



## National Evolutionary Synthesis Center

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## Data and Software Policy

### *Introduction*

NESCent strongly believes that sharing all data and software source code with the research community is a key ingredient towards fostering synthetic research at NESCent and elsewhere, and therefore contributes to advancing evolutionary science as a whole.

In order to accomplish its mission, and to best support the scientific community in advancing evolutionary science as a discipline, NESCent expects that all data and software created through NESCent-sponsored activities be made publicly available.

### *Scope*

This document defines the policies for sharing data and software source code that is created, generated, used, hosted, replicated, sponsored, or made available by a NESCent-sponsored scientist, project, or activity, or by a collaboration in which NESCent participates.

In the remainder of this document data and software source code within the scope of this policy is collectively referred to as NESCent-sponsored data and software source code, respectively.

Data or software used that have more restrictive terms of use and dissemination than those set forth here are exempt from this policy. However, NESCent strongly encourages its participants and collaborators to consider alternatives that do not restrict sharing and free dissemination.

### *NESCent-sponsored Data*

NESCent is committed to making all evolutionary biology and any other data within the scope of this policy readily available to the broader scientific community.

To meet this goal, NESCent sponsored-data are, insofar as possible, to be made accessible with no restrictions for use and dissemination through explicit use of a [Creative Commons Zero](#) waiver or its equivalent, and through deposition in a public data repository (e.g. [Dryad](#), [Knowledge Network for Biocomplexity](#)) or an established open database. Data are to be made available in a timely manner -- no later than one year after the conclusion of the NESCent award, or immediately upon publication of an associated article, whichever comes earlier. The data should be adequately documented for validation and reuse, including appropriate attribution of its original source.

NESCent recognizes that there are many questions associated with the open licensing of scientific data collections and encourages sponsored scientists to familiarize themselves with the issues (for example, see the [Database FAQs at Science Commons](#)).

### ***NESCent-sponsored Software***

NESCent is committed to open-source software development and distribution. Software developed with NESCent funding or participation is expected to become readily and freely available to the broader scientific community.

Specifically, NESCent-sponsored software is to be made accessible on a FTP or web-accessible site hosted by NESCent, or at [Sourceforge](#) or a similar site, for download in source code, and the source code is to be licensed under a [OSI-approved Open Source license](#). The source code is to be made available in a timely manner, meaning as early as possible but no later than the conclusion of the collaboration or NESCent award, or publication of an article involving the software or data generated using the software, whichever comes earlier. The code is to be sufficiently documented, at a minimum stating purpose, copyright and license, and acknowledging and attributing any other software or software libraries that the NESCent-sponsored software uses or depends on, as required by the licenses of such software. Copyright and license must be stated in every source code file, and the licenses for all the files constituting the software must be compatible.

### ***Support By NESCent IT***

NESCent's Informatics team will help a principal investigator or NESCent fellow in selecting the most suitable Creative Commons or Open Source license, and placing the license appropriately on the website for the dataset or the software, as well as in depositing data, meta-data, and software source code in the pertinent public repository. NESCent and its Informatics team will also help to remove any obstacles towards making data and software available, for instance by researching and resolving license incompatibilities, consulting or coordinating with collaborators, etc.

### ***Continuation of Support***

NESCent Informatics will schedule a wrap-up meeting with all NESCent fellows about 3-4 weeks before their term at NESCent ends. One goal of this interview is to identify any data, data sets, and source code that the scientist created under NESCent support, and to develop a recommendation for what type of continued support NESCent should provide for the data or data collection (for instance, hosting a database) and for the software (e.g., fielding user questions, bug resolution, or continued feature development). The recommendation will be communicated to the leaving scientist, at the latest upon approval by NESCent's Director.

NESCent is not positioned to guarantee hosting of a database or application for the long term. NESCent will, however, help to establish or secure such long-term hosting if recommended, for instance by assisting to apply to [DataCentral](#) at the [San Diego Supercomputer Center](#).

## ***Copyright and Acknowledgment***

Data or datasets and software generated or created by a NESCent fellow or through a project or meeting funded by NESCent must appropriately and conspicuously acknowledge NESCent and the National Science Foundation.