

# DATA VETTING REQUEST

## – Standard Operating Procedure –

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### 1. PURPOSE

1.1 To outline the process to be followed by DataNB Approved Users and Employees/Students, to request vetting of research project results. Data results must be vetted before they may be removed from the Trusted Research Environment (TRE) to produce the Research Results and may not be disclosed to anyone not on the Research Team (section 2 of the most current & approved DAR). Following this process is mandatory at the DataNB.

### 2. SCOPE

2.1 This procedure applies to all unvetted data results, prior to being released from the Trusted Research Environment, as per Schedule A of the signed Data Access Agreement (DAA) and deliverables for Information Manager Agreements (when no specific release arrangements have been stated).

### 3. DATA VETTING PROCEDURES

#### 3.1 Receive Data Vetting Request

Once ready to request vetting of data results, an Approved Data User will complete and store a vetting package in the 'Disclosure Request' subfolder of the project folder.

The package includes:

- a Vetting Request Form (to be filled out by the Approved User)
- the data requested for release,
- supporting files

When ready, the Approved Data User e-mails the Data Accesses Coordinator (DAC) at [dar.nbdata@unb.ca](mailto:dar.nbdata@unb.ca) to notify that the completed vetting package is ready for review. The DAC will send a reminder to the Principal Investigator (PI) of the Research Results Data Dissemination Request and forward the vetting package to the DBA.

#### 3.2 Review Data Vetting Request

The Database Administrator (DBA) may review the data vetting package themselves or assign the review to a Senior Data Analyst (SDA). The DBA/SDA reviews the package, applying DataNB data vetting rules and ensuring data vetting requirements are met.

These rules include, but are not limited to:

- verification that aggregated results match the approved project objectives
- verification of sample descriptions for aggregated results
- verification of variable names and labels
- check for risk of residual disclosure

If the request for release does not meet the vetting requirements, the DBA/SDA will suggest changes and communicate them to the Approved Data User in writing.

#### 3.3 Review Data Vetting Request Edits

If edits are needed, the Approved Data User revises the vetting request form, output files, and/or supporting files. The Approved Data User may also choose to withdraw the vetting request.

When the revisions are completed, the Approved Data User resubmits and notifies the DBA by email. This process can be repeated until all the vetting requirements are met.

#### 3.4 Approve Data Vetting Request

Once all the vetting requirements are met, the data results release is prepared. The DBA/SDA adds the files to be released into the DataNB Released Data Archive. These files are indexed by project number, the Approved Data User's username, and date.

Using the secured desktop in the server room, the DBA/SDA copies the files for release to a dedicated USB stick.

The DBA/SDA logs on to the DataNB-only desktop with an Internet connection in the server room and sends the files for release to the Approved Data User by email.

NOTE: In the exceptional circumstance that an error is identified after research results data have been released or during the embargo period, the PI will send an email to the DBA identifying the error and a request for re-release. This standard operating procedure will be followed for any re-release of data results.

### **3.5 Addressing Conflict of Interest**

In the absence of the DataNB DBA or if the DataNB has a conflict, the *Conflict of Interest Policy* applies.

In preparation for the DBA's absence, the DataNB DBA will assign an SDA to the role of vetting data disclosure requests.

In the case of absence, the DBA will send an email notification to all Approved Data Users stating who will be their replacement during their absence.

If the DataNB *Conflict of Interest Policy* applies, an SDA will be selected; the DataNB Privacy Officer will consult with the DataNB Director and the DataNB DBA.

The DataNB Director informs the DataNB Systems Administrator to create an account for the SDA with credentials needed to access and vet data disclosure requests.

Approved Data Users follow the data vetting request procedures, as per above, with the SDA who was assigned by or in place of the DBA.

### **3.6 Appeal Procedures**

If a disagreement or concerns are raised after the regular data vetting process has occurred, a data vetting appeal may be requested.

The PI will inform the DataNB Director and/or Privacy Officer that they disagree or have concerns with the results of the data vetting that occurred.

A Data Vetting Appeal Committee meeting to review the appeal will be organized by the DAC. The PI will attend and provide input relating to their disagreement or concerns with the data vetting results.

The DBA will also attend the Data Vetting Appeal meeting to provide details regarding the results of the data vetting process and concerns regarding the requested release.

All parties at the meeting will cooperate to find an acceptable solution to the raised concerns or disagreements.

The DAC will confirm the decision from the meeting to the PI within 5 business days from the date of the meeting.

## 4. ADMINISTRATION

### 4.1 Accountability

- 4.1.1 The PI is accountable for submitting a data vetting request.
- 4.1.2 In the event of an appeal, the Data Access Coordinator is responsible for recording all Data Vetting Request meetings and appeals.

### 4.2 Monitoring, Auditing, and Reporting

- 4.2.1 The DBA is responsible for reviewing the vetting package or assigning an SDA to review.
- 4.2.2 The Data Access Coordinator is responsible for ensuring a summary of all Data Vetting Request appeals received is included in the DataNB Annual Report.

## 5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Data Vetting Request Form*
- *DataNB Dissemination of Research Findings Policy*
- *DataNB Conflict of Interest Policy*

## 6 DOCUMENT VERSION HISTORY

Version	Author	Nature of Change	Date
1.0	Afton Lavigne /Donna Curtis Maillet	Document development	April 7, 2022

Version	Author	Nature of Change	Date
1.1	DataNB Staff	Content review – slight grammatical & spacing change	June 2022

Version	Author	Nature of Change	Date
1.2	NB-IRDT Employee	Content review – slight grammatical & spacing change	October 2022
1.3	NB-IRDT Employee	Change formatting	July 17, 2023
1.4	NB-IRDT Employee	Addition of note to 3.4	August 29, 2024
2.0	DataNB Staff	Rebranding updates	September 16, 2025