

GUIDANCE ON NSF DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

All proposals submitted to NSF 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.

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.

Proposals must include the plan as a supplementary document of no more than two pages.

Data management requirements and plans may vary by Directorate, Office, Division, or Program.

Basic Template and Directorate Specific Guidance

In general, the data management plan should answer these two questions: *1) What data is generated by your project? 2) What is your plan to manage the data?*

Unless otherwise specified in a specific program solicitation, or by a directorate's office or division, your plan may include:

1. Expected Data

Describe the types of data to be used and any data to be collected. Include both quantitative and qualitative such as samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, images, audio and other materials to be used during project.

2. Data Format

Describe the format in which the data or products are stored (e.g., hardcopy notebook and/or instrument outputs, ASCII, html, jpeg or other formats). Where data are stored in unusual or not generally accessible formats, explain how the data may be converted to a more accessible format or otherwise made available to interested parties.

3. Access to Data and Data Sharing Practices and Policies

Refers to data made accessible without explicit request from the interested party, for example those posted on a website or made available to a public database. Describe your plans, if any, for providing such general access to data, including websites maintained by your research group, and direct contributions to public databases. Describe your practice or policies regarding the release of data for access, for example, whether data are posted before or after formal publication.

“Data sharing” refers to the release of data in response to a specific request from an interested party. Describe your policies for data sharing, including (if applicable) provisions for protection of intellectual property, national security, or other rights or requirements.

4. Policies for Re-Use, Re-Distribution

Describe your policies regarding the use of data provided via general access or sharing. For example, if you plan to provide data and images on your website, will the website contain disclaimers, or conditions regarding the use of the data in other publications or products? Describe these disclaimers and/or terms of use.

5. Archiving of Data

Describe how data will be archived and how preservation of access will be handled. For example, will hardcopy notebooks, instrument outputs, and physical samples be stored in a location where there are safeguards against fire or water damage? Is there a plan to transfer digitized information to new storage media or devices as technological standards or practices change? How long will data be retained? Also describe any documentation you will generate to describe the data including any metadata format and content.