

Guidelines for Handling Research Data at the Leibniz Institute for Spatial Social Research (IRS)



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The "Guidelines for handling research data at the Leibniz Institute for Spatial Social Research (IRS)" will come into force with the resolution of the IRS Board of Directors on 04.10.2022 and the internal announcement of the Institute.

Disclaimer: This English translation of the "Guidelines for handling research data at the Leibniz Institute for Spatial Social Research (IRS)" is provided for informational purposes only. In the event that the English and the German versions permit different interpretations, the German text shall prevail.

Preamble

Research data are a basis and at the same time an important result of scientific work. Responsible handling of research data is a central principle of good scientific practice and promotes the traceability of the scientific research process. The IRS is committed to responsible and transparent handling of research data within the framework of a sustainable and quality-conscious research process. In accordance with the "[Guidelines for Handling Research Data of the DFG](#)" (2015), the "[Guidelines for Handling Research Data in the Leibniz Association](#)" (2018), the DFG Code "[Guidelines for Ensuring Good Scientific Practice](#)" (2019) and the "[Leibniz Code of Good Scientific Practice](#)" (2021), the IRS supports its researchers in implementing quality-conscious research data management. The strategic and planned handling of research data is an expression of the scientific quality of empirical work and a prerequisite for the reproducibility of research results and the re-usability of data.

Subject

Research data are digital and digitised data that are created in the process of research work through observation, collection and further processing with the purpose of generating and validating research results. This also includes subsequently used secondary data or research data generated from it, as well as metadata and descriptions of the data structures. Research data management includes the process of planning and collecting, securing and storing, processing and documenting as well as archiving and making data accessible.

Guidelines

The responsibility for handling research data during the research process lies with the project leaders and the participating researchers. Ethical and data protection regulations as well as the requirements of funding bodies are observed. The data protection officer and the research data manager of the IRS are cooperating and advisory contact persons.

The rights of use to the empirical research data must be clarified at an early stage. This applies in particular to consortia projects, contract research and qualification work accompanying projects. Unless otherwise specified, the IRS has the right to use the data collected by IRS employees. Furthermore, the use of the collected data is particularly entitled to those who collect it. Further use of research data after the end of the project by former project staff is possible after consultation with the project management and the research data manager, as long as no data protection regulations and other requirements or reservations stand in the way.

To ensure responsible handling of the research data used in the research process, data management plans (DMPs) are used at the IRS, which are drawn up at the beginning of a research project and updated over the course of the project. The DMP documents project-specific specifications on the type, scope and security of the data, records the necessary metadata, contains specifications on access and usage rights as well as agreements on responsibilities in dealing with the research data. The IRS provides scientists with templates for data management plans.

The research data collected at the IRS is predominantly personal or organisation-related data. The associated data protection requirements are taken into account by anonymising or pseudonymising the data, unless the respondents expressly consent to non-anonymised use. The IRS provides data protection-compliant templates for informed consent forms for the collection of personal qualitative interview data and audiovisual data. As a prerequisite for giving informed consent, data subjects are provided with information about the nature and purpose of the collection and their rights prior to the interview. Verbal declarations of consent confirmed by a signature or documented by an audio recording are the prerequisite for securing, processing and using personal research data.

In order to ensure the verifiability and reproducibility of research results, collected primary data and processed secondary data are stored together with project-related metadata, declarations of consent, analysis data and results on access-protected IRS servers, provided that there are no data protection regulations or other requirements to the contrary. Archiving is carried out systematically and independently of individuals in digital form for at least ten years after the end of the project. The IRS supports the researchers in archiving by providing the necessary infrastructure and the support of the research data manager.

In compliance with data protection regulations and other requirements, the project participants decide at an early stage on the further use of the research data. In accordance with the FAIR principles - Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable - the IRS encourages scientists to make their research data accessible for further scientific use. This can be done via the IRS's own data archive and additionally via a publicly accessible repository. The IRS research data manager supports scientists in the selection of a suitable repository.

Erkner, 04-10-2022

Prof. Dr Oliver Ibert
Director of the IRS
(For the Management Board)