



SEARCH Data Policy

Last Updated 12 May 2007

The SEARCH Data Policy applies to all data defined as SEARCH data by the participating agencies. An initial list is contained in the SEARCH Implementation Workshop Report (see: <http://www.arcus.org/search/resources/reportsandscienceplans.php>). The main purpose of the SEARCH Data Policy is to maximize data access, integration, and ultimately long-term preservation. It is intended to complement policies from other associated programs such as International Polar Year (IPY) and those of NSF's Division of Arctic Sciences. The participating agencies in SEARCH should enforce the policy as described below. When SEARCH data are collected as part of a collaborative international effort, they should also be distributed according to the SEARCH Data Policy of free and open access.

SEARCH investigators must describe their plan and timing for making data available as part of their proposals to announcements of opportunity that are designated as part of SEARCH.

Data policy actions for SEARCH Principal Investigators (PIs) are:

- Make all SEARCH community project data fully, freely, and openly available as quickly as possible after collection and quality control, subject to procedures approved in the proposal. Timely data availability will be part of SEARCH proposal review criteria.
- Follow guidelines for the preparation and submission of data, metadata, and documentation as described in the SEARCH Data Management Plan (in development). Standard metadata are required to achieve the program goals of maximum data integration and synthesis, broad community usage, and long-term preservation. Make sure all project related data sets are submitted to an appropriate data archive. These archives are generally defined as national archive centers and/or SEARCH project specific repositories.

In keeping with the IPY data policy, the only exceptions to this policy are some instances with human-dimensions data where respect for confidentiality, intellectual property rights, or proprietary information sources might take precedence; or in other cases where data release might cause harm (for example, locations of nests of endangered birds or of sacred sites).

All SEARCH data users are obligated to properly recognize the data providers. Attribution should credit both the data provider or author and the data center or publisher. In a scientific publication, attribution should take the form of a formal citation, such as for a journal article or book, or as described by the publication. General acknowledgement may be more appropriate in other situations such as instrument development, field applications, or logistics planning.