Research Data Management

EPSRC's Expectations

Ben Ryan

Senior Manager, Research Outcomes, EPSRC

ben.ryan@epsrc.ac.uk

Overview

- **Underpinning Philosophy – common to all UK Research Councils**

- **EPSRC's 'expectations'**

- **Key Differences from other councils**

- **Current RCUK work on Research Data Policy**

- **Other developments**

RCUK Common Principles on Data Policy

http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/Pages/DataPolicy.aspx

■■ **Driven by a recognition that Data are a critical output of the research process:**

❖ For the integrity, transparency and robustness of the research record

❖ Value often increases through aggregation

❖ Enables new research questions to be addressed

❖ Supports the wider exploitation of data

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RCUK Common Principles on Data Policy (2)

❖ Publicly funded research data are a public good, produced in the public interest, which should be made openly available with as few restrictions as possible in a timely and responsible manner that does not harm intellectual property.

❖ Institutional and project specific data management policies and plans should be in accordance with relevant standards and community best practice. Data with acknowledged long-term value should be preserved and remain accessible and usable for future research.

❖ To enable research data to be discoverable and effectively re-used by others, sufficient metadata should be recorded and made openly available to enable other researchers to understand the research and re-use potential of the data. Published results should always include information on how to access the supporting data.

❖ RCUK recognises that there are legal, ethical and commercial constraints on release of research data. To ensure that the research process is not damaged by inappropriate release of data, research organisation policies and practices should ensure that these are considered at all stages in the research process.

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RCUK Common Principles on Data Policy (3)

❖ To ensure that research teams get appropriate recognition for the effort involved in collecting and analysing data, those who undertake Research Council funded work may be entitled to a limited period of privileged use of the data they have collected to enable them to publish the results of their research. The length of this period varies by research discipline and, where appropriate, is discussed further in the published policies of individual Research Councils.

❖ In order to recognise the intellectual contributions of researchers who generate, preserve and share key research datasets, all users of research data should acknowledge the sources of their data and abide by the terms and conditions under which they are accessed.

❖ It is appropriate to use public funds to support the management and sharing of publicly-funded research data. To maximise the research benefit which can be gained from limited budgets, the mechanisms for these activities should be both efficient and cost-effective in the use of public funds.

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EPSRC Expects Research Organisations to:

- promote internal awareness of these principles and expectations

- allocate adequate resources from within their existing public funding streams to support the curation of publicly-funded research data

- implement effective policies/processes to maintain internal awareness of the research data they hold, and require their researchers and research students to comply with these (or - in exceptional circumstances - to justify why this is not possible)

- ensure their researchers and research students are aware of the regulatory environment in the UK (including exemptions which may if needed justify withholding of research data);

- record requests by third parties to access publicly funded research data

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EPSRC Expects… (2)

- published research papers to include a short statement describing how and on what terms any supporting research data may be accessed.

- appropriate metadata describing the research data to be made freely discoverable on the internet (normally within 12 months of the data being generated);

- the metadata must:

  - enable others to understand what research data exists, why, when and how it was generated, and how to access it;

  - use robust digital object identifiers;

  - summarise any conditions which must be satisfied for access to the research data to be granted.

EPSRC Expects… (3)

- effective data curation to be provided throughout the data lifecycle, with clearly allocated responsibilities and appropriate security controls

- EPSRC-funded research data to be securely preserved for at least 10-years after any 'privileged access' period expires or, if others have accessed the data, after the last date on which access to the data was requested by a third party

- all reasonable steps to be taken to ensure that research data is not held in any jurisdiction where the legal safeguards provide lower levels of protection than are available in the UK

- non-digital research data to be stored in a manner that facilitates sharing in the event of a valid request for access to the data being received

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EPSRC Policy Timeline

- Policy Announced May 2011

- EPSRC acknowledged significant changes/investment might be required, including some over the medium-long term.

- Full compliance expected by 1st May 2015 - over 70% of organisations holding EPSRC grants, including all our Framework and Strategic Partners, have confirmed they expect to be able to comply by the 2015 deadline

- EPSRC will monitor compliance on a case by case basis. In cases of non-compliance, and in particular if it appears that proper sharing of research data is being obstructed, EPSRC reserves the right to impose appropriate sanctions.

So, how is EPSRC's data policy different?

- Emphasis on the responsibility of the Research Organisation to support effective RDM as an integral part of the 'research environment' (i.e. they should offer their researchers appropriate RDM training and ensure they have access to and make proper use of RDM infrastructure).

- No formal requirement for a 'Data Management Plan' to be submitted with each new research grant application (but an expectation that one will exist!)

- No formal peer review of Data Management Plans.

- No formal requirement to deposit data in any specific data repository

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Currently, in RCUK…

- The RCUK Research Outputs Network (RCUK-RON) is actively reviewing individual Council policies to explore opportunities for future alignment

- No major philosophical differences identified – it's the nature of the data itself that is most often behind differences in approach

- Shared guidance to be issued soon on how RC funds may be used to support RDM

- Review includes how RDM is treated at the grant application stage

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A related development…

■ Research data status is under active consideration by parliament.

■ The Intellectual Property Bill (just passed 2nd reading in House of Lords) includes this proposed amendment to the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

"Information obtained in the course of, or derived from, a programme of research is exempt information if—

(a) the programme is continuing with a view to the publication, by a public authority or any other person, of a report of the research (whether or not including a statement of that information), and

(b) disclosure of the information under this Act before the date of publication would, or would be likely to, prejudice—

   (i) the programme,

  (ii) the interests of any individual participating in the programme,

 (iii) the interests of the authority which holds the information, or

(iv) the interests of the authority mentioned in paragraph (a) (if it is a different authority from that which holds the information)."

Thank You!

Ben Ryan
Senior Manager, Research Outcomes, EPSRC
ben.ryan@epsrc.ac.uk