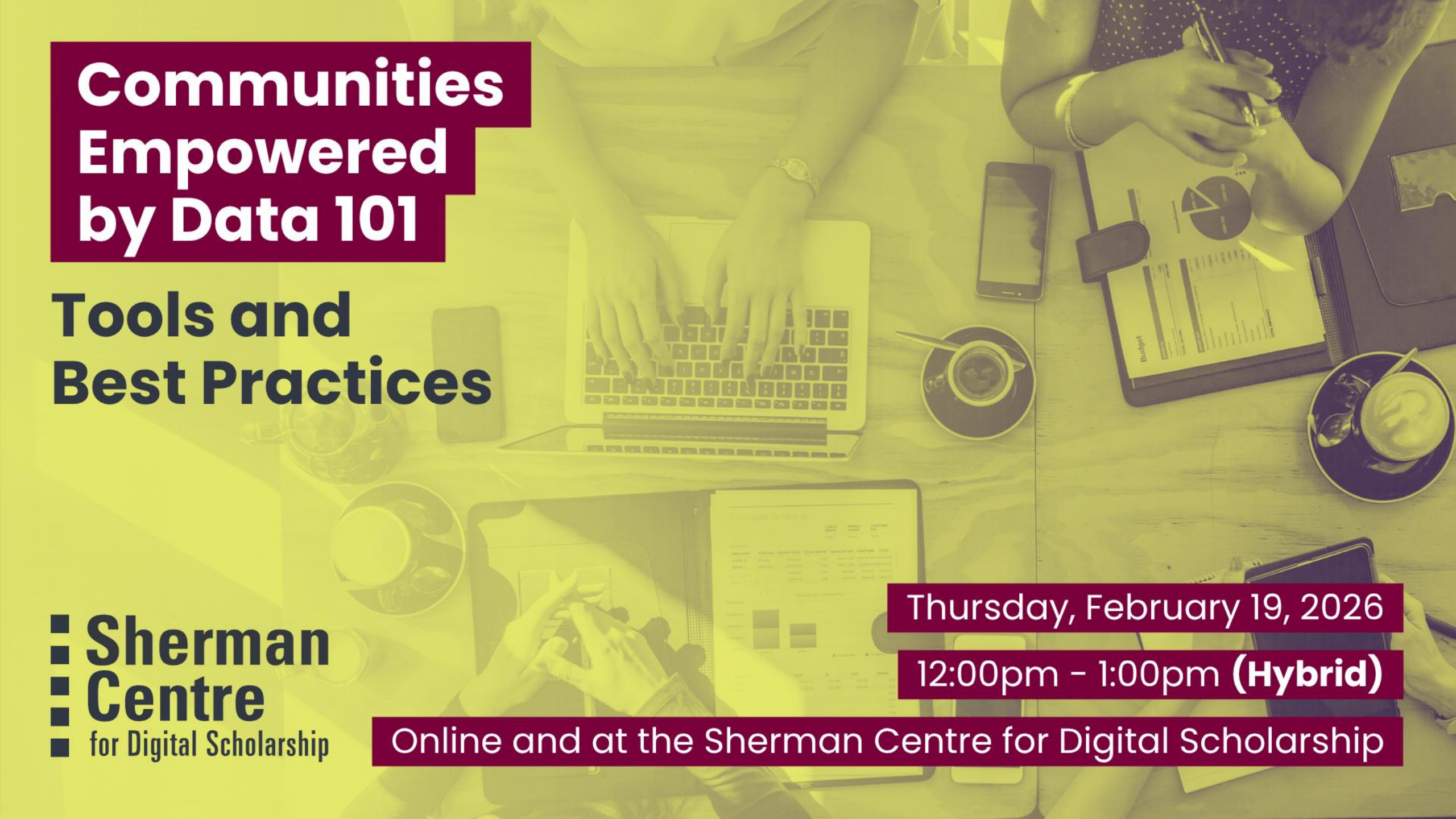
# Communities Empowered by Data 101

## Tools and Best Practices



Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship

Thursday, February 19, 2026

12:00pm - 1:00pm **(Hybrid)**

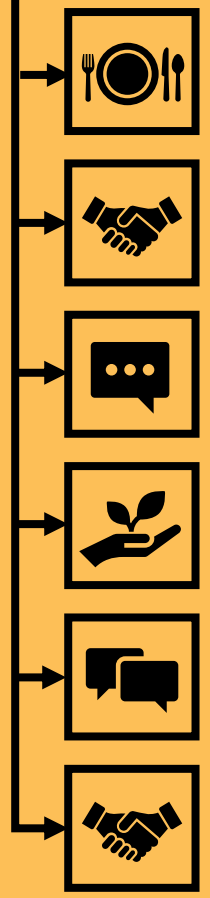
Online and at the Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship

# **Communities Empowered by Data 101:** Tools and Best Practices

February 19, 2026

Shahad Al-Saqqar, Strategic Community-Engaged Research Manager
Danica Evering, Research Data Management Specialist
Isaac Pratt, Research Data Management Specialist
Subhanya Sivajothy, Data Analysis and Visualization Librarian

# Outline



- Setting the table - Research Data Management (10 minutes)
- Roles and responsibilities (10 minutes)
- Data Management Plans as conversations (10 minutes)
- Data deposit and sharing (10 minutes)
- Case study + discussion (20 minutes)
- Community Research Resources

# Code of Conduct, Session Recording, & Privacy

**Code of Conduct:** The Sherman Centre and the McMaster University Libraries are committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for its presenters and participants. Please refer to our code of conduct webpage for more information: **scds.ca/events/code-of-conduct**

**Session Recording:** This session is being recorded with the intention of being shared publicly via the web for future audiences. In respect of your privacy, participant lists will not be shared outside of this session, nor will question or chat transcripts. Questions asked via the chat box will be read by the facilitator without identifying you. Note that you may be identifiable when asking a question during the session in an audio or visual format.

# Certificate Programs

**The Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship Certificate of Attendance**

The Sherman Centre's certificate program recognizes attendance at our workshops. It complements degree training, supports the development of critical competencies in data analysis, research data management, and digital scholarship, and formalizes core skills fostered by our workshops.

