

# Open Science Policy within the Max Weber Foundation

Adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 22, 2024

## Preamble

The Max Weber Foundation - German Humanities Institutes Abroad (Max Weber Stiftung – Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland (MWS)) is a publicly funded organization that aims to inform both the scientific community and the general public about its research activities. MWS advocates for Open Science which shares all components of the research process in an accessible, transparent, and reusable way. The foundation sees its commitment to Open Science as a means to address inequalities in the global distribution of scientific resources. Thanks to the presence of MWS member institutes across the world the foundation is particularly sensitive to and aware of this concern.

This policy expresses our self-understanding and is addressed to all researchers within the foundation. It is based on an ongoing, iterative discussion process. The policy is a work in process and, therefore, an offer for the joint development and implementation of the fundamental principles and practices of Open Science within the MWS.

## Relationship to other documents and guidelines of the MWS

This Open Science Policy is derived from the MWS's agreements with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) as well as the MWS's sustainability and "Strategy 2030" concept documents.<sup>1</sup> It also builds on the efforts of national and international scientific organizations such as the German Research Foundation (DFG),<sup>2</sup> the Council for Information Infrastructure (RfII),<sup>3</sup> the

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<sup>1</sup> Max Weber Stiftung - Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland. (2023). [Nachhaltigkeitskonzept der Max Weber Stiftung](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10220844). Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10220844>; the [MWS strategy until 2030](https://www.maxweberstiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/MWS_Strategie2030.pdf): [https://www.maxweberstiftung.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/MWS\\_Strategie2030.pdf](https://www.maxweberstiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/MWS_Strategie2030.pdf) (both documents are only available in German).

<sup>2</sup> Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. (2022). [Open Science als Teil der Wissenschaftskultur](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7193838). Positionierung der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7193838>.

<sup>3</sup> RfII. (2022). [Datenpolitik, Open Science und Dateninfrastrukturen](https://rfii.de/?p=7743): Aktuelle Entwicklungen im europäischen Raum. Bericht und Empfehlungen. <https://rfii.de/?p=7743>. urn:nbn:de:101:1-2021090875.

European Research Council (ERC),<sup>4</sup> and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)<sup>5</sup> to promote Open Science. This policy integrates two previous MWS papers (Open Access Policy and Guidelines for Handling Research Data)<sup>6</sup> into a broader context and corresponds directly with the MWS Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice.<sup>7</sup>

## Definition of Open Science

The term “Open Science” is widely used and encompasses the use of digital tools for open access, transparency, reusability, and reproducibility of scientific research. The goals of Open Science include, among others, promoting equal, rapid, and sustainable access to knowledge, increasing the visibility and impact of research results, the conservation of resources, promoting trust in science, and enabling public participation in research processes. Legal, ethical/moral, and economic considerations can limit the openness of science just as much as disciplinary-specific characteristics. In response to this potential conflict of goals, the MWS adheres to the principle “as open as possible, as closed as necessary.”

## Intentions and fields of action for Open Science within the MWS

The MWS and its researchers are committed to the principles of Open Science and actively promote the introduction and use of Open Science practices. This is facilitated through the foundation's existing infrastructure, consulting services in digital publishing, libraries, and research data management, as well as the aggregation of expertise from the institutes in working groups such as the Digital Humanities working group (AK DH). Out of these activities the MWS's institutes are able to identify concrete action areas and to initiate an inventory of their existing Open Science practices. This will be promoted individually and collectively within the foundation over the years 2025-2028.

## Dimensions of Open Science within the MWS

The dimensions of Open Science within the MWS include, among others, the open provision of and free access to publications, data, metadata, and software under standardized open licenses (e.g., Creative Commons licences). The MWS supports its researchers in granting unrestricted and free access to their scientific output for all people in all locations. It also encourages the testing of open procedures, such as Open Peer Review.

Another field of action is the active promotion of open and inclusive science communication. In line with its values, the MWS focuses on the use of open, non-commercial platforms. The MWS provides its researchers with an open international infrastructure for science communication through

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<sup>4</sup> <https://erc.europa.eu/about-erc/thematic-working-groups/working-group-open-access>.

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO. (2021). [UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379949). UNESDOC Digital Library. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379949>.

<sup>6</sup> Max Weber Stiftung - Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland. (2024). [Open Access Policy](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14282081) within the Max Weber Foundation. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14282081>; Max Weber Stiftung - Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland. (2023). [Guidelines for the Handling of Research Data](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10225705) within the Max Weber Foundation. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10225705>.

<sup>7</sup> Max Weber Stiftung - Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland. (2023). [MWS Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10228420). Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10228420>.

de.hypotheses,<sup>8</sup> the blog portal for the humanities. This also enables the networking and transfer of knowledge to the public.

The MWS further supports research processes and instruments that enable dialogue with society through citizen science elements. It promotes the use and creation of open educational resources (OER).

In the spirit of a sustainable cultural transformation in the humanities and social sciences, the MWS aims to create and anchor a consciousness for Open Science among its researchers, inter alia through information and training events. In line with the humanities and social sciences orientation of the foundation, a critical perspective on these processes is also incorporated. The institutes support the engagement of their researchers to participate in national and international forums and debates on Open Science.

The MWS promotes the recognition of different career paths in the humanities, including the recognition of activities in the field of research infrastructure, which are of fundamental importance for Open Science.

As a publicly funded organization with locations distributed worldwide, the MWS sees it as its special responsibility to promote multilingualism and the dissemination of scientific knowledge, inter alia through translations. Free access to knowledge, debates, and international exchange in the field of Open Science are all goals to further promote inclusion, diversity, and global justice.

## Scope of application

This policy applies to the entire foundation and all researchers within the MWS.

## Validity

This policy was adopted by the MWS Board of Trustees on November 22, 2024 in Berlin. It will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated at least every four years by the AK DH in light of new developments in the field of Open Science.

## Current version of the policy

Version	Publication	Comments/changes
1.0	28.01.2025	First publication, adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 22, 2024. Translation of the original text was done with the help of AI ( <a href="https://docs.hpc.gwdg.de/services/chat-ai/models/index.html#llama-31-8b-instruct">https://docs.hpc.gwdg.de/services/chat-ai/models/index.html#llama-31-8b-instruct</a> ) plus human manual correction and editing.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://de.hypotheses.org/>.

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