

Data Management Plan for NIFA-Funded Research, Education, and Extension Projects

Last updated: September 26, 2019

The Data Management plan (DMP) is a required document for Research, Education and Extension projects for the programs in the identified Request for Applications.

Data Management Plan (if applicable)

- Limited to two pages and does not count toward the page limits for the project narrative and should not be used to circumvent the project page limit.
- If a project does include data collection (e.g., a meeting with no proceedings), the DMP document could be limited to the following statement, “No data will be produced.” with clear explanation.
- Regardless of the number of subawards, only one DMP should be submitted for the project and should cover data collected by all collaborators.
- Some programs may have different standards for DMPs and those will be outlined in the specific request for applications.
- Clearly articulate how the project director (PD) and co-PDs plan to manage and disseminate data generated by the project.
- DMP must include the following components depending on the type of research, education, and extension activities being conducted.
 - **Expected data type**
Describe the type of data (e.g., digital, non-digital), how it will be generated, and whether the data are primary or metadata. Research examples include: lab work, field work and surveys; Education examples include: number of students enrolled/participated, degrees granted, curriculum, and training products; Extension examples include: outreach materials, number of stakeholders reached, number of activities, and assessment questionnaires.
 - **Data format**
For scientific data to be readily accessible and usable it is critical to use appropriate community-recognized standard and machine readable formats when they exist. If the data will be managed in domain-specific workspaces or submitted to public databases, indicate that their required formats will be followed. Regardless of the format used, the data set must contain enough information to allow independent use (understanding, validation, and analysis) of the data.
 - **Data storage and preservation**
Data must be stored in a safe environment with adequate measures taken for its long-term preservation. Applicants must describe plans for storing and preserving their data during and after the project and specify the data repositories, if they exist. Databases or data repositories for long-term preservation may be the same that are used to provide Data

Sharing and Public Access. Estimate how much data will be preserved and state the planned retention period. Include any strategies, tools, and contingency plans that will be used to avoid data loss, degradation, or damage.

- **Data sharing, protection, and public access**

Describe your data access and sharing procedures during and after the grant. Name specific repositories and catalogs as appropriate. Include a statement, when applicable, of plans to protect confidentiality, personal privacy, proprietary interests, business confidential information, and intellectual property rights. Outline any restrictions such as copyright, confidentiality, patent, appropriate credit, disclaimers, or conditions for use of the data by other parties.

- **Roles and responsibilities**

Who will ensure DMP implementation? This is particularly important for multi-investigator and multi-institutional projects. Provide a contingency plan in case key personnel leave the project. Also, what resources will be needed for the DMP? If funds are needed, have they been added to the budget request and budget narrative? Projects must budget sufficient resources to develop and implement the proposed DMP.

- Applicants are encouraged to consider using platforms, catalogs, and workspaces provided by USDA (e.g., the [Ag Data Commons](#)), and include adequate funds in the budget to support data management and submission fees as required by the platforms, catalogs, etc. Successful projects should monitor the implementation of the DMP throughout the life of the project and after, as appropriate.
- Implementation of the DMP must be a component of annual and final reports to NIFA ([REEport](#)) and include progress in data sharing (publications, database, software, curriculum, outreach materials, etc.). The final report should also describe the data that was produced during the award period and the components that will be stored and preserved (including the expected duration) after the award ends. The DMP should be compliant with the [Research Terms and Conditions](#) that govern NIFA-funded projects. The DMP is not intended to be a replacement for other grant reporting requirements.