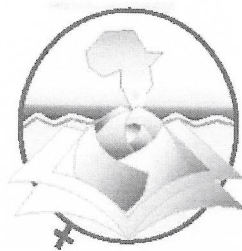


WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY IN AFRICA

Library
Department



549 Arcturus Road,
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Addressing gender disparity and fostering equity in University Education

LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

1. TITLE OF THE POLICY

Research Data Management (RDM) Policy

2. INTERPRETATION

In the Policy, the terms have the following meanings:

Data curation: means how data is managed through the life-cycle of that data, including how the data can be used and re-used by other researchers in a scholarly or educational context.

Data identification code: means the digital identification code that is generated for a data set when it is uploaded onto a digital RDM platform. Such a data identification code is globally unique and is a unique identifier assigned to every element of metadata and every concept/measurement of a dataset.

Data Management Plan (DMP): means the plan established for the management of any data that is collected, stored and shared.

FAIR Data: It refers to a set of guiding principles to ensure research data are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable, promoting maximum value and reproducibility.

Metadata refers to structured information that describes, explains, locates, or otherwise makes it easier to retrieve, use, or manage research data and outputs.

Open Data: means research data that are retained at the conclusion of a project which are then available to be subject to further scrutiny, openly and without restriction.

Principal Investigator: means the lead investigator on the project or, where the project is collaborative and the formal principal investigator is located at another institution.

Research Data Management (RDM): is a set of activities undertaken over the course of the research lifecycle which address the collection, organisation, storage, documentation, preservation and sharing of research data.

Research Data: the recorded information (regardless of the form or the media in which it may exist) necessary to support or validate a research project's observations, findings or outputs.

Researcher: a member of the University, including staff and postgraduate researchers, or a person affiliated with the University, including visitors and collaborators, who conducts research for, on behalf of, or in association with the University; on University premises; or using University facilities.

3. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this Policy is to establish clear guidelines for Research Data Management (RDM) at the Women's University in Africa (WUA) throughout the research cycle stages. This includes collection, curation, secure storage, organisation, retrieval, re-use, sharing, archiving, and access of research data, following international best practices, legal, statutory, ethical, contractual and intellectual property obligations, and the requirements of research funding bodies, publishers and stakeholders.

This Research Data Management Policy of the Women's University in Africa (WUA) is a response to:

- i. The FAIR principles of Open Science;
- ii. The requirements of funders to make data visible;
- iii. A recognition of the importance of collaborative research;
- iv. The need for greater research data integrity; and
- v. Society concerns that data should be more easily available via a digital platform.

The Policy addresses both the principles of open data and the need to limit the accessibility of data in certain cases, even when that data has been collected through publicly funded research programmes or projects.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The University is committed to the responsible management of research data in line with legal, ethical, funder and institutional requirements. This Policy establishes the framework for the secure creation, storage, use, sharing and preservation of research data to ensure its integrity, accessibility and long-term value. Researchers are required to plan for data management from project inception and to maintain data in ways that support transparency, reproducibility and the protection of sensitive information. The University will provide appropriate infrastructure, training and support to enable compliance with this Policy and to promote best practice in research data management. Through these measures, the University seeks to uphold research excellence, safeguard intellectual property and enhance the impact and sustainability of its scholarly outputs.

5. SCOPE

- i. This Policy applies to all members of the Women's University in Africa (*hereinafter referred to as the University*) engaged in research activities, including academic staff, research staff, postgraduate researchers, visiting researchers, and collaborators where the University is the lead or joint institution.
- ii. It covers all forms of research data, irrespective of format or medium, created, collected, or processed during research conducted under the University's auspices.
- iii. The Policy applies to externally and internally funded research, as well as unfunded research projects and encompasses data generated by all disciplines. It includes, but is not limited to, digital datasets, laboratory notebooks, audio-visual materials, survey results, models, algorithms and software.
- iv. This Policy governs the management of research data from project inception through to retention, sharing, archiving, or secure disposal, ensuring compliance with relevant legal, ethical and contractual obligations.
- v. It is intended to complement other University policies, including those on research ethics, research, intellectual property and data protection.

6. PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE POLICY

- i. Research data shall be managed to uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency and reproducibility across all disciplines.
- ii. Researchers must incorporate data management planning at the outset of research projects and are individually responsible for ensuring compliance with data management obligations throughout the research lifecycle.
- iii. All research data management practices must comply with relevant legislation, ethical standards, contractual agreements and funder requirements, including those concerning privacy, confidentiality and intellectual property.
- iv. Research data must be accurate, complete, securely stored and protected against unauthorised access, loss, or corruption, with appropriate measures proportional to the sensitivity of the data.
- v. Where appropriate, research data should be made openly available with minimal restrictions, in line with the principles of FAIR data (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable), while respecting legal, ethical and commercial considerations.
- vi. Research data of long-term value must be preserved in durable, accessible formats and retained for periods consistent with funder, legal and disciplinary requirements.
- vii. The University will provide infrastructure, guidance and training to enable researchers to manage data effectively and to meet the standards set out in this Policy.
- viii. In collaborative research projects, clear agreements must be established regarding data ownership, management responsibilities and access rights at the outset of the research.
- ix. When research is published, the digital location where the data can be digitally accessed upon which the research publication was based should be provided in a footnote of any research publication that is not subject to an embargo.
- x. To ensure that those who have collected the data are appropriately recognised for their work in collecting, storing and analysing the data, all users must acknowledge through citation of the researchers who generated, stored and shared the data.
- xi. Researchers must ensure that data is not released at any stage in the research cycle that is at variance with ethical, legal, and commercial requirements.

