# Data Management Plan (DMP)

## What is Research Data Management?

Research data management refers to the ways researchers work with, organize, and maintain the data created from a research project.

## What is a data management plan (DMP)?

A DMP is a formal, researcher-created document that **details the methods, tools, and practices that will be used to manage data during and after a research project**. The DMP can be modified throughout a research project to reflect changes that arise throughout the course of a project.

Making and following a plan for all data generated, acquired, or collected during a research project can help researchers and research teams

* ensure data is handled efficiently, effectively, and securely,
* prevent data breaches or data loss,
* maximize potential for data to be reused at a later date,
* follow ethical, legal, and institutional data requirements, regulations, and
* incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion principles and practices into all stages of the research data lifecycle.

The Portage Network’s [Brief Guide to DMPs](https://zenodo.org/record/4495482) gives an overview of the purpose, content, and benefits of DMPs.

The Portage Network’s [DMP Primer](https://zenodo.org/record/4495631) provides more in-depth information about DMPs.

## What information should researchers include in a DMP?

Some of the key information described in a DMP includes

* types of data that will be gathered or generated during a research project,
* how data will be handled (stored, shared, named, accessed, protected, made discoverable etc.) during and after a research project,
* who will be responsible for a project’s data,
* and ethical, legal, methodological, or commercial constraints or supports to data sharing.

The Portage Network’s [DMP Primer](https://zenodo.org/record/4495631) provides more in-depth information about DMP content.

## Can I see an example of a DMP?

The Portage Network’s DMP Assistant houses [Public DMPs](https://assistant.portagenetwork.ca/public_plans) created and shared by Canadian researchers.

## I need to create a DMP for my project. How can I start?

The SLC Research Office recommends using the Portage Network’s [DMP Assistant](https://assistant.portagenetwork.ca/public_plans). The assistant provides questions and prompts to guide researchers in the creation of their own DMP.

To use the DMP Assistant, you will need to create a free account. Once signed in, click on “Create plans” to get started on your plan.

## Equity, diversity, and inclusion and data management planning

It is important to consider Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at every stage of the data lifecycle. Below are some questions to ask yourself as you make and follow plans for research data.

* Who owns, controls, and will be able to access data during and after the project? Will the communities involved in the research as participants or partners have ownership, control, and/ or access?
* Does my data management plan maximize the reach and benefits of the data generated and collected while protecting sensitive or identifying information?
* Are data collection practices appropriate and relevant for the communities or groups who will be participants, partners and/ or beneficiaries of the research?
* Am I following research protocols relevant to the communities with whom I am working? For example, are Indigenous research protocols relevant to this project (see Chapter 9 of the [TCPS2](https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/tcps2-2022-en.pdf) and [The First Nations principles of ownership, control, access, and possession - OCAP](https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/)).