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**FAQ - research data**

Updated 1 April 2022

**Can I bring my research data?**  
  
If the principal investigator should switch employer, the general rule is that research data will stay put, and therefore be processed and archived at Karlstad University. If the researcher still wants to bring the data to the new work place, one solution could be to bring copies (a legal practitioner and/or data protection officer should be contacted if there are confidential data or personal data in the material). Another solution is that the new university borrows the material for a limited time.

**How shall I store research data during the project?**  
  
Sunet Drive should be used to store research data. It is a safe and easy-to-use solution that also facilitates sharing research data with others.

* [Read more about Sunet Drive and how to request storage](https://www.kau.se/forskning/forskningsdata/under-projekt/sunet-drive)

## For how long must the research data be stored?

Research data can be discarded no sooner than ten years after the findings have been presented and published and a final financial report is made. In some cases, research data shall be exempt from being deleted and be stored indefinitely. This applies to research that is considered

* to have lasting interdisciplinary worth, or be of worth to another research domain
* to be of considerable worth in terms of science history, cultural history or personal history
* to be of considerable interest to the public

The principal investigator knows the material best and can judge the potential future worth of the research. But the head of department makes the formal decision about whether research data is to be stored indefinitely or deleted.

**Karlstad University’s policy is that I must archive research data when the project is finished – how do I accomplish this?**

In this context, archiving means compiling and presenting research data for future use. Regardless of whether research data is to be deleted or stored indefinitely, it is important that it is safely stored and clearly labelled during the period when it is stored. It is a good idea to start thinking about metadata, order and structure in an early stage of the research project.

Remember to also continually register and archive administrative documents related to the research project, such as applications, agreements and permissions. See Karlstad University’s document management plan (dokumenthanteringsplan) for detailed descriptions on what should be registered and archived.

* [Karlstad University’s document management plan](https://www.intra.kau.se/dokument/upload/82F31D981d6631E0F8gSF58FDED0/Informationshanteringsplan%201.3.pdf?-session=rs:82F31D2A1d59b19CFCipB9771890) (in Swedish)

**The research funding body requests a data management plan – what is that?**

A data management plan is requested is because it supports the possibility of sharing data with others. It also provides the project with a better structure and organisation, which is helpful for you as a project leader.

* [More about data management plans](https://www.kau.se/forskning/forskningsdata/vid-projektstart/datahanteringsplan)
* [Make a data management plan with DMPonline](https://www.kau.se/forskning/forskningsdata/vid-projektstart/dmp-online)

**Which IT systems and services can I use to process research data?**

Information should only be managed in the IT systems procured by Karlstad University, and adapted with appropriate technological and organisational security measures.

There is a document detailing the rules of procedure for the processing of information in systems and services, which is to be used as guidance for researchers regarding which IT services are available at Karlstad University.

* [Rules of procedure for the processing of information in systems and services](https://intra.kau.se/dokument/upload/C10B944707bea24BF2uu24338BC0/Rules-of-procedure-for-the-processing-of-information-in-systems-and-services.pdf)

**Can the IT Services procure a programme so that I can analyse my research data more easily?**

* Contact the IT Services at [2525@kau.se](mailto:2525@kau.se) or telephone: 054-700 25 25.

**I collaborate with researchers in other countries – do I need ethics approval in all countries participating in the project when we conduct interviews?**

The Swedish Ethical Review Act stipulates that approval from the Swedish Ethical Review Authority is required for research conducted in Sweden, if the research:

* includes processing of sensitive personal data or data on criminal offences,
* entails physical procedures in living or deceased persons,
* is conducted using a method that aims to affect a person physically or mentally or carry an obvious risk to injure the research participant physically or mentally, or
* is performed on biological materials from a living or deceased person and can be traced back to this person.

If data gathering or analysis of data is conducted in other countries as well, ethics approval in accordance with legislation in the countries in question could be required. This is something that must be considered in each specific case.

**What is a DOI?**

The abbreviation DOI stands for digital object identifier, and is a unique and persistent alphanumeric string. It can be assigned to electronic documents and digital material such as a dataset. Using a DOI makes it easier to identify, find and reuse digital material in the same way that an ISBN number does for books.

You can also search for material by entering the DOI into a search engine, such as for example Google Scholar. If you make a reference to a publication or dataset that has a DOI, the DOI shall be noted last in the reference. State doi: and then the identifier, which always starts with 10.

