

What is a Data Management Plan?

A data management plan (DMP) is a formal document describing your data and what you will do with it during and after your research project. Most funding agencies require one, and each has specific requirements. There is no “one-size-fits-all” template, but these common elements apply in most situations.

Things to Consider

- **What data** will you produce, collect, or use? What formats? How much? How will you collect and process it?
- How will you **document** and **organize** your data? What metadata will you record? What standards and formats will you use?
- What are your plans for **access, sharing, and re-use**? How will you address any privacy, copyright, or ethical issues? Who will have access?
- What are your plans for **long-term archiving**? Who will be responsible for the long term? Where will your data be deposited? What data will you preserve?
- What **resources** will you need? How will you cover these costs?

Why should I bother?

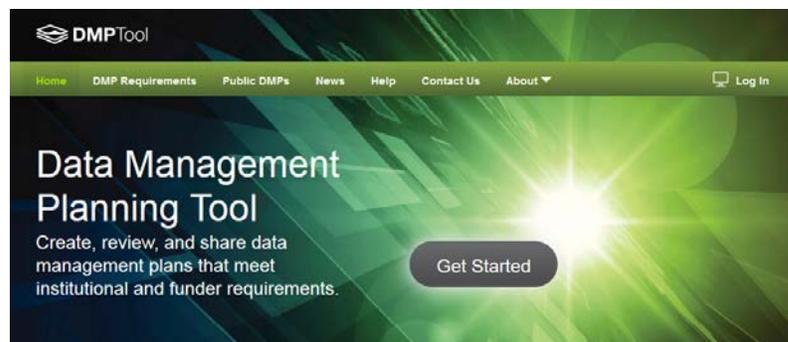
*Save money.
Increase your impact.
Meet funder requirements.*

Planning ahead can save you time, money, and a lot of pain in the long run. Writing a data management plan, even if one is not required, can be a hugely useful exercise. It can deviate as your research progresses, but will serve as a reference point when questions arise.

Use it to spell out instructions, like naming conventions and file formats, that will help your collaborators share active data more effectively. It can help clarify roles and expectations, such as what to do if a member of your team leaves the project. It can also help you set aside enough funding to make sure your data—the lifeblood of your research—are safeguarded and useable in the future.

Where do I start?

The **DMPTool** can help you create ready-to-use data management plans to meet specific funding agency requirements. Step-by-step instructions and custom templates with suggested responses tailored for UT help guide you through the process. Save, preview, and export your DMP, or share it publicly.



To access the DMPTool, visit <http://dmptool.org>, click “Get Started,” and choose the “University of Texas at Austin” from the drop-down menu. Log in with your EID and password.