Participants are invited to collect **seven** workshop points to receive a certificate of attendance. To verify your participation in today's workshop, we will provide a code and additional instructions at the end of the session.

You can learn more about the certificate program at **scds.ca/certificate-program**

**The Canadian Certificate for Digital Humanities**

This workshop is also eligible for the Canadian Certificate for Digital Humanities. To learn more about the certificate, visit **ccdhhn.ca**. You can also contact local liaison Alexis-Carlota Cochrane at scds@mcmaster.ca.

# Learning Objectives

**By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:**

- Summarize RDM best practices and what Data Management Plans and Data Deposit look like in community-based research
- Locate available tools, training, and guidance.
- Appraise the tools and prepare to implement community control for data in your work.

## Land Acknowledgement

McMaster University is located on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee Nations. Settlers have responsibilities under the Silver Covenant Chain Wampum, part of the 1764 Treaty of Niagara.

Georgia Kirkos, “Campus Winter Snowfall 2023,” January 23, 2023, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada https://brand-resources.mcmaster.ca/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=58512&index=199&total=939&view=viewSearchItem

# Community Research Data Toolkit

This toolkit introduces communities and the organizations and researchers who collaborate with them to concepts of research data management—such as data management plans and data deposit—to support their work.

It is also a collection of **guidance documents** we made together with **templates** and **examples** for data management plans; roles and responsibilities for researchers, community members, and data professionals; and options for where data lives in the long term.

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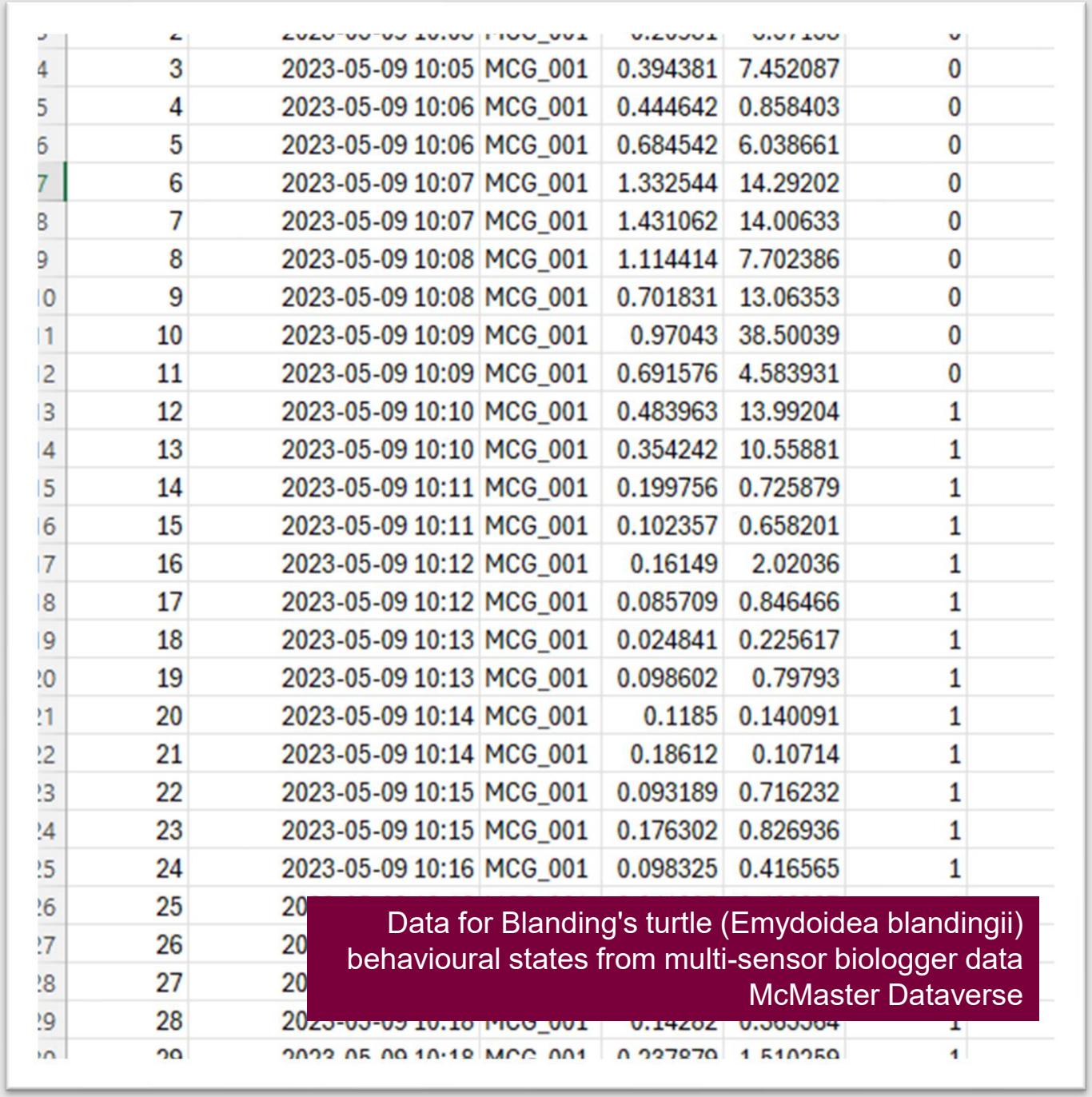
# What counts as “research data”?

Information or materials that are used as evidence in research and scholarly work.



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| 6 | 5 | 2023-05-09 10:06 | MCG_001 | 0.684542 | 6.038661 | 0 |
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Data for Blanding's turtle (Emydoidea blandingii) behavioural states from multi-sensor biologger data
McMaster Dataverse

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# What counts as “research data”?

Information or materials that are used as evidence in research and scholarly work.

Top to bottom: Rachel Glaves, "Collage party at Million Fishes," CC-BY 2.0: https://www.flickr.com/photos/pepperlime/3227196507/; Christina WOC in Tech via Unsplash; Eberhard Grossgasteiger on Unsplash.

