EPSRC Research Data Management - Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I am funded by EPSRC - what data do I need to include with my research publication?

EPSRC does not provide prescriptive guidance on what data should support a research publication. EPSRC considers the researcher to be the expert, the person who knows the most about their data and its value to others. Researchers need to decide the minimal necessary research data that needs to accompany the publication. In general, the minimal amount of data required is that which allows the experiment to be reproduced. EPSRC suggests that there might be occasions where it is better to publish analysed, representative or random sample examples, instead of all the raw data. If only selected research data is shown, then the researcher needs to explain the process that led to the creation of that data.

Q. I am funded by EPSRC – what happens if I am not compliant with EPSRC expectations?

1. EPSRC will check if researchers funded by its grants are compliant with EPSRC expectations on research data management. EPSRC will perform ‘dip stick’ checks on papers published on or after 1st May 2015, to check the availability of data under-pinning published research, examining the following aspects:
   - Do publications have a statement describing how to access underlying data?
   - If there is not a statement included – is there a link to the data?
   - Is the correct type of data available?

2. EPSRC will investigate any complaints about research data not being managed in line with EPSRC expectations. EPSRC aims to embed compliance ‘dip stick’ checking as part of regular grant assessment by the Research Council’s Audit and Assurances group (AASG).

Q. I am funded by EPSRC – can I put restrictions on access to the data?

EPSRC requires that you make your research data publicly available, easily accessible and with as few restrictions as possible. However, there are some exemptions to this:

- Sensitive Data (that would compromise intellectual property or security) should not be released. Delays/restrictions to publishing of research data are acceptable if necessary to protect intellectual property or commercially confidential data.
- Personal Data should not be released, unless consent of the person is given.

Q. I am funded by EPSRC, and I am collaborating with non-UK organisations on my EPSRC funded project – do I still need to share the research data from this project?

EPSRC’s expectation is that if you collaborate with a foreign organisation, you will have made them aware of EPSRC’s data sharing requirements before the start of the project. If the collaborating organisation did not agree to share the research data, this should have been mentioned in the grant proposal. Otherwise, EPSRC expects that the research data from the project will be shared.

If you have any further questions please contact Donna Sumner (d.sumner@keele.ac.uk)