ARDC
Australian Research Data Commons

Why Am I Being Asked for Metadata About My Research Data?

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About the Australian Research Data Commons

The Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) enables the Australian research community and industry access to nationally significant, data intensive digital research infrastructure, platforms, skills and collections of high quality data.

The ARDC is supported by the Australian Government through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS).

The ARDC are building a corpus of important Australian data collections

Research data are the foundation of the scholarly record.

Your publications are underpinned by the evidence held within research data and so these data hold considerable value to your research. The ARDC wants to support this value as a national priority and acknowledge the contribution your research data make to the Australian research sector. One way the ARDC delivers support for valuable and important data collections is the Data Retention Project

The ARDC Data Retention Project recognises important and nationally significant data collections

By partnering with your services providers (libraries, IT departments and eResearch organisations) to embed standardised metadata associated with the research data collections they are responsible for (your research data).

Why use metadata?

Metadata, or data about your data, are best represented in standardised ways. We are making use of existing metadata standards already used across Australia and the international research communities, including:

- People IDs (ORCIDs)
- Organisation IDs from the Research Organisations Register (RoR)
- ABS Fields of Research Codes (FoR)

We also use conventional markers of impact like citations and grant identifiers.

We are not making judgements on your data, rather we are making use of traditional conventions in academic research of citation and peer review. This is why we are asking your service providers (those who maintain and store your data collections) for Grant IDs, citations or allocation IDs.

NCRIS
National Research
Infrastructure for Australia
An Australian Government Initiative

The ARDC
is enabled
by NCRIS

If you share your data or other researchers use it, they can acknowledge you with a data citation

In exchange for providing these metadata, your service provider will be provided with a DataCite Digital Object Identifier (DOI), similar to the DOIs found on traditional publications. The DOI is a convenient and rapid way for anyone to attribute or cite your data collections in a digital world, enabling automated citation formatting and a persistent URL redirect to whichever data repository your data are stored in.

The Data Retention Project helps you and your institution fulfil the ARC/NHMRC code of conduct

The ARC/NHMRC has provided recommendations that it considers important for good research practice in the Australian research sector. These are documented in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

One of the responsibilities (R22) reads that…

> *"Researchers will ... retain clear, accurate, secure and complete records of all research including research data".*

Another is provided to our research institutions (R8) and reads that institutions should…

> *"Provide access to facilities for the safe and secure storage and management of research data, records and primary materials and, where possible and appropriate, allow access and reference"*

Providing the metadata we ask for will help you and your institution fulfil these responsibilities with minimum effort.

> "
> _____
>
> [Institutions should]…Provide access to facilities for the safe and secure storage and management of research data, records and primary materials and, where possible and appropriate, allow access and reference.
>
> *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018. National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.*

FAIR data

There has been a lot of talk about the FAIR data principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable).

The ARDC, amongst other national and international bodies, believes the FAIR data principles are an accurate representation of good research practice and that all research data should be as FAIR as possible without compromising any security or privacy obligations.

By providing the metadata we suggest, you are also demonstrating a commitment to good research practice and will help build a robust, resilient and sustainable scholarly record in line with the FAIR data principles.

Do you need help collecting the metadata?

Every research organisation has support staff to assist researchers to manage and share their data.

You can contact ARDC (contact@ardc.edu.au) and we can put you in touch with local data management support at your institution. See also ARDC's national list of *data management support web pages at Universities*. The ARDC Engagement also works with all Australian research institutions to support and encourage their maturing data management processes.

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