



Grand Challenges Canada®
Grands Défis Canada

Data Access Policy

Grand Challenges Canada is committed to optimizing the use of data to translate knowledge into life-saving solutions. To fulfill this objective, data must be made widely and rapidly available to the Grand Challenges Canada research community and the broader global health community through ethical and efficient data access practices.¹

GOAL OF DATA ACCESS

The goal of data access is to promote:

- *Innovation*, by encouraging diversity of analysis and opinion; facilitating evaluation of alternative hypotheses, meta-analysis, and synthesis of results from individual projects into a larger whole; and permitting the coordinated application of scientific, social, and business knowledge to generate solutions to complex challenges.
- *Collaboration*, between related projects and Grand Challenges programs, researchers and institutions, and among diverse disciplines to foster greater productivity and creativity.
- *Efficiency*, by preventing unnecessary duplication of effort, and enabling secondary analyses and enhancement of existing data, permitting the redirection of resources to the most promising endeavours to maximize the impact of investments.
- *Accountability*, by encouraging independent verification and analysis, thereby improving data quality and outputs.
- *Capacity Strengthening*, by facilitating the education of new researchers, and enabling broader access to data for secondary analysis and stimulation of bold and innovative ideas, which is of particular importance to researchers in developing countries.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF DATA ACCESS

Data access will be facilitated in accordance with the following principles:

Promotion of the Common Good

Data will be shared as broadly and as promptly as possible to foster innovation and optimize prospects for the translation of knowledge into life-saving solutions. Data access should enhance the value of research and advance the objectives of Grand Challenges programs.

¹ Data access represents an elaboration of the second guiding principle of the Global Access Policy which states that *knowledge gained through discovery is broadly, and as promptly as possible, distributed between related projects and to the global scientific community*. Grand Challenges Canada Global Access Policy available at: <http://www.grandchallenges.ca/resources/>

Respect

Respect for cultural diversity, scientific integrity, and the privacy of individuals and communities that contribute data will be ensured in all data access activities. Respect must also be given to matters of attribution as they pertain to researchers and institutions that share data.

Stewardship

Those who collect, produce, share and use data are responsible for ensuring data quality, security, and modes of access and use that are consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and standards of ethical research conduct as outlined in Grand Challenges Canada Ethics Policy.²

Proportionality

A proportional approach will be adopted when balancing the needs of investigators against those of communities and sponsors that expect health benefits to arise from the activities to which they contribute data or resources. The risks and benefits of data access will be considered and accounted for when sharing data.

Reciprocity

The aim of benefitting the individuals and communities who enable and support inquiry, be they research participants or investigators, should be furthered to the extent possible and is of particular importance when involving individuals and communities from developing countries. The sharing of data that can be used to foster breakthrough solutions to global challenges is one way to ensure benefits are returned.

REQUIREMENTS

The requirement of data access applies to data collected and generated from research sponsored in whole or in part by Grand Challenges Canada. Data refers at minimum to final, annotated quantitative and qualitative datasets and accompanying information such as metadata, codebooks, data dictionaries, questionnaires and protocols.³

All grantees are subject to the terms of this policy; however, those in receipt of \$500,000 or more will be required, as a condition of the award, and in fulfillment of the Global Access agreement, to develop and submit a Data Access Plan (DAP) that specifies how data access will be implemented and the timeframe for data release. Where deemed appropriate, grantees in receipt of awards less than \$500,000 may also be required to develop a DAP⁴. At its sole discretion, Grand Challenges Canada may require that grantees enter into a specific Data Access Agreement that is consistent with this policy and the principles and objectives of Global Access. In developing the DAP, grantees should ensure that relevant aspects of their grant proposal are conducive to data access, i.e. permissions to share data are included in informed consent documents, and in collaboration and consortia agreements. The financial costs related to making data accessible may be included in the proposed budget and will be subject to review and approval.

² Grand Challenges Canada Ethics Policy available at: <http://www.grandchallenges.ca/resources/>

³ Exclusions: laboratory notebooks, partial datasets, preliminary analyses, communication with colleagues, drafts of scientific papers, unpublished research protocols, future research plans, and physical objects such as laboratory specimens. Note, in certain cases some of these items may be applicable under the Global Access Policy.

⁴ As directed by the Program Officer.

Data should be deposited into public access repositories whenever possible. When relevant public access repositories are not available for a given dataset, grantees should propose alternatives for access, with consideration given to ease of discovery of the dataset and sustainability of long-term access. Grantees are encouraged to consult Databib (<http://databib.org>) and similar catalogues to identify suitable repositories for the placement of data.

Grand Challenges Canada recognizes the value of intellectual property and commercialization and the benefits of first and continuing use of data, but not prolonged or exclusive use. In some cases, intellectual property protection, laws, or regulations may delay or preclude access to data. In such cases, the grantee will provide justification to warrant a partial or complete waiver of the data access requirement⁵. For additional guidance on fulfilling the requirements of data access, grantees should refer to the program specific FAQ and consult with their Program Officer.

⁵ For example, trade secrets developed in the course of grant-funded activities would qualify for exemption from early disclosure requirements.