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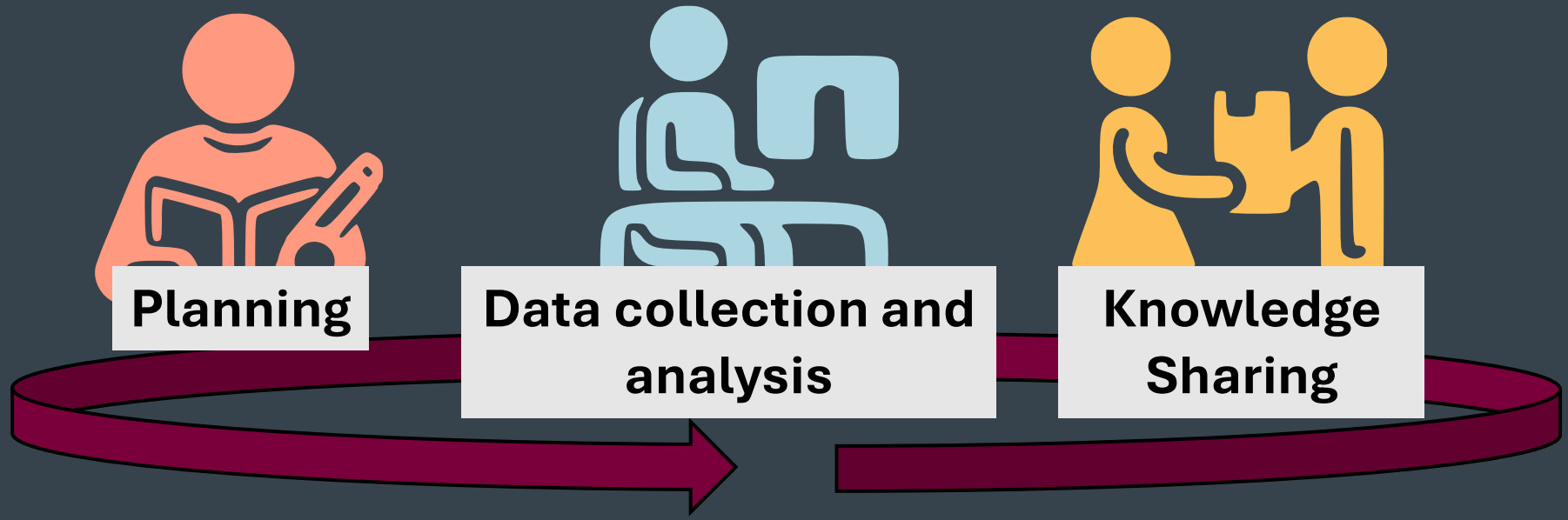
**What does your research data look like?** *Interviews, surveys, administrative data, Statistics Canada, focus groups, art, photos, zines, Open Government*

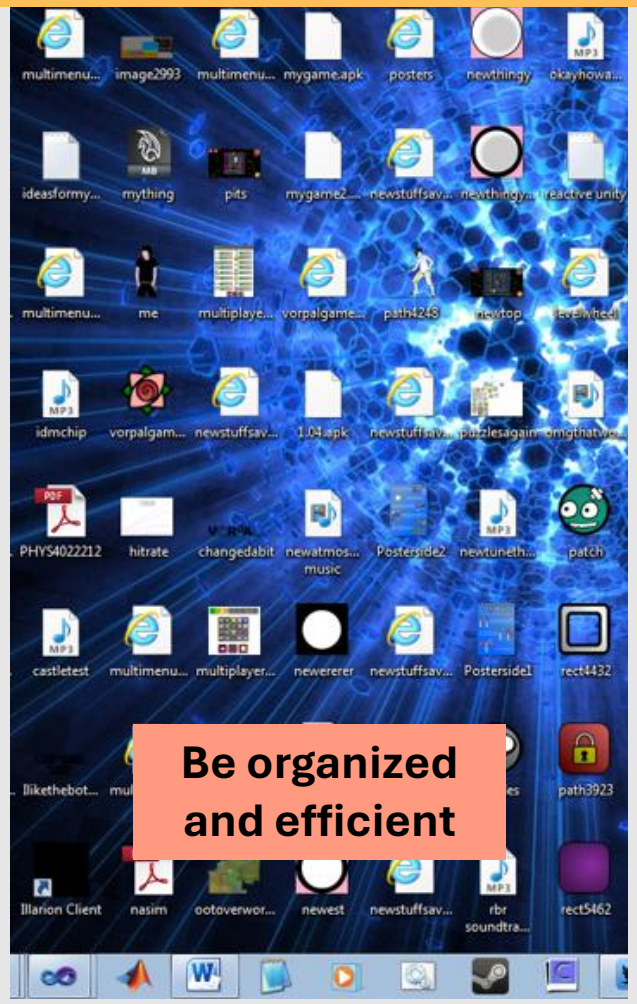
# What is Research Data Management?



# What are our goals with RDM?

Avoid losing data

Be prepared



Be organized and efficient

Community ownership

Left to right: The Big Lunch, “The Big Gay Lunch Belfast,” Flickr, 2 May 2013, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; NIAID, “Clinical Trial Volunteer Signs Informed Consent Form,” Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0, ritvsihu45, “Citizen delegates participated in moderated discussion groups,” Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-SA 2.0

# Research Data Management activities

**Planning**

- Creating a **data management plan**
- **Finding** existing data
- Obtaining systems and software for managing data

**Data collection and analysis**

- **De-identification** of personal information
- **Organizing** data efficiently
- **Documenting** data effectively
- **Storing** data securely

**Knowledge Sharing**

- Preparing data for **archival** and sharing
- **Publishing** data and providing access to communities and other researchers

# From Neighbourhood Organizations to Large Non-Profits

**Small Org**

- *Ex: neighbourhood network, ad-hoc group organizing against hate, tiny nonprofit*
- 1-5 staff
- May have board committees or volunteers

**Large Org**

- *Ex: YWCA, Good Shepherd, school board*
- Established IT teams and infrastructure
- Formal bylaws, procedures manuals
- May have staff time available

**No Org**

- *Ex: group of refugees from one country, queer community with small groups, social spaces*
- 0 staff
- May need to rely on a third-party like a library, another organization, the university for infrastructure.

