Opening up humanities scholarship

Open humanities Data on the Routledge Open Research publishing platform

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Openly accessible research data is a key element of open scholarship. Publishers’ research data sharing policies are continuing to strengthen, increasingly requiring authors to share the data which underpins the results reported in their article. In reviewing publishers’ research data policies, it appears that little acknowledgement has been given to the ways that humanities research practice differs from scientific methodologies, and the specific challenges associated with identifying and sharing humanities research data. If publishers intend to encourage authors to think of their research outputs as “data”, and to share them accordingly, more support and guidance is required.

This poster illustrates the approach taken on the F1000 publishing platform Routledge Open Research, which publishes research from Education, the Arts, Humanities, Psychology and Social Sciences. Focusing on the humanities, we outline how a standard Open Data policy has been adapted to reflect humanities scholars’ research methods and outputs, and how humanities research data can be better aligned with the FAIR Data principles to support reuse. We also include some of the challenges we have identified for humanities authors who are prompted to share their research data; and the specific changes we made to our guidance and use of terminology to address these challenges.

**Humanities data sharing can be challenging**

- Difficult to identify what constitutes “humanities data”.
- Likely that researchers integrate third-party, copyrighted sources into their research (for example materials from galleries, libraries, archives or museums).
- Lack of humanities data sharing policies from stakeholders such as funders or publishers may mean that humanities researchers are less experienced in data sharing practice compared to other disciplines.

**The F1000 Open Data policy requirements**

Across all F1000 platforms, including Routledge Open Research, we require authors to:

- Deposit all data underlying their study into an approved data repository.
- Apply an open licence (CC-BY or CC0) to their dataset.
- Include a Data Availability Statement in their manuscript, explaining how and where the data can be accessed.
- Cite the data they used, and add it to their reference list.

Adapting the F1000 Open Data guidelines for Humanities (and social sciences)

**Supporting FAIR Humanities Data Sharing**

To encourage humanities authors to share FAIR data, we provide a set of simple steps as part of our guidelines:

**The best way to achieve Findable data is by:**
- Depositing your dataset into a recognised data repository which assigns globally unique persistent identifiers (such as DOIs).
- Adding as much contextual information (metadata) as possible when depositing your dataset into the repository.

**The best way to achieve Accessible data is by:**
- Depositing your dataset into a recognised data repository which uses standard communications protocols like “http”.
- Ensuring that the data repository you choose gives continued access to metadata even when datasets are removed.

**The best way to achieve Interoperable data is by:**
- Checking FAIRsharing.org for the standards that apply to your data type and using them.
- Ensuring that the data repository you choose allows you to include links or references to other related data.
- Using open, non-proprietary file formats for your data.

**The best way to achieve Reusable data is by:**
- Adding as much contextual information (metadata) as possible when depositing your dataset into a repository.
- Applying an open license to your data, preferably CC0 or CC-BY 4.0.
- Checking FAIRsharing.org for the standards that apply to your data type and using them.

**What is Routledge Open Research?**

Routledge Open Research is an Open Research publishing platform for scholars working in the fields of the arts, humanities, behavioral and social sciences, offering rapid publication of articles and other research outputs without editorial bias. All articles benefit from transparent peer review and editorial guidance on making all source data openly available.

**But humanities researchers consider data sharing to be important**

How important do you think it is to share research data with others in the humanities?

- *Very important or important*
- *Not important at all*
- *I’m unsure (N=347)*


**What’s different about our Open Data Guidelines for Routledge Open Research?**

- Written with Humanities and Social Sciences researchers, and their research practices, in mind.
- Provides guidance for self-generated data, as well as more traditional humanities sources like archival or museum collections.
- Examples from published humanities research are used to illustrate each policy requirement.

We hope that these changes will encourage our authors to share a rich and diverse datasets when publishing on F1000 platforms, and that they will further encourage other publishers, and stakeholders such as funding agencies, to continue to develop their guidance to support data sharing by humanities researchers.