accordance with academically recognised standards and practices throughout. Matters of ethics, data protection, copyright, confidentiality and secrecy are to be considered at all times.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Recommendation of the 16th General Assembly of the HRK on 13 May 2014 in Frankfurt am Main – Management of Research Data – A Central Strategic Challenge for University Administrations, available at (in Germany only):

[https://www.hrk.de/uploads/tx\\_szconvention/HRK\\_Empfehlung\\_Forschungsdaten\\_13052014\\_01.pdf](https://www.hrk.de/uploads/tx_szconvention/HRK_Empfehlung_Forschungsdaten_13052014_01.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Available at (in German only):

[http://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/dfg\\_im\\_profil/reden\\_stellungnahmen/download/empfehlung\\_wiss\\_praxis\\_1310.pdf](http://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/dfg_im_profil/reden_stellungnahmen/download/empfehlung_wiss_praxis_1310.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <http://www.uni-muenster.de/imperia/md/content/wwu/senat/pdf/kodex.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Available at (in German only):

[http://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/antragstellung/forschungsdaten/richtlinien\\_forschungsdaten.pdf](http://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/antragstellung/forschungsdaten/richtlinien_forschungsdaten.pdf).

2. At the start of a research project, the project director is responsible for clearly stating how the research data is to be handled and ensuring compliance with subject-specific standards.
3. Data management plans are regarded as an essential component of any research project, and therefore have to be drawn up at the start of a project. This plan should be amended with respect to changing circumstances as the project is carried out.
4. Before a research project commences, the project director is called upon to explicitly determine and document all rights connected with research data resulting from the project, e.g. intellectual property rights, copyrights and usage rights. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that the data remain freely accessible for academic purposes.
5. Research data which serves as the basis of published findings must be archived for long-term usage in a data repository of the University of Münster or a suitable, trustworthy external data repository. If this is impracticable for reasons of confidentiality or secrecy, then equivalent archival solutions have to be implemented. The researchers are personally responsible for determining when and under what legal and usage-related conditions their research data is to be made publicly available.
6. Research data which form the essential basis of acquired knowledge should be documented in a research data registry of the University of Münster.

The University of Münster pledges to create the conditions necessary for complying with the principles listed above.<sup>5</sup>

Supplementary instructions for concretely applying and implementing these principles in research practice will be made available and updated on a continuous basis.

Adopted (in the original German version) by the Rectorate on 11 May 2017.

The Rector, Prof Dr Johannes P. Wessels

Adopted (in the original German version) by the Senate on 14 June 2017

Chairman of the Senate, Prof Dr Georg Peters

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<sup>5</sup> The University of Münster has pledged its support of the declaration of the German universities on the occasion of the HRK workshop on research data management on 16 Dec. 2016. Available (in German only) at: [https://www.hrk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/hrk/o2-Dokumente/Erklaerung\\_Workshop\\_Forschungsdatenmanagement\\_16122016.pdf](https://www.hrk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/hrk/o2-Dokumente/Erklaerung_Workshop_Forschungsdatenmanagement_16122016.pdf)