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# Responsibilities and Resources in Research Partnerships

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## Institutional Power and Relationship Dynamics

Stemming from previous institutional histories and events, community-researcher partnerships can be impacted by mistrust and can be further reified by researcher behaviours and communication styles.

Source: Gardening across generations by d-olwen-dee https://flickr.com/photos/52271725@N07/8201694319.

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## Trust as an Ethical Construct

Critical reflective trust as “being at the place in a relationship where mistakes and other issues resulting from differences can be discussed and resolved" (Lucero, 2018)

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James Petts, “People on bench, Ruskin Park, London.” CC BY-SA 2.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:People_on_bench_(14072817007).jpg

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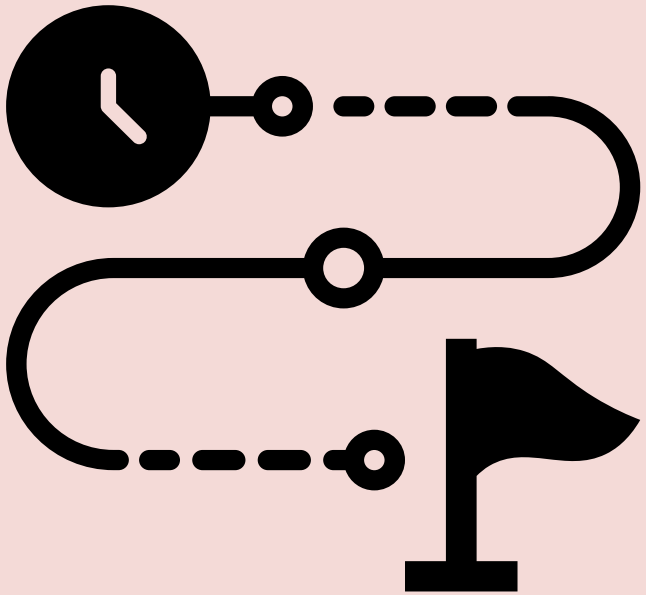

1. Before Research
    - Setting transparent parameters and clear agreements
    - Communication Guidelines
2. During Research
    - Feedbacks and Check-ins
    - Discuss challenges
3. After Research
    - Data Dissemination
    - Assessment and Future Collaboration

Created by Anggara Putra from Noun Project

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| Responsibilities and Resources | |
|---|---|
| Who will be responsible for the care and maintenance of this information? | |
| Who will be responsible if that person or people need to step back for whatever reason? | |
| What will we need in terms of resources for this?<br><br>(e.g., extra hard drives, training for team members, digitization, etc.) | |
| Do we need to apply for any additional funds or allocate someone's time towards this? | |

Centre4 Art and Research DMP Template
https://zenodo.org/records/10651058

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## [Project Name] Community Protocols

**Before research**

| Question | Response |
|---|---|
| Has the community partner been approached about a research project before or after a grant has already been submitted? | |
| How will the research relationship, as well as research data, be beneficial to both parties? | |
| What is informed consent for you as a participant, community member, or community organization? | |

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# **Data management plans** can be conversations to build trust

*Isaac Pratt, Anneliese Eber, Cathy Paton, Kaelan Caspary, Template for Building a Data Management Plan through Conversation (McMaster University, 2025), https://doi.org/10.71548/MZH6-A877.*

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Sophie von Maltzan, “Socially engaged art performance in the Liberties in Dublin 2022.png,” in Wikimedia Commons, 5 December 2022, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Socially_engaged_art_performance_in_the_Liberties_in_Dublin_2022.png – CC BY-SA 4.0

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# Data Management Plans

A Data Management Plan (DMP) describes how you will create, store, organize, document, secure, preserve, and share your research data.

SSHRC: Partnership Grants - Stage 2 (Pilot – 2022-23)

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## Queer Data Management Plan Example

*Danica Evering, Alexis-Carlota Cochrane, and Subhanya Sivajothy, reviewed by Isaac Pratt*

This is an example DMP for a fictional research project by queer and gender diverse researchers conducting a project within our community. It is led by Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) from a community organization and university. This example uses the Template for building a Data Management Plan through conversation[1] from the Community Research Data Toolkit.[2]

### 1 | Data collection

*What is the "data" in this project? What will we collect? Whose consent or approval do we need to collect the data for this project? Do we need ongoing consent? Is there anything we are reusing?*

| Data Type | Data Sources | File Formats | Software | Size (30 GB) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Audio | Interviews with trans and gender diverse community members | .MP4 (oral histories), .txt, .docx (transcribed), .txt (archival) | Zoom (interviews/ transcription), Taguette (analysis) | 10 interviews, 30 minutes each, 15 GB |
| Survey | Community participants | .xlsx (for data review), .csv (archiving) | LimeSurvey (collection) | 200 KB |
| Text and image | Zines created during Trans Day of Visibility event | PDF scans | Tropy (analysis) | 30 zines, 6 MB |
| Audio | Field recordings collected at soundwalk | .wav (active research), FLAC (archival) | Audacity | 10 GB |
| Archival | LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive at Hamilton Public Library | PDF scans | Tropy (analysis) | 1 GB |

Evering D, Cochrane AC, Sivajothy S, 2026, Queer Data Management Plan Example, developed using the Template for building a Data Management Plan through conversation

