



Research data belong to everyone

The SNSF wants to make scientific publications as well as the data on which they are based available to all. As of October 2017, it will start financially supporting open access to research data.

The Open Science movement demands that research work be transparent and accessible to everyone – scientists as well as members of the general public. “The SNSF supports this idea not least because these research data are funded by the taxpayer and ultimately belong to the public,” says Matthias Egger, President of the National Research Council. “They are a valuable back-up to scientific findings because they make it possible to replicate the research results.” According to Egger, open access offers another advantage as well: “In the future, researchers will increasingly be able to use IT programs to draw new conclusions from old data.”

Data unlimited

The SNSF will soon require researchers to archive data generated during their research work in non-commercial, digital databases that subscribe to the FAIR principles. FAIR stands for Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. Such

repositories allow anyone interested in the data to reuse it, provided there are no legal, ethical or copyright constraints that stand in the way of disclosure.

Introduction in October 2017

These principles will apply to applicants, but also to the SNSF, as of the October 2017 grant round for project funding. “We expect everyone to consider the question of access to their research data in advance and to submit a corresponding data management plan,” says Aysim Yilmaz, head of

the Biology and Medicine division and the person responsible for Open Science at the SNSF Administrative Offices. The SNSF has consciously avoided setting any requirements for the plan, hoping that the scientific disciplines will define their own standards “bottom up”. “However, the data management plan must be plausible, considering that the SNSF will be paying up to 10,000 Swiss francs each time to enable researchers to process their data for the repositories,” Yilmaz adds.

Open data at publication

All important research data should be publicly accessible. As a minimum requirement, the SNSF expects all publication-related data to be made available.

FAIR
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