



RCUK Researchfish principles of use

All RCUK-funded researchers¹ are required to provide an annual update on the outputs, outcomes and impacts (from now on, referred to as research outcomes or outcomes) that arise from their RCUK-funded research. This information is used by the Research Councils to:

- strengthen the evidence base the Research Councils has to draw upon for public accountability,
- make the case for public investment in research,
- inform strategic decision-making,
- evaluate progress, and
- better understand the research system.

To collect information on outputs and outcomes the Research Councils use an online system, Researchfish² For further details see 'RCUK requirements for funded researchers – reporting research outcomes using Researchfish' and 'RCUK Researchfish compliance and sanctions policy'³.

Researchfish is used by a number of research funders, including the Research Councils, Research Charities, and Research Organisations. These principles of use relate to RCUK – funded research and outline what information is collected in Researchfish, how it is used by the Research Councils and what information is likely to be published.

1. Information collected via Researchfish?

The Research Councils use Researchfish to collect information on outputs, outcomes and impacts that have arisen from RCUK funded research. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information for output types such as publications, further funding, influence on policy and research databases/models.

The Researchfish system presents a common question set which is in use across all funders. The Research Councils also require RCUK-funded researchers to address additional RCUK specific questions. The question sets can be downloaded from the RCUK website⁴.

Guidance on completing the questions can be found throughout the Researchfish system. You are advised to ensure that you do not disclose data that is commercially sensitive, personal, that might be considered confidential or is defamatory. Contact your university research support offices or unit administrators for further guidance.

¹ For example, principal investigators, unit programme leaders, fellows and, where appropriate, students

² www.researchfish.com

³ www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/research/OFFICIALRCUKRFrequirementsandsanctions.pdf

⁴ www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/researchoutcomes/questions/

2. How the Research Councils will use information submitted via Researchfish

The information you submit to Researchfish will be used to support the objectives outlined in the introduction above and will include some information being published in the form of analyses and evaluations undertaken by the Research Councils, case studies — often in specific areas of research — and in narrative to demonstrate trends and key outcomes.

In addition some of the information you provide will be published on Research Council and RCUK websites and on other websites such as the RCUK Gateway to Research and Europe PubMed Central (see below). This is to ensure the outcomes of publicly-funded research are accessible to the research community, business, policy makers and the public.

Information made available elsewhere will also be published in line with the Open Government Licence or relevant Research Council policies on open access and open data⁵.

Please be aware that text you submit to Researchfish may be quoted, in full or in part, and attributed to investigators and grants. By submitting data to Researchfish you consent to this use, publication and onward dissemination of outcomes.

Information will also be returned to the research organisation holding the Research Council funding to which you have allocated those outcomes. These principles of use apply only to the way in which the Research Councils will use and publish data collected via Researchfish. You should contact your local administrator for guidance on how this information might be used in your own organisation.

Publishing information in the RCUK Gateway to Research

The RCUK Gateway to Research⁶ provides access to information on Research Council funded awards, this includes:

- a. the names of the investigators and research organisations
- b. the project title, abstracts and technical summary (where available), impact summary
- c. the total value and duration of the award(s)
- d. outcomes and publications

The gateway is open for anyone to search, download and use data in line with the Open Government Licence v2.0⁷ except where otherwise stated. See the pages on data and the data dictionary for further information on outcome and output data that is published via the gateway.

⁵ www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/openaccess/

⁶ gtr.rcuk.ac.uk/

⁷ www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2/

Sharing links with Europe PubMed Central

Links between publications and Research Council funding will be shared across the Europe PubMed Central⁸ and Researchfish datasets to reduce duplicate requests to researchers and duplicate reporting.

Information on publications submitted to Researchfish may be copied into Europe PubMed Central and links established in Europe PubMed Central or extracted from publication acknowledgements may be copied into Researchfish.

3. Personal data held by Researchfish

The Researchfish system holds information about awards which is drawn from the Research Councils research management systems. This will include a limited amount of personal data comprising your email contact details and the name of the research organisation holding the award (which may be your employer). This information is managed in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and used in combination with the information on research outcomes you enter in Researchfish to:

- operate the Researchfish system (including notifying you of changes to the system, system downtime, and deadlines for submission of outcome information)
- report to employers and research organisations on progress in gathering outcome data
- operate the RCUK Researchfish compliance and sanctions policy

Researchfish users can have a number of email addresses held within the system and therefore the Research Councils and Researchfish may contact researchers using different addresses in line with your preferences. Email addresses held by Researchfish include the email address provided by each funder, which for the Research Councils will be drawn from the joint electronic submission system, JeS⁹ and a contact address you are able to provide yourself within the Researchfish system and which would not be made available to funders.

- Researchfish provides the facility for you to update your email contact details only for the purposes of interacting with the Researchfish system. You can request the amendment of any other details displayed in the system by contacting researchoutcomes@rcuk.ac.uk
- If you wish to change the email address that RCs use to contact you, then you must update your details via JeS (contact JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk for guidance).

Information about research outcomes which you enter into the "My Portfolio" section of Researchfish is accessible only to you and anyone you identify via the delegate or team member function. This information can only be accessed by relevant research funders when you (or your delegate/team member) have allocated the outcome to an award(s) for which you have reporting responsibility and is only made available to research organisations when you have formally submitted.

Guidance on completing the questions can be found throughout the Researchfish system. As the information you submit to the RCs via Researchfish may be published, you should avoid specifically identifying individuals involved in the work, unless this information is already in the public domain (such as the names of co-authors listed on publications).

⁸ www.europepmc.org/

⁹ <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk>

You are also advised to ensure that you do not disclose data that is commercially sensitive, that might be considered confidential in some other way or is defamatory. Contact your university research support offices or unit administrators for further guidance.

By agreeing to these principles of use and by submitting data into the system, you have explicitly consented to your data being processed by us in this way and stored on the Researchfish system and associated internal Research Council systems.

4. Information requests

The Research Councils aim to be as open as possible in informing others about how we conduct our business through our publications, websites and face-to-face discussions. As public bodies the Research Councils are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act (2000). Should we receive any requests for information on outcomes and outputs held within the Researchfish system and which are not already publicly available the Research Councils will aim to consult with you and your research organisation as soon as possible to determine whether exemptions might apply. We will take your views into account when considering how to respond to such a request however the final decision on whether to disclose or withhold any information will rest with the relevant Research Council.

5. Final grant report

To avoid duplication of effort, the Research Councils no longer request a final report for the majority of our awards. However, please note that separate reporting processes may be in place for some funding mechanisms, for example, NPRI awards, research technology clubs, experimental medicine awards, clinical trial grants, public engagement awards and specific grant calls.

6. Changes to principles of use

These principles of use are published on the RCUK website¹⁰ at. The principles are also displayed to researchers on submission and will need to be accepted before data can be submitted to the system.

7. Contact

If you have any questions about these principles, or wish to change any details displayed in the Researchfish system please contact researchoutcomes@rcuk.ac.uk.

¹⁰ www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/researchoutcomes/principles/