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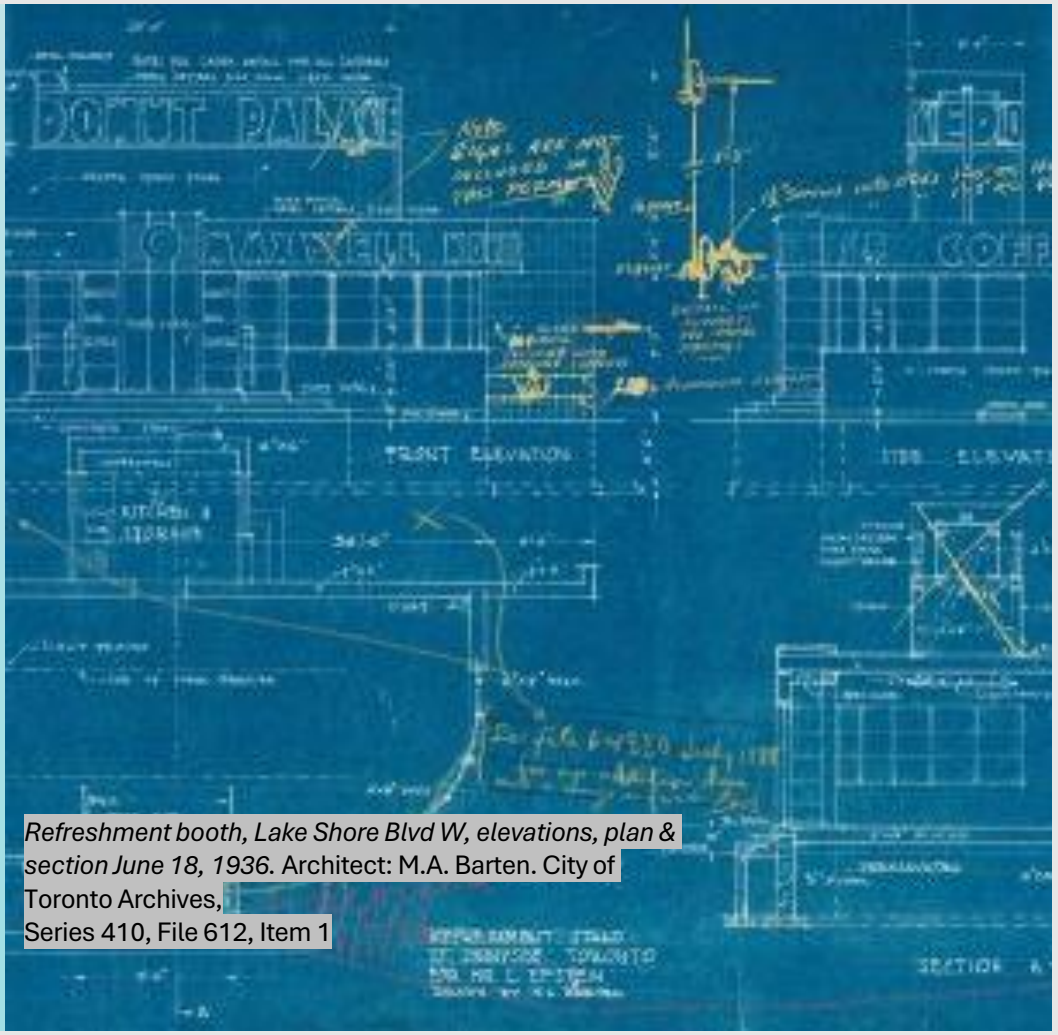
# What are DMPs *for*?

- Start a project on a solid footing
- Define each person's responsibility to the project data
- Standardize data practices for your project
- Figure out the technical bits – storage, access, software, etc
- Write out responsibility charts and contingency plans
- An opportunity for funders to ask researchers to follow best practices



*Refreshment booth, Lake Shore Blvd W, elevations, plan & section June 18, 1936.* Architect: M.A. Barten. City of Toronto Archives, Series 410, File 612, Item 1

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# Why build a DMP for a community project?

- An early opportunity to clearly address community needs/goals
- A place to clearly outline processes for two-way accountability between researcher and community
- Define the distinct roles for communities and researchers with regards to the data

