What, where and when to share

Transcript of video

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In this session, we will talk briefly about the basic principles when sharing data, the what, when, and where.

A research project may generate a vast amount of data, and in many cases, not all the data will end up being used in the study. When deciding what to share, at the very least, all the data that has been used directly in the study should be shared, but it is fully possible and advisable to share other data as well. The decision of what to share, or not to share, normally lies with the author of a study, and it is therefore important for the author to make an informed choice. Here, it is very useful to have insight into what might be of interest or use to the general research community, and advisable to consult colleagues or supervisors. Sharing research data openly is a way of ensuring that 'cherry-picking', where only the data that supports the author's hypothesis has been included, has not been employed. It goes without saying that when choosing what data should be shared, any 'negative' findings should be treated as equally important as any 'positive' findings, just as in any other scientific study. Finally, the author also needs to ensure that the data that is shared corresponds to the data collection described in the Data Management Plan.

The sharing of data marks the final step of a research project. As a guiding principle, or a general rule of thumb, the research data should be shared once you are done with the data, and you have entered

the publication phase of the project. If the findings of a study are to be published in a scholarly journal, it is often required that the related research data should be shared. Journals often require the author to share the data at the time of publication of the study, if not earlier. In specific cases, exceptions can be made, if it is possible to accommodate the stakeholders' requirements.

Funding bodies may also have requirements regarding when and where the data should be shared. Most data repositories allow publication of data under an embargo period, which means that the data will be submitted, but access will be limited for a given amount of time.

When it comes to choosing where the research data should be deposited, the author should first of all consult the guidelines from their employer, and in applicable cases also those of funding bodies or publishers. All these parties may have specific expectations, requirements or recommendations regarding choice of data repository. Often the author(s) gets to choose where to publish the data. However, there are quite a few things to take into consideration before making such a choice. How to choose where to publish your data will be discussed in detail in a separate session. Keep in mind that it is advisable to decide where, how and when research data should be shared, preferably in the early stages of a research project.

When sharing the data, make sure to give appropriate credit to any contributors. Here, the CASRAI Credit initiative can serve as a useful source of inspiration. They have created a comprehensive contributor taxonomy tailored to all stages of scholarly output, which is being adopted by more and more institutions and which is also quite useful for the individual scholar.