Scholarly Communications Corner

Why manage your data?

By Sandy De Groote

The management of data is becoming more critical as the growth of data and legislative mandates requiring data management plans continues to rise. There is recognition of the importance of data sharing and open data, as they can lead to broader collaboration and expedite the advancement of discovery and knowledge.

A data management plan is a document that describes the data that will be gathered as part of a research project. It also outlines how the data will be organized and defines the life cycle of the data. Data management plans often include how the collected data will be organized, preserved, stored long term, accessed, shared, protected for ethical purposes, and when and if the value of the data will expire.

Data management plans can help you:

- Identify the data to be preserved and maintained
- Identify how the data will be preserved
- Determine what resources are needed to preserve the data long term
- Determine formats to facilitate the best re-use and sharing of data
- Abide by federal agencies proposal requirements and comply with sharing mandates
- Increase the impact of your research
- Support open data sharing

The University Library can help UIC faculty and researchers manage their data, making it easier to preserve, reuse, and share data. Contact the library for:

- Assistance developing a data management plan
- Metadata consulting
- Suggestions for best practices
- Help with using the DMPTool
- Library-based workshops
- Help locating where to share your data.
Available Tools & Resources

Many tools and resources are already available to help you with your data management needs.

The library has developed a guide linking to useful information related to managing your data at:  http://researchguides.uic.edu/dataplan

This guide links to various data management guides, data plan mandates, and data repositories which may be available for the sharing of your data.

The Digital California Library has developed the DMPTool which you can use create a customized data management plan, depending on the data management requirement of various funding agencies. This is available at: https://dmp.cdlib.org

Databib is a tool that can help identify and locate online repositories of research data. Databib is available at: http://databib.org

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