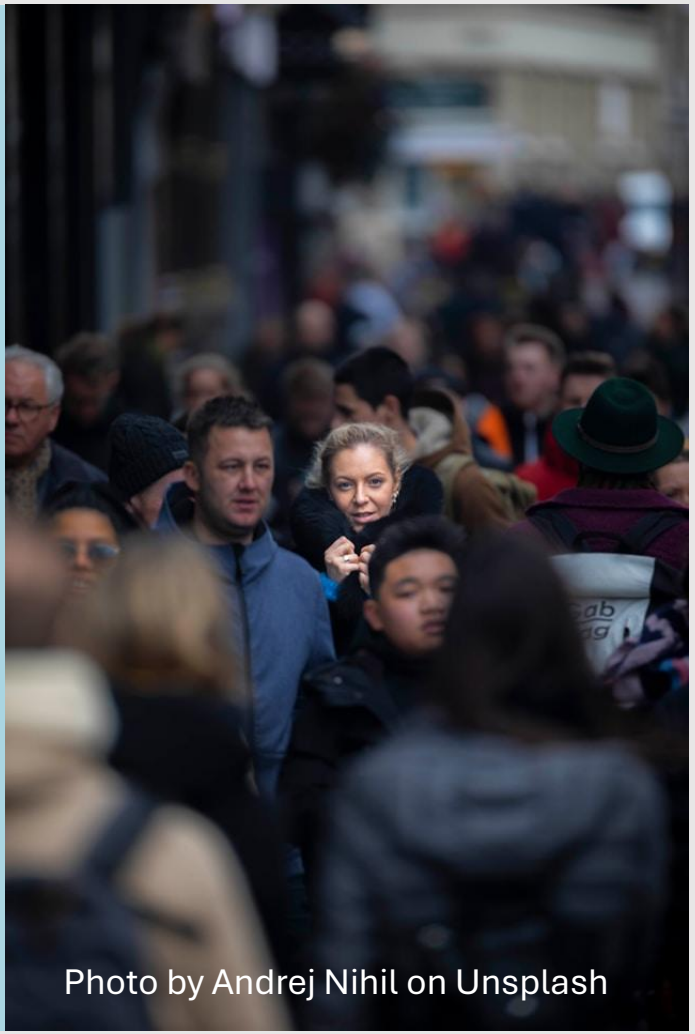


Photo by Andrej Nihil on Unsplash

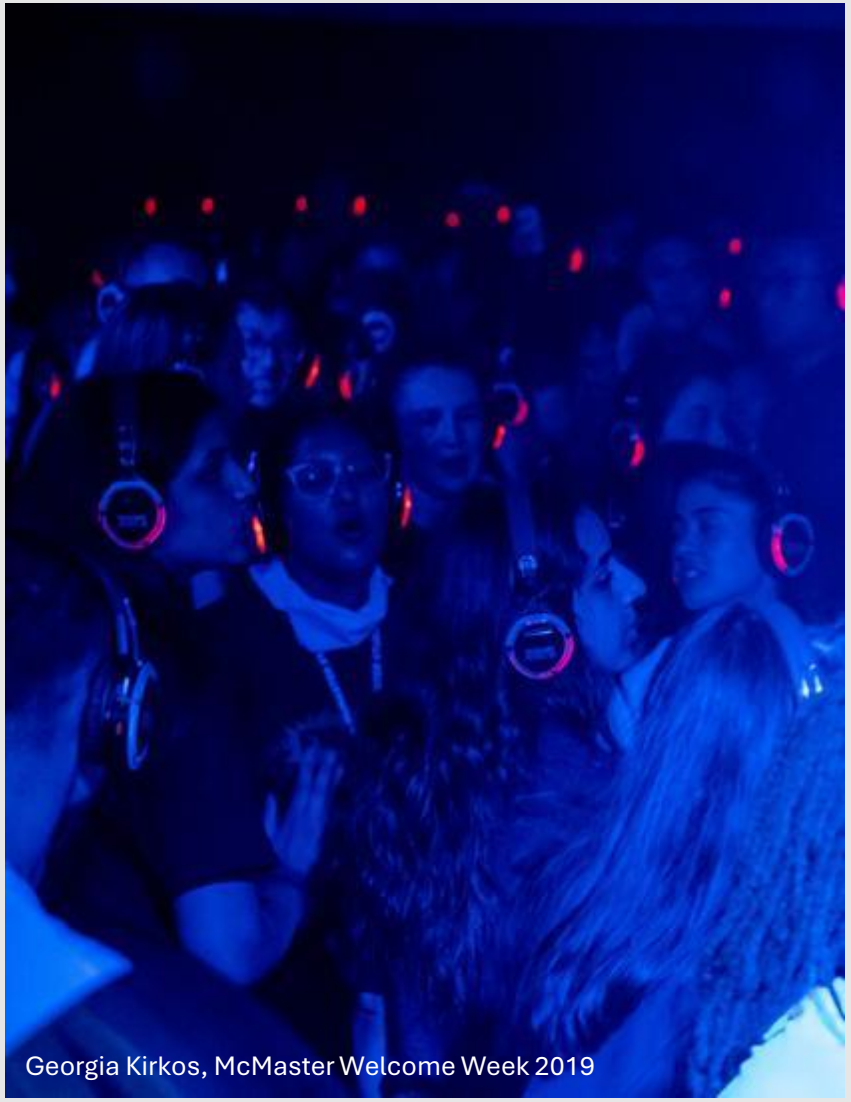
# What's in the Toolkit

1. Template for building a Data Management Plan through conversation

The first part of the toolkit is a framework for building a data management plan as a conversation.

2. Data Management Plan Guidance: Data management in action

The second part provides additional context, inspiration, and examples for how you might plan your work.



Georgia Kirkos, McMaster Welcome Week 2019

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# The conversation template

The template is meant to be a guiding document used to focus everyone during a meeting, retreat, town hall, or series of meetings.

1. **Data collection**
2. **Documentation**
3. **Storage and security**
4. **Maintenance and care**
5. **Sharing, ownership, and reuse**

Photo by Victoria Morgan on Unsplash

# The conversation template

- Some of the questions to be addressed include:

*What is the "**data**" in this project? What will we collect?*

*How will we make sure our data is **secure** and accessible only to approved people?*

*Who will be **responsible** for the care and maintenance of the project records?*

