Research Data Policy of the University of Rostock

Preamble

Quality-assured research data is a cornerstone of scientific knowledge that can be used on multiple occasions as the basis for further research, irrespective of its original purpose. Sustainable storage and provision of research data therefore not only helps verify earlier results, but is also significantly important for attaining future results with the goal of improving the quality, productivity and competitiveness of science, and forms a fundamental basis for the transfer of knowledge.

With its Research Data Policy, the University of Rostock aims to provide its researchers principles and recommendations for planning, handling, archiving and sustainably publishing research data. The University of Rostock recognises the value of exchanging and publishing data for disseminating research work and publications.

When acquiring and disseminating scientific findings and managing research data, all members of the university community at the University of Rostock and its associates observe the rules of good scientific practice[1]. They are required to provide the research data emanating from their research according to the rules or standards that have been established for the respective subject area.

Pursuant to the University of Rostock's Open Access Declaration[2], the University recommends that the research data is made accessible to the public alongside the scientific publications.

Research Data

Research data is all data that is generated using scientific methods during a research project – this applies to newly created as well as previous data that has been adapted for use. Research Data Management (RDM) denotes all activities related to digital research data (not including their actual use), in particular their documentation, storage and long-term availability. These principles are applied to digital research data.

The provision of research data for further use is a service that not only benefits science, but also society as a whole. This additional effort as part of the research activities is recognised and encouraged.

Responsibilities

This policy is aimed at all members of the university community at the University of Rostock and its associates that handle research data, as well as researchers working in Rostock temporarily or as guests. They implement Research Data Management in line with the principles of this policy.

Research Data Management complies with the valid laws to protect individuals and intellectual property and the provisions of the statutes and the university regulations and is subject to specific research funding agreements concluded with third parties. These guidelines apply to research collaborations and research projects, as long as those involved have not stipulated any equivalent or stricter rules.

Handling Research Data

a. The research data is to be stored in accordance with the FAIR principles of findability, accessibility, interoperability and reusability. Open access to research data is usually provided through the citable publication of data.

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[1] Official Bulletin 2023, No. 18 [de]

[2] Official Bulletin 2015 No. 47 [de]

b. Research data that forms the essential foundation for published findings shall be archived in a trustworthy repository, corresponding to the usual customs of the subject area, for at least ten years after the date of publication.

c. Research data that cannot be made available as a result of legal and contractual regulations, or due to data protection and other protective reasons, or ethical and legal aspects, will be stored by a confidential storage service that complies with the FAIR principles. A corresponding service is provided by the University of Rostock.

d. Access to research data can be temporarily restricted by appropriate embargo periods for a maximum of three years after the end of the project, in order to enable the prior production of corresponding scientific evaluations, publications and theses or dissertations.

e. The research data shall be kept securely, processed and documented (details should include the entire research cycle as well as the tools and procedures used) pursuant to established regulations or standards, and stored for the long term.

f. Ideally, the corresponding descriptive meta data will be linked to the research data during the research process, or the meta data will be specified in the data management plan.

g. It is recommended that research projects involving research data develop and submit a data management plan to the members of staff in the Strategic Research Consulting Unit (S1.1), if possible prior to the start of the research project, especially if university resources are required for Research Data Management.

h. The University implements and maintains a basic research data infrastructure and thus ensures appropriate storage and the technical availability of digital research data. Specific requirements must be discussed and, where necessary, financed additionally.

Terms of Access and Use

a. The rights to use research data are determined by contractual provisions, in particular as a result of employment contracts or through other agreements (e.g. third-party research contracts). Research data (this also includes research data that cannot be protected) must be personally marked and stored under the name of a responsible person.

b. The University of Rostock, its members and associates observe ethical, data protection and confidentiality requirements in all tasks related to Research Data Management.

c. As far as possible pursuant to the relevant research standards, personal data from individuals whose data is being collected shall be anonymised or, if it helps pseudonymised. They are to be processed and used in accordance with the valid legal regulations. A description of the procedure that is to be agreed with the Data Protection Officer forms the basis for approval pursuant to data protection regulations.

d. When transferring subsequent rights of use and publication rights, efforts shall be made to ensure that the data remains available for scientific purposes in accordance with the FAIR principles. An open licence (for research data: Creative Commons) is therefore recommended for simple subsequent use.

Fostering the Development of Competence

The subject-specific methods for Research Data Management shall be appropriately and sustainably anchored in teaching and further education offers, in particular in research-oriented practicals, projects and theses/dissertations.

Expiry

Due to research progress, the way data is handled is subject to constant change. That is why these principles are evaluated regularly and adjusted to current standards no later than 3 years after their publication[3].

Drawn up following the decision passed by the Rectorate on 19 June 2023.

Rostock, 22 June 2023

The Rector
of the University of Rostock
University Professor Dr. Elizabeth Prommer

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[3] Contact: forschungsdaten@uni-rostock.de / www.ub.uni-rostock.de/en/support-for-researchers/research-data/research-data/