



START EARLY

- make a plan of how you are going to manage your digital material**
Think about the key issues that affect your research material over the course of the project. If in doubt, plan to preserve your material and data for the long term.
- get permissions to publish copyrighted material as you go along**
Whatever level of permission you obtain (personal use, controlled dissemination or open access) make sure you keep them as part of your research information.
- don't leave everything until the end of the project**
Get into good habits early in your research. Little things, such as using appropriate file formats, organising your files and documenting material over the course of the project, will save time later.



SENDING YOUR RESEARCH MATERIAL INTO THE FUTURE

More information

LSE FAQ: www2.lse.ac.uk/library/services/training/

Cambridge FAQ: www.lib.cam.ac.uk/dataman/

IHR FAQ : www.history.ac.uk/research-training/digital-research-skills

Funding Body



Participating Institutions



If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.

Isaac Newton, Letter to Robert Hooke, February 5, 1676

The principle of validating and extending the research work of others is long established. Making both publications and underlying research material available for others to build on gives researchers kudos and more citations. Research in general will benefit by less duplication of effort, faster developments and more efficient use of scarce funds.

So how do you send your digital research material and data into the future?



EXPLAIN IT

- contextualise your material and data**
Describe the circumstances prevailing at the time of your research and the parameters within which you were working.
- describe your research process**
Help people understand your material and data in the future by explaining why you used a particular methodology, or how you analysed your data.
- explain acronyms and jargon**
Don't assume the reader will understand specialist terms - remember they may be reading your material in several years' time.
- provide information (sometimes called metadata) about each file**
This will help a preservation service to index your material and people to find it. Some of this might be generated automatically by the digital equipment you use.



STORE IT SAFELY

- make multiple copies**
Use different types of storage media and store copies in different locations.
- use open file formats where possible**
Choosing non-proprietary formats means that files are more likely to be readable in the future. Your library or preservation service should be able to advise you on suitable formats.
- control who can access your files**
Take particular care about how you handle and store sensitive information.
- decide when to delete digital material and data**
Be selective about what you keep so that it is easier to find relevant and useful information.



SHARE IT

- to gain more impact**
Other researchers - in your field or in different disciplines - may want to make use of your material, now and in the future.
- to enhance your reputation**
Making research available allows you to demonstrate research excellence, increases your citations and can lead to collaborations.
- to increase the chance of funding**
Most funding agencies respond positively to you making your material and data available to others.
- use repositories and data centres for archiving your material**
Consider making your research openly available. Choose a repository with controlled access if this is more appropriate for your research.
- redact or embargo when necessary**
Your material can still have value when personal or confidential information is removed, and most preservation services will embargo your material while you wait for publications or patents.