

Guideline on the Handling of Research Data at the University of Cologne

DISCLAIMER: THIS TRANSLATION OF THE 'Leitlinie zum Umgang mit Forschungsdaten an der Universität zu Köln vom 25.01.2018' PUBLISHED IN 'Amtliche Mitteilungen 7/2018' IS NOT LEGALLY BINDING.¹

Preamble

The University of Cologne (hereinafter UoC) pursues the goals of critically preserving passed down knowledge, gaining new knowledge and making both accessible, comprehensible and usable for science and society as well as for future generations. The management, preservation, storage and sustainable provision of research data must therefore comply with recognized scientific and legal requirements and meet high standards.

Guiding Principles

1. Research data are data that are collected, observed, simulated, derived or generated in the course of research. They can be processed and analyzed using various methods. If relevant for a publication or further research, they should be archived and, whenever possible, published. Thus research data in each scientific discipline appear in different media types, aggregation levels and formats.
2. Research data management includes planning, collection, processing, provision, storage and documentation. It ensures access, re-use, reproducibility and quality assurance of all research data scientific results are based on. This ensures that scientific results can be verified and used for further purposes. The handling of research data is subject to constant change due to progress in research.
3. Project leaders and independent researchers are responsible for the management of research data in their research projects. All persons involved in a research project are responsible for complying with the regulations laid down in the project. They document the entire research process as well as the tools and procedures used in an appropriate, subject-specific form.

¹ (Translation of the 'Leitlinie zum Umgang mit Forschungsdaten an der Universität zu Köln', published in the Official Bulletins on 25 January 2018, available under https://am.uni-koeln.de/e21463/am_mitteilungen/@6/AM_2018-07_Leitlinie-zum-Umgang-mit-Forschungsdaten_ger.pdf).

4. If research data is obtained in a project, a data management plan is usually drawn up and maintained. This plan should describe all relevant research data and contain a concept for dealing with them (including access and usage rights).

5. The UoC gives advice on the management of research data in research projects from the planning to the implementation phase as well as beyond the end of the project and offers suitable initial and further training. In the training of early-career scholars and scientists, information on the adequate handling of research data and subject-specific competences and standards should be conveyed.

6. The UoC implements and maintains a research data infrastructure. That way, it ensures appropriate storage and technical accessibility of digital research data.

7. The publication, storage and archiving of research data and their documentation is ensured in the long run in the UoC's information infrastructure, or alternatively in recognized external or internal data archives or subject repositories.

8. The UoC and, in particular, its scholars and scientists observe ethical, data protection, copyright and confidentiality interests in the management of research data. The examination of research data with regard to the 'Arbeitnehmererfindungsgesetz' (Employee Inventions Act) and contractual agreements shall remain unaffected by this.

9. The UoC promotes and supports open access to research data. However, researchers are not obliged to make research data accessible to persons outside the project team prior to processing, evaluation and publication as well as other forms of exploitation. In individual cases, the UoC may demand disclosure to a commission. Contractual agreements as well as requirements of third-party funding providers shall also remain unaffected. When transferring rights of subsequent use or publication, care shall be taken to ensure that the data remain freely available for scientific purposes.

10. The UoC acknowledges that the implementation of this guideline must take into account the situation and particularities of the various subject cultures.

The University of Cologne is committed to providing the means necessary to fulfil these principles.