An example of a link containing a DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fishres.2022.106268>

**Publications and research funding bodies want me to make data openly available – how do I do that?**  
  
The idea purpose of making research material available is to increase visibility and transparency, as well as facilitate searchability and reutilisation. This can be achieved through data repositories, publication as a supplement to an article in a journal or in specialised data journals. Research funding bodies and journals usually provide guidance regarding what is being requested.

When it comes to making data available via data repositories, there are many general and subject-specific platforms and services that provides various solutions. Examples include Svensk nationell datatjänst, Zenodo and subject-specific databases.

* [Search for data repositories](http://re3data.org./)

Before research data is made openly available, it is important to make sure that there are no legal, ethical or commercial issues related to this.

If data cannot be shared openly, you can publish a description of your research data in order to make it searchable and visible. Several platforms offer the possibility of registering only descriptions of research data, together with contact details in case a secondary user wants access to data.

Contact Karlstad University’s research data group for further guidance.

* [forskningsdata@kau.se](mailto:forskningsdata@kau.se)

**I need to share data with partners in another EU country during the project – how/where do I do this?**

In research projects that involve researchers from other organisations than Karlstad University, it is important to determine which entity or entities are principally responsible for the research and personal data controllers. When personal data is shared between two principally responsible entities, the relationship between the one that transfers the data and the one that receives the data must be defined, which must also be stated in the research participation information. For secure sharing of research data, you are recommended to primarily use Sunet Drive.

For more information on research participation information, see the Guidance for research participation information and related templates.

* [Guidance for research participant information](https://intra.kau.se/dokument/upload/C10B94391dfc51D620ySA3EADA45/GuidanceResarchParticipantInformation.pdf)

**I need to share data with partners in non-EU country during the project – how/where do I do this?**

If you intend to transfer the data to a third country, i.e. countries outside the EU/EES, consult the data protection officer at Karlstad University before you start collecting data. When transferring personal data to researchers located outside of EU/EES, the regulations regarding third country transfers in GDPR. If such transfers are going to happen, information regarding this and potential risks of such transfers, must be included in the research participation information.

* Contact the data protection officer: [dpo@kau.se](mailto:dpo@kau.se)

**What are the rules regarding if someone requests documents connected to research conducted at Karlstad University?**

Documents connected to research are normally regarded as official documents and are subject to the principle of public access to official records. This means that private citizens can request access to such documents. Before the documents, which can include reports, surveys, test results or other data, are made available, a confidentiality assessment must be performed. If the documents are confidential and subject to the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act, they cannot be disclosed. Contact a legal officer, archivist or data protection officer if you need assistance.

**What does open data mean?**

The term open data creates a lot of confusion and it is important to emphasise that it is not necessarily the same as openly available research data. Since certain research data cannot be published freely and the opinions regarding what open data means, it is better to use the term available data for reusable research data.

**What does data sharing mean?**

In many instances, data is already being shared between collaboration partners in an ongoing research process, but in order to increase the transparency of the research, it is also increasingly common to make all data available in conjunction with the publication of the findings.

Before data is made available, legal and ethical considerations must be made in order to see how much of the data that can be made openly available. Data that cannot be made openly available include:

* Confidential material subject to OSL (2009:400).
* Sensitive personal data.
* Material copyrighted by someone else.
* Material that contains trade secrets or financial information.

Data made available should adhere to the FAIR principles as much as possible. This stands for Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable, and aims to facilitate reutilisation as much as possible. You need to use persistent identifiers in order for you data to be searchable. Make sure that your dataset has a license for reutilisation and that your metadata is standardised. In order maximise the visibility of your research, as well as increasing the opportunities of others to recreate your findings, you should clearly link both the data and the potential source code to the publication they are the basis for, and then back to the publication from the data and source code.

* [FAIR principles](https://www.force11.org/group/fairgroup/fairprinciples)

**What does it mean to make data available?**

Open or freely accessible data means that anyone can access the data. The most common method is to download the data directly from a depository.

There can be varying degrees of availability and only parts of the existing research data are openly available. The rest of the data is available to a limited extent. This means that there is information on how you can access this data, but that since the data can be sensitive in some way, you must put in a request in order to gain access. Possibly, a confidentiality assessment must also be performed before you can access the data.

**What is research data?**

Research data is information and material collected or generated during the research process, and that form the basis for a scholarly analysis, regardless of the research domain.