

# FAQ english

## General questions:

ETH Data Archive is ETH Zurich's long-term digital archive. It is available for research data, documents and other data from libraries, collections and archives.

ETH Data Archive is based on the application Rosetta developed by the company Ex Libris and is operated by ETH Library in the infrastructure [ETH Zurich's IT Services](#).

Yes, you can. ETH Data Archive does not meet every need and there might be reasons as to why it is not the best solution for your purposes.

Consequently, we will gladly help with the appraisal of other service-providers or support you in planning your research group's or organisational unit's data management. If required, we will put you in contact with our partners, e.g. the IT Services or [ETH Zurich University Archives](#).

No. Nevertheless, you are required to arrange the storage of certain research data in accordance with ETH Zurich's guidelines for good scientific practice.

Some funding agencies also have specifications for data storage. However, you usually decide yourself which data archive or service best meets your requirements. The index [re3data \(external link\)](#) reviews a wide range of data archives.

We will gladly help you – e.g. to assess data services in your specialist field.

As a rule, researchers at ETH Zurich can use the ETH Data Archive free of charge. Institutional customers will be charged the costs of the storage quota they occupy and of additional services.

As the initial situation and amount of work can differ greatly depending on each use case, please contact us directly.

Your first point of contact is the [ETH Zurich University Archives](#), which we will gladly put you in touch with. The University Archives also use the ETH Data Archive to archive digital documents and historical Websites of ETH Zurich.

As the workflows involved in processing these documents differ from those for other data, the responsibility is with the University Archives, which work closely with the Digital Curation Office.

PLoS provides a [list of repositories](#). To find a repository that is specialized for certain file formats, the site [re3data](#) collects a large number of topic-specific and institutional repositories.

## Publication of data in the ETH Data Archive:

Please contact us directly with your concern as there are various possibilities to submit your data to the ETH Data Archive.

For structured data that you would like to enrich with metadata locally in your group, we will provide you with a local editor, for instance, which will create a data package that can be processed by the ETH Data Archive.

If you would like to archive data and metadata regularly from a particular application (e.g. from a LIMS), we will verify whether we can create a suitable interface with the ETH Data Archive.

Other solutions can be agreed on, especially for the one-off submission of data.

In principle, you can submit all file formats to the ETH Data Archive. Please arrange which formats you would like to submit beforehand, however, as not all formats are equally suitable for long-term storage. The format PDF/A is one of our [recommended file formats](#). There are several [methods to create PDF/A documents](#).

For many formats, especially manufacturer-specific formats that are not openly documented, we can only guarantee unaltered storage in the format provided (preservation of bitstream).

Further measures, such as the conversion into a more up-to-date file format, are normally only possible for a few openly documented standard formats.

Metadata is "data about data", i.e. information that describes the actual data.

On the one hand, this information helps to retrieve data. Especially in the case of research data, metadata should also provide sufficient information to be able to interpret and reuse data in a scientifically correct way.

There is also technical metadata, which is designed to enable digital objects to remain usable for longer periods – ideally permanently – and rights metadata, which provides information on who is allowed to use which objects when and under which conditions.

To submit data of other persons to the ETH Data Archive you need their written approval. The creators of the data decide about its publication.

Yes, that is possible. We will organise this advance assignment of a DOI for you together with the [ETH Zurich DOI Desk](#).

Please consult the site [Preparing your files](#) for detailed information.

No, this is not possible as without metadata there is no way to preserve the usability of data and still be able to interpret it correctly in the future.

If you require a solution to store larger amounts of data without metadata, we would be glad to put you in touch with [ETH Zurich's IT Services](#).

Yes, that is possible. Already when you submit research data to the ETH Data Archive, you can stipulate for how long research data should be stored if it is not of lasting value. The shortest storage period is ten years.

Once this time limit has expired, the ETH Zurich University Archives can decide whether to accept permanent responsibility for certain data for historical reasons in consultation with the data Producers.

## Access and reuse of data:

You find open access data by searching the [ETH Search Portal](#). You may either narrow your search to the Resource Type "Research Data" or the Collection "ETH Data Archive".

Yes. For instance, you can distribute a DOI (digital object identifier) – usually as a link in a publication – which provides permanent access to your data. Moreover, selected metadata on your data is distributed worldwide so that your data can also be found without a DOI link.

Providing accurate metadata makes it more likely that your data will be found by internet searches, thereby increasing the chances that your data are cited.

No. You decide yourself whether and when your data is cleared for public use. Data access may be limited to the IP range of the ETH Zurich or may only be released publicly after a delay period of two years.

When deciding about your access limitations, you should consider the requirements of your funding agencies.

The ETH Data Archive will evaluate the usage statistics of your data on request. We will provide you with information about the number of accesses.

## Data Management:

It certainly couldn't hurt! Mandatory requirements for the storage and publication of your data are not uncommon. You may have to describe your planned data organisation in a [data management plan](#) that you submit with a project proposal.

Depending on the amount of data you expect, you should contact the IT Support Group (ISG) responsible for your group early on so that the necessary resources can be planned and suitable solutions can be found.

In order to ensure that data can be used in the longer term, it should already be documented as thoroughly as possible from the outset. It is also worth agreeing on certain rules for the organisation and naming of files within a research group.

We will gladly help you with these considerations.