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

---

[1] Data access represents an elaboration of the second guiding principle of the Grand Challenges Canada Global Access Policy, which states that knowledge gained through funded research should be broadly and quickly disseminated between related projects and to the global scientific community.

BOLD IDEAS WITH BIG IMPACT®

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.

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.

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 OF DATA ACCESS

The following requirements apply 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.[2]

1. **Commitment to achieving data access.** All funding recipients must commit to compliance with the terms of this Policy. Grand Challenges Canada may require funding recipients to develop and submit action plans detailing how data access will be implemented. Funding recipients must ensure that relevant aspects of their funding proposals are conducive to data access, i.e. permissions to share data are included in informed consent documents, in research ethics board approvals, and in collaboration and consortia agreements. The financial costs associated with making data accessible may be included in proposed project budgets and will be subject to review and approval.

---

[2] 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.

2. **Data repository deposit.** Funding recipients must deposit data arising from Grand Challenges Canada-funded research into open access repositories. When relevant open access repositories are not available for a given dataset, funding recipients must propose alternatives for access, with consideration given to ease of discovery of the dataset and sustainability of long-term access. Funding recipients are encouraged to consult the Registry of Research Data Repositories (http://www.re3data.org) and similar catalogues to identify suitable repositories.

3. **Timeframe for data release.** Funding recipients must make data openly accessible within 12 months of completion of a Grand Challenges Canada-funded research project. Any exceptions to this timeline must be approved by Grand Challenges Canada in writing, at its sole discretion. Datasets underlying publications of funded research must be made openly accessible immediately upon publication, and such publications must instruct readers on how to access the underlying datasets. 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, funding recipients must provide a justification to warrant a delay or waiver of the data access requirement.

4. **Reporting.** Funding recipients must provide periodic reports on progress in achieving data access, including after completion of funded research.