

## Data Policy

### 1. Preamble

Research data are of fundamental importance to the DBFZ Deutsches Biomasseforschungszentrum gemeinnützige GmbH. They are an essential part of our value creation and form the basis for quality-assured research and scientific integrity. The data policy respects the FAIR principles of findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable research data. Transparent documentation of research data and responsible research data management (RDM) form the basis for traceability and reproducibility of research results while offering the potential to support diverse scenarios for data reuse and related exploitation strategies. By enabling the reuse of research data, scientific work can be accelerated and knowledge gain promoted. This contributes significantly to improved visibility and effectiveness of research. The DBFZ acknowledges, supports and promotes its research staff in adopting scientific initiatives for open access to research data and quality-conscious RDM along the lines of national and international declarations and recommendations [1,2,3,4,5,6] that aim to improve scientific communication.

### 2. Definitions

**Research data** are all data that are collected in the course of scientific work processes or are the result thereof. Depending on the research question and using different methods, they are generated in a variety of types, aggregation levels and formats including i.a. measurement data, laboratory values, audiovisual information, texts, objects from collections or samples, software, geodata, simulation results, program codes or survey results.

**Research data management (RDM)** comprises planning, collection, processing, documentation (including structured metadata), storage, long-term archiving and scheduled deletion of research data as well as their provision and publication in an appropriate form.

A **data management plan (DMP)** is an instrument for the structured description of the data life cycle. Among other things, it specifies the responsibilities for the data, describes their type and scope, regulates their storage, contains strategies with regard to quality assurance, authenticity, documentation and protection of the data as well as information on licensing, availability, access and publication modes.

**Actors** are all involved DBFZ employees who actively handle research data or are responsible for their handling. Regardless of the legal form of the employment (employment contract, guest contract, scholarship holder, etc.), this includes junior researchers, scientific employees, project managers, heads of working groups and departments as well as guest researchers and technical staff, such as laboratory staff, IT and data processing employees.

### 3. Scope

This guideline is applicable to all DBFZ actors defined above. In the case of third-party funding and cooperation projects, the principles of this guideline should be observed as far as possible, as long as they do not conflict with other requirements of sponsors or cooperation partners.

### 4. Rights and licensing

In order to make research data publicly accessible and reusable, it is important to ascertain who is responsible for the data and who holds which rights to them.

In this context, copyrights and neighbouring rights, such as the rights of database creators, legal conditions from employment contracts, consortium and cooperation agreements, secrecy obligations or patent laws play a role. The DBFZ and its researchers check and clarify prior to and during the creation of the data who holds which rights to them in order to make the generated data legally accessible and reusable. The choice of an open, valid license for subsequent use is recommended.

### 5. Handling of research data

The storage and archiving of research data, including associated metadata, takes place within the information infrastructure of the DBFZ, in its own collections and archives, or in external subject repositories. Together with the departmental research units of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), the DBFZ maintains the OpenAgrar repository ([www.openagrar.de](http://www.openagrar.de)), which is a suitable venue for the citation via digital object identifiers (doi) and for the publication of research data. An integration of specific solutions in an international or national context is possible. Close cooperation between researchers, data management, the IT service unit and the library of the DBFZ makes it possible to provide a powerful infrastructure that meets the various requirements for recording, processing, documentation, use and exchange with cooperation partners and long-term security of research data.

Responsible data management includes the creation of a data management plan.

If research data and associated documents are to be deleted or destroyed after the expiry of storage periods or for other reasons, this may only be done with due consideration of pertinent legal, contractual or ethical aspects. The deletion must be traceable and documented. It is authorised by the DBFZ management.

The DBFZ supports and promotes its researchers in providing research data from publicly funded research in the form of citable data publications. In doing so, the protection of personal data, secrecy protection, exploitation interests, copyright provisions, obligations towards third parties and contractual agreements with cooperation partners must be taken into account. The DBFZ shall ensure that access to the research data is guaranteed in the case of a transfer of re-use or exploitation rights. In principle, research data should be accessible in a timely manner.

## 6. Responsibilities

### Responsibilities of the actors

The participating researchers have the responsibility for the management of research data generated within the framework of a project or in the fulfilment of specialist tasks in agreement with the project management, the working group management and the head of the department.

Project, working group and department heads organize the RDM in their working areas in such a way that the principles and requirements of this guideline are met. They are obliged to ensure compliance with good scientific practice, current professional standards and internal quality standards, in particular in cooperation with young scientists and science technicians.

### Responsibilities of the DBFZ

The DBFZ supports and advises the researchers in technical, organisational and legal questions concerning all areas of the RDM and provides access to the services and infrastructure described above so that the requirements of third-party funding providers and other legal entities can be met and the responsibilities described in this guideline can be fulfilled. In this context, subject-specific solutions can be integrated in a national and international context.

Quality-assured research data are part of the scientific output of the research activities at the DBFZ, whose production is to be appreciated accordingly. The aim is therefore to develop suitable indicators that honor the scientific performance provided within RDM activities.

The liaison body for all general, organisational and legal questions as well as questions regarding the publication strategy for data is the data management, which serves as the interface between departments and the relevant service units of the DBFZ.

The point of contact for technical questions is the IT service unit. Subject-specific questions shall be addressed to the corresponding project, working group and department heads.

Details and exceptions regarding data responsibility, rights of use, exploitation of research data, data storage and data publication are regulated in service instructions, quality management guidelines and the contractual agreements between the researchers and the DBFZ.

## 7. Commencement and vailidity period

The management has put this document into effect on [date of resolution] and will adjust the relevant employment regulations. The data policy be reviewed at least every 2 years and updated if necessary.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Nelles'.

Prof. Dr. mont. Michael Nelles  
Scientific Managing Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Mayer'.

Daniel Mayer  
Administrative Managing Director

## Links and sources

- [1.] „Berliner declaration on open access to knowledge in the sciences and humanities“ [https://open-access.mpg.de/67605/berlin\\_declaration\\_engl.pdf](https://open-access.mpg.de/67605/berlin_declaration_engl.pdf) (retrieved: 22.10.2018)
- [2.] „Appell zur Nutzung offener Lizenzen in der Wissenschaft“ (DFG) [http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/info\\_wissenschaft/2014/info\\_wissenschaft\\_14\\_68/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/info_wissenschaft/2014/info_wissenschaft_14_68/index.html) (retrieved: 22.10.2018)
- [3.] „Principles for the handling of research data“ (DFG) [https://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/download/archiv/Allianz-Principles\\_Research\\_Data\\_2010.pdf](https://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/download/archiv/Allianz-Principles_Research_Data_2010.pdf) (retrieved: 22.10.2018)
- [4.] „Joint Declaration of Data Citation Principles“ (FORCE11) <https://www.force11.org/datacitation-principles> (retrieved: 22.10.2018)
- [5.] Wilkinson et al. (2016) The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship. *Sci. Data* 3:160018
- [6.] „Proposals for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice“ (DFG) [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) (retrieved: 22.10.2018)