

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.
2. In order to do this, Cancer Research UK wishes to ensure that data arising from the research that it funds should be managed and made available as widely and freely as possible to maximise public benefit. 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.
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 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 sharers should receive full and appropriate recognition (e.g. by acknowledged collaboration) by funders, their academic institutions and new users for promoting secondary research.
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. 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.

Cancer Research UK will keep this policy under review.