- xii. Research that is managed, stored and shared does not include institutional data generated by WUA or the administrative data of a research project, such as funders' policies and grant applications.
- xiii. In case of third-party involvement, roles and responsibilities regarding research data management must be included in agreements.
- xiv. When a set of research data is protected by intellectual property rights (e.g. copyrights or database law), such rights shall vest in the WUA, unless otherwise stated in the research agreement.

7. POLICY PROVISIONS

Research Data Management Policy provisions are:

7.1 Data Management Planning

All researchers must develop a Data Management Plan (DMP) at the onset of their research projects. The Library will assist with the documentation of research data management plans. A DMP includes information on data collection methods, documentation, storage, backup procedures, data sharing and access policies, data security measures, and plans for data preservation and long-term archiving.

Research data management plans must specify how and when research data will be made available for access and reuse. The accompanying research data should be made available as soon as findings are published, under appropriate safeguards when necessary. Research outputs which convey findings from research data should include a citation or data access statement which clearly provides a route for readers to obtain the data. When the researcher does not hold the intellectual property rights or has permission to make derived data available, they must provide a citation or data access statement in relevant publications to the source of data. Costs such as extra storage, long-term retention, or data management effort must be addressed and included in the total cost to funders whose policies accept RDM costs.

7.2 Data Sets Submissions

All data shall be submitted in terms of the Research Innovation and Postgraduate Centre guiding principles, which include the following research data: working papers (preprints), moving

images, numerical data, pictures, music scores, sound recordings, interview transcripts, experimental results, programming code and much more.

7.3 Ownership

All research data are subject to the University's Intellectual Property Policy and are owned by the University, or, where applicable, by a contributory institution, unless otherwise agreed. Ownership exceptions may arise in cases involving commercial, sensitive, or third-party data governed by specific contractual agreements.

7.4 Access and Sharing of Research Data

Accessing and sharing of research data uploaded on the WUA Data Repository will be done in consultation with the originator, as recorded in the DMP.

7.5 Data Security

The Library, in collaboration with the University Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will provide a mechanism to protect documents that could need to be protected.

7.6 Preservation of Research Data

The Library will ensure short-term and long-term preservation of research data.

7.6.1 Short-term Preservation

The Library will provide short-term preservation of research data, and data will be preserved for a period of 5 years.

7.6.2 Long-term Preservation

After project completion, all data will be deposited in the WUA Data Repository, ensuring that datasets are preserved in line with institutional policies.

7.7. Metadata

Metadata are fundamental to the successful implementation of Open Science practices. Every research output deposited in a repository must be accompanied by high-quality metadata that adheres to recognised standards and best practices. Metadata should be detailed, accurate and maintained to ensure that research outputs are easily discoverable, accessible, interoperable with

other systems, and reusable by others. The use of common metadata schemas and controlled vocabularies is encouraged to facilitate interoperability and enhance the visibility and impact of the University's research outputs.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Quality Assurance Department	Policy Evaluation and Assessment
University	The University is responsible for providing funding to develop the necessary infrastructure and training support services for effective research data management.
Library Department	Lead the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of the Research Data Management Policy
Library Committee	Oversee the implementation of Research Data Management at WUA
ICT Department	Provide the necessary infrastructure for research data storage and preservation as well as setting up the requisite systems.
Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Centre	Lead the strategic development, coordination, and continuous improvement of research data management practices across the University. This includes establishing institutional standards, monitoring compliance, supporting infrastructure and training initiatives and ensuring that the University's research data management aligns with national and international best practices.
Internal Audit	Evaluate, monitor and review the Research Data Management Policy

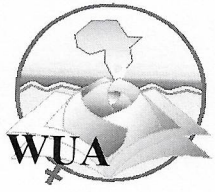

9. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Policy will take effect when approved by the University Senate.

10. REVIEW

The authority to amend this Policy shall reside with the Library Committee of the Women's University in Africa, acting on the advice of the Senate. The Policy shall be reviewed on a three-year cycle; however, recommendations for improvement may be incorporated as they arise.

11. DOCUMENT VERSION AND CONTROL

Document Name	Research Data Management Policy	
Version Reference	1.0-2025	
Document Owner	Women's University in Africa Library	
Approved by		
Date of Approval		
Review Date	Annually	