*Who **owns** those outputs?*

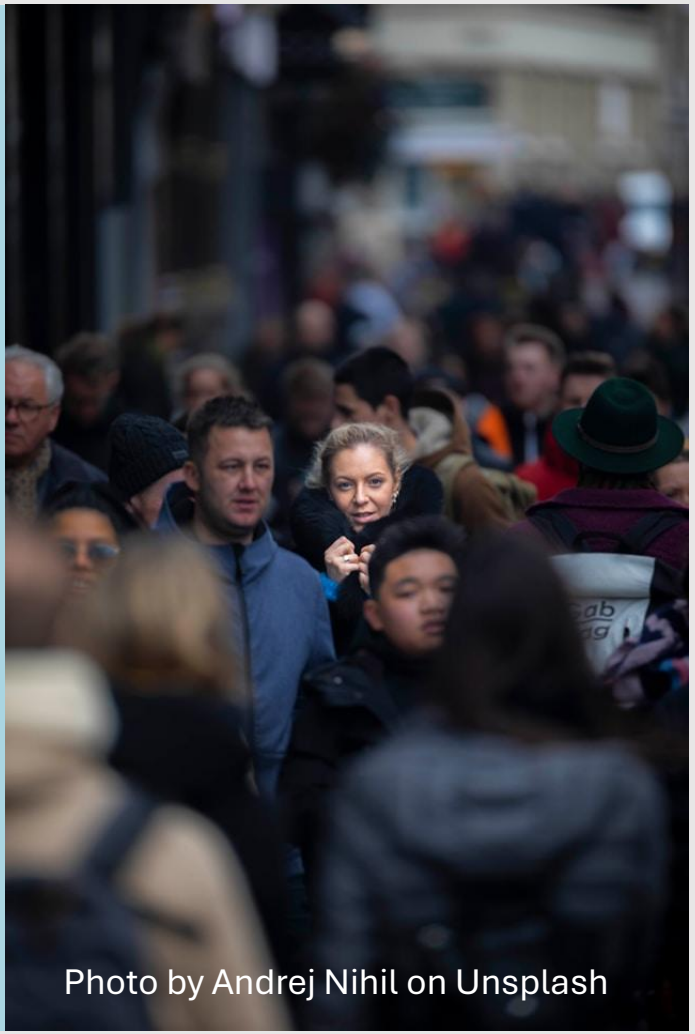

Photo by Andrej Nihil on Unsplash

# **Data Deposit**: community care and control over data

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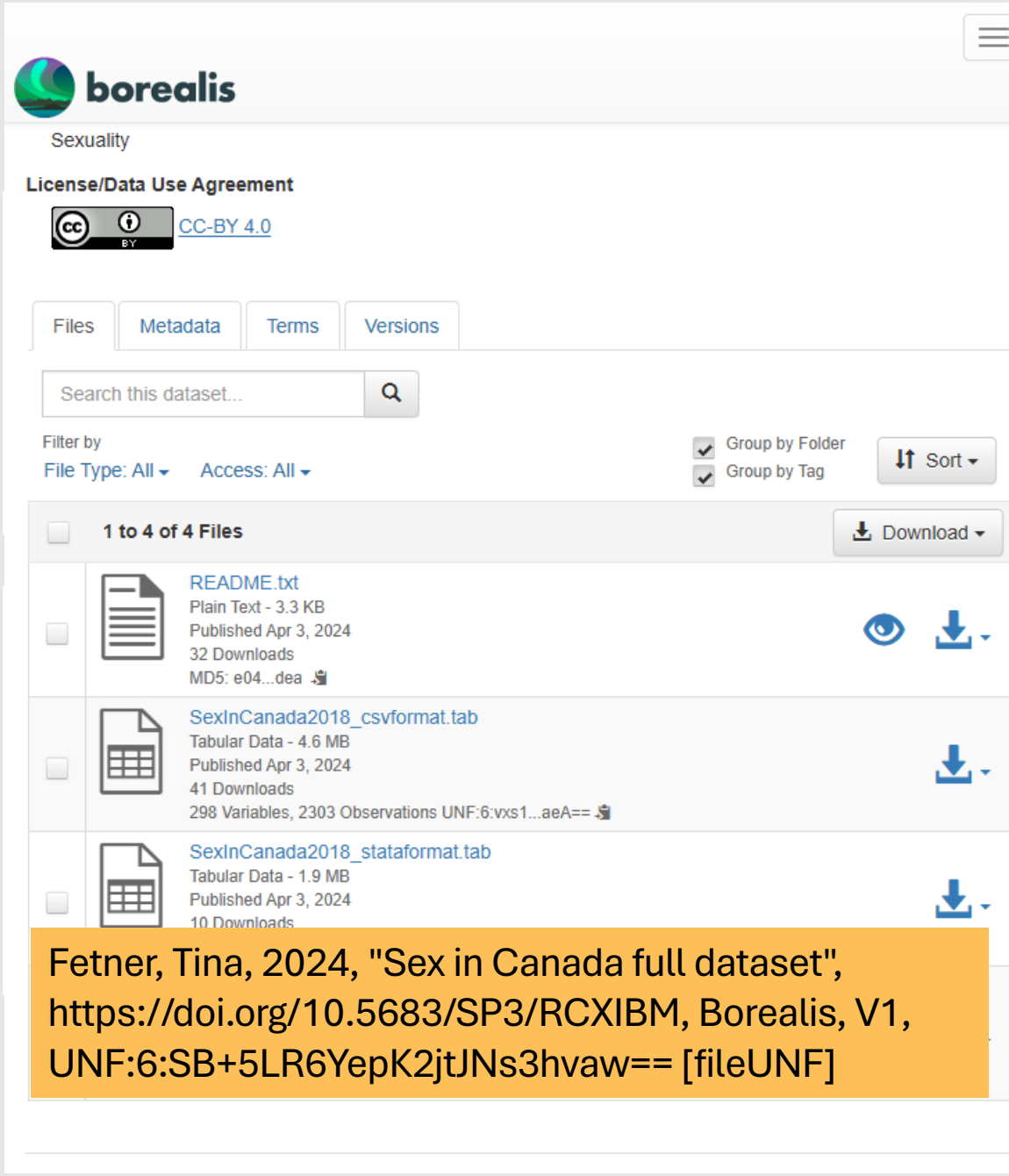
# Data Deposit

A **data repository** is a web platform and storage space for researchers to deposit data sets associated with their research. This can be a place to store and **archive data**, make it easier for other people to find, or support “open research.”

Updates to TCPS2 around “broad consent” for data sharing as well as the Tri-Agency RDM Policy.

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**Data deposit** can be an act of community care + control

*Amber Gallant, Niloofar Hooman, Lucia Constanzo, Mikala Narlock, Tracy Sallaway, "Data Deposit, Sharing, and Archiving," in* Community Research Data Toolkit, *ed. Danica Evering and Subhanya Sivajothy, 2025. https://doi.org/10.71548/7MP6-FN45.*

Ross Burgess, "Trans Pride 2014 QTIPOC Brighton," in Wikimedia Commons, 26 July 2014, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Trans_Pride_2014_QTIPOC_Brighton.JPG – CC BY-SA 4.0

