Submission of a data sharing and preservation strategy

Cancer Research UK regards it good research practice for all researchers to consider at the research proposal stage how they will manage and share the data they will generate. Therefore, Cancer Research UK requires that applicants applying for funding provide a data management and sharing plan as part of their application. This plan will be reviewed as part of the funding decision.

Any applicants who consider that the data arising from their proposals will not be suitable for sharing must provide clear reasons for not making it available.

Cancer Research UK Policy on Data Sharing and Preservation

1. Cancer Research UK carries out world-class research to improve our understanding of cancer and find out how to prevent, diagnose and treat different kinds of cancer, working in partnership with others to achieve the greatest impact. We recognise and encourage the dissemination of research outputs in all formats, including publications, preprints and other non-traditional research outputs (including, but not limited to datasets, software, methods, protocols and policy papers).

2. As a signatory to the Concordat on Open Data, Cancer Research UK wishes to ensure that data arising from the research that it funds should be managed and made available to the academic community for academic non-commercial research purposes as widely and freely as possible to maximise public benefit, while safeguarding the privacy of research participants, through following GDPR and relevant local rules and regulations. Availability should also ensure compliance with any applicable ethical requirements and protect confidential and proprietary data. Such data must be shared in a timely and responsible manner and researchers who are providing and receiving data are required to adhere to any relevant regulatory requirements including those relating to the ethical use of data. Access requests for commercial use or from commercial organisations should be dealt with separately on commercial terms and subject to any pre-existing arrangements. CRUK’s Commercial Partnerships team can provide advice with regard to dealing with such requests.

3. A limited period, defined in consultation with the lead applicant, of exclusive use of data for primary research is reasonable, according to the nature and value of the data and the way they are generated and used. Ongoing research contributing to the completion of datasets must not be compromised by premature or opportunistic sharing and analysis. Sharing should always take account of enhancing the long-term value of the data.

4. This policy is not intended to discourage filing of patent applications and recognises the need to safeguard intellectual property, to protect opportunities for commercialisation of research outputs (including research data) and respect obligations of commercial confidentiality and that it may be necessary on occasion to delay publication or restrict the release of data.

5. Cancer Research UK believes that data generators and sharers should receive full and appropriate recognition (e.g. by acknowledged collaboration and/or citation) by funders, their academic institutions and new users for promoting secondary research. As a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), Cancer Research UK values the sharing of all types of research outputs, and we consider the value and impact of those outputs during our research assessment process. To acknowledge appropriate recognition of data generators and sharers, and allow appropriate citation of datasets, we encourage researchers to use persistent identifiers such as Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) and ORCID identifiers.
6. For medical research involving personal data, the appropriate regulatory permissions – ethical, legal and institutional – must be in place before the data can be shared.

7. Data arising from Cancer Research UK-funded research should be properly curated throughout its life-cycle and released with the appropriate high-quality metadata in order to make stored data findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR) in a manner appropriate to the discipline and/or the methodology that was used to produce the data. This is the responsibility of the data custodians, who are usually those individuals or institutes that received Cancer Research UK funding to create or collect the data.

8. This data sharing and preservation policy applies to all Cancer Research UK-funded research while recognising that different fields of study will require different approaches. It does not prescribe when or how researchers should preserve and share data, but requires them to make clear provision for doing so when planning and executing their research.

9. All Cancer Research UK grantees are expected to make every effort to ensure that new studies that result from data sharing should meet the high standards of all Cancer Research UK-supported research regarding scientific quality, ethical requirements and value for money; new studies should also add recognisable value to the original dataset. Such research is often most fruitful when it is a collaboration between the new user and the original data creators or curators, with the responsibilities and rights of all parties agreed at the outset.

10. Where publication in a journal or submission to a database/registry would result in data access being inconsistent with the rules of this policy then the Host Institution should alert CRUK to the potential conflict and discuss with CRUK a potential route forward. The contact for this is the CRUK Commercial Partnerships team (commercial@cancer.org.uk).

Cancer Research UK will keep this policy under review.

11. Document Information

| Version | 4 |
| Approved by | Scientific Executive Board |
| Last Approved | Aug 2020 |
| Next scheduled review date | Aug 2022 |
| Document owner | Research Funding Operations Department |