

5 Things You Should Know about NSF Data Management Plans

The National Science Foundation (NSF) now requires a **Data Management Plan** with every NSF proposal. The Data Management Plan should address two main questions:

- What data are generated by your project?
- What is your plan for managing the data?

1. What is a Data Management Plan?

A data management plan is a document of no more than two pages that supplements an NSF funding proposal. It describes how the proposal will conform to NSF policies on dissemination and sharing of research results. (See Frequently Asked Questions: www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmpfags.jsp)

2. Who must prepare a Data Management Plan?

All researchers submitting NSF grant proposals must include a data management plan. A data management plan is required for all types of proposals (projects, conferences, symposia, and workshops).

3. What is considered "data"?

"Research data" are defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget as "the recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific community as necessary to validate research findings." This may include, but is not limited to: data, publications, samples, physical collections, software and models. This includes both analyzed data and the metadata that describe how those data were generated.

Data not included are "preliminary analyses, drafts of scientific papers, plans for future research, peer reviews, or communications with colleagues."

4. What is contained in a Data Management Plan?

- a) Expected data (to be produced)
- b) Data format
- c) Access to data and data sharing practices/policies
- d) Policies for re-use and re-distribution
- e) Archiving of data

5. Are all Data Management Plans alike?

The requirements and content of data management plans are often unique to an NSF directorate, division, or office. Identify the NSF directorate/and or division responsible for the grant and check their guidelines (www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp).

For Assistance

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