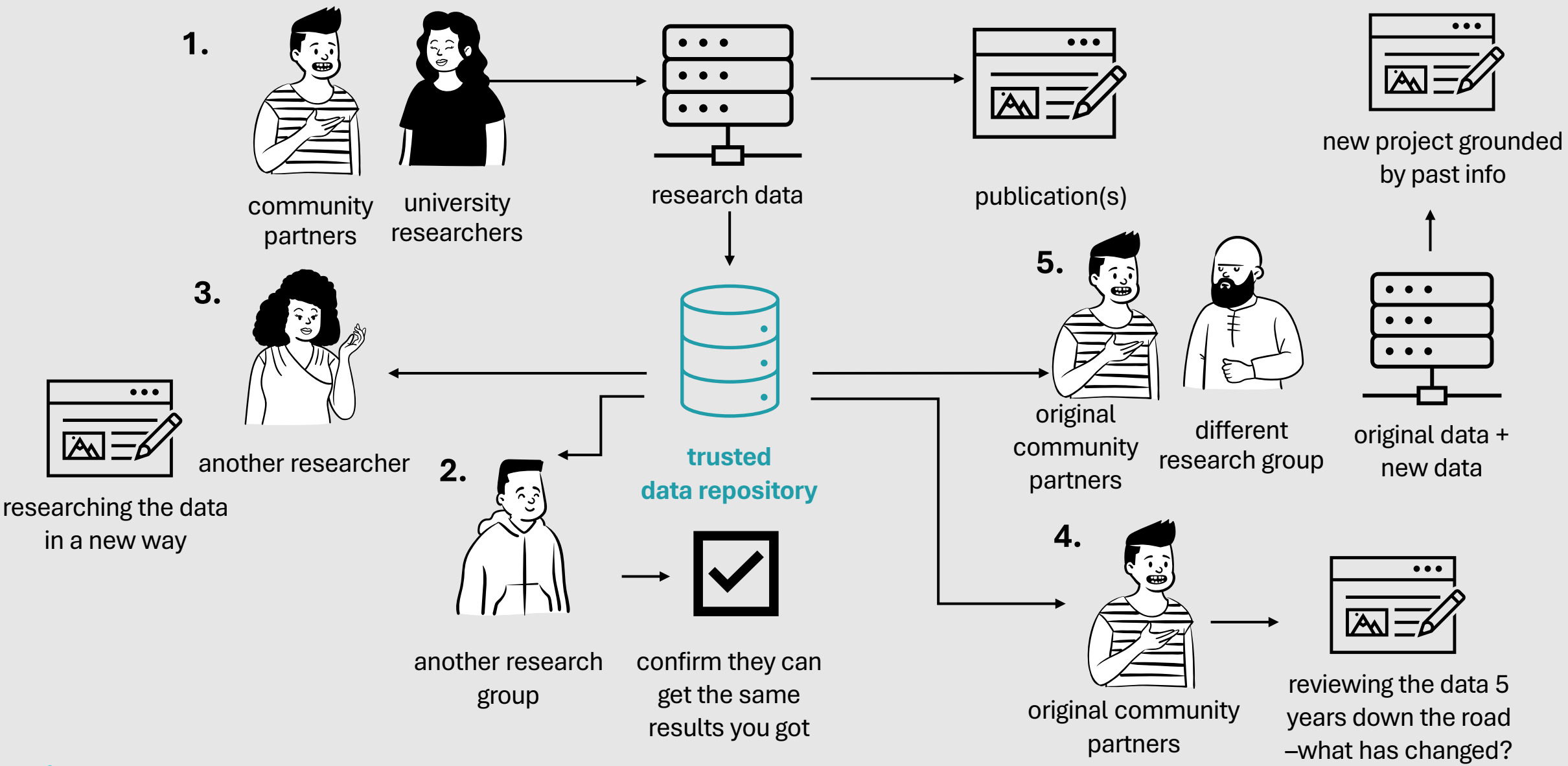


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Diagram by Tracy Sallaway, "Data Access Committees," in *Community Research Data Toolkit,* 2025. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.71548/cjk4-gs68

Penny 12 ,"Eva & Adele being interviewed by ArtStars* TV host Nadja Sayej at Vienna Art Fair in 2011." CC-BY-SA 2.0, Wikimedia Commons

# Data Access Committees

- *Example: data containing personal information that can identify individual research participants.*
- **Data Access Committee**: group responsible for reviewing dataset requests and granting access.
- **Membership**: nature of data, needs of community, purpose of original research, where data is held.
- **Practical**: Funding available, staff member, technical aspects.
- **Conceptual**: How does the community make meaning and understand data?

Sallaway, T., Hooman, N., Costanzo, L., & Gallant, A. (2025). "Data Access Committee Terms of Reference Template." In Danica Evering & Subhanya Sivajothy (Eds.), *Community Research Data Toolkit*. McMaster University.

ritvsihu45, "Citizen delegates participated in moderated discussion groups," Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-SA 2.0

Kai Schreiber, “Zettelkasten,” CC BY-SA 2.0 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zettelkasten_(514941699).jpg

# Data Access Terms + Data Use Agreements

- *Example: anonymized survey results about a sensitive topic such as social housing or immigration experiences.*
- **Data Access Terms:** How will users be eligible (part of an institution with an ethics board? Member of a community? Plans for data?); security measures (encryption, offline); conditions for reuse.
- **Data Use Agreement:** Purpose of use, security, acknowledgement and publication, how to share data back, legal details.

Hooman, N., Costanzo, L., & Gallant, A. (2025). “Data Access Terms and Data Use Agreements.” In Danica Evering & Subhanya Sivajothy (Eds.), *Community Research Data Toolkit*. McMaster University. https://doi.org/10.71548/bhnp-jt84

# Open Access

- *Example: number of applications per year to social service programs; interviews about a community art program with names, ages, and other identifying information removed.*
- **Data Repository**: Online platform with open access to datasets.
- **Creative Commons**: Open licenses let you determine things like attribution, non-commercial use.
- **Curating**: Tidying up data and getting it ready for long-term storage.

Narlock, M., Costanzo, L., & Gallant, A. (2025). “Reviewing and taking care of community research data.” In Danica Evering & Subhanya Sivajothy (Eds.), *Community Research Data Toolkit*. McMaster University. https://doi.org/10.71548/ftwp-wr49

SilesianSoul, “A librarian from Silesian University of Medicine Main Library,” Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY 4.0

# Case Study for Discussion

A group of queer and gender diverse researchers are conducting a project within their community. It is led by Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) from a community organization and university. They will be gathering **oral histories** with trans and gender diverse community members, **zines** created during an event, a community **survey**, and **archival materials** from the local public library. There is some administrative data that could be used for the project. Previous surveys have been targeted by bot attacks, leading to unusable data.

The organization is a small nonprofit advocacy group who also serves to develop research, education, and outreach to help queer communities navigate social support systems. They are a registered charitable organization, with 5 staff members, a board of directors, and a membership and volunteer system. They also have a wider community of people who are involved in projects, events, and research initiatives.

# Community Research Resources

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# OCE Resources

## OCE INTAKE FORM

## OCE RESOURCES WEBPAGE

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# OCE Events

## PRE- COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

- Real Talk: More than a Podcast with HARRC & HIPC
  - Feb 24th 2:00 – 5:00 PM
- Intro to Equity Co-Creation
  - Mar 12th 2:00 – 5:00 PM
- Location: One James St North

## COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH CONFERENCE

- Date: March 26th 9 AM – 5 PM
- Location: One James St North

**https://buytickets.at/mcmasteroce**

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