

Guidelines for Authors (SComS)

Open Data Guidelines for Authors

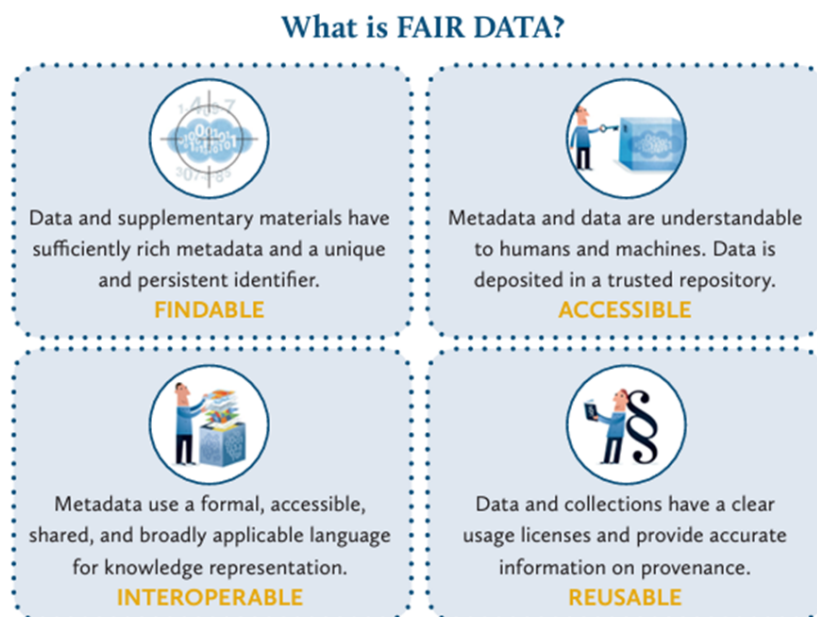
Studies in Communication Sciences (SComS) encourages authors to make data supporting their articles publicly available upon publication, whenever ethically feasible and except in rare circumstances. Making data publicly available aims to encourage open scientific dialogue, enable further research, and support findings' verification. These guidelines are based on the [open data policy](#) of *SComS*.

1. Understanding Open Data

Open data, as defined by *opendefinition.org*, can be “freely used, modified, and shared by anyone for any purpose” (<https://opendefinition.org/>).

To achieve this objective, published research data should have the following characteristics, as summarized in the [FAIR principles](#):

- **Findable:** The dataset should be easily discoverable by both humans and computers. It should be accompanied by clear metadata and a description that enables all users to understand data, including how to reuse it. Additionally, it should have a persistent identifier, such as a DOI.
- **Accessible:** Data should be accessible via a repository that ensures the effectiveness of open data. Access should be free and available to anyone, regardless of institutional affiliation. A suggested repository list is provided below.
- **Interoperable:** Data should be capable of being integrated, merged, or aggregated with other datasets.
- **Reusable:** Data should be released under a license that permits reuse in accordance with copyright law. Suggested Creative Commons licenses are listed below.



2. *Selecting a Creative Common License*

When publishing research data – including supplementary material – that are protected by copyright, authors must select a suitable Creative Common license. Three of them permit the release of research data in a way that is considered open according to the opendefinition.org:

- **CC0** license: The researcher allows anyone to reuse the content, even in modified form, and agrees to remain anonymous. Nevertheless, according to good scientific practice, attribution should be provided.
- **CC BY** license: The researcher allows anyone to reuse the content, even in modified form, provided the name(s) of the author(s) and the source of the content are cited.
- **CC BY-SA** license: The researcher allows anyone to reuse the content, provided the name(s) of the author(s) and the source of the content are cited, and any shared modifications also have the same CC BY-SA license.

Researchers should carefully consider ethical principles and the implications of open licenses, such as privacy and intellectual property rights. We encourage researchers to release their data under the CC0, CC BY, or CC BY-SA license, except in cases where restrictive access is justified due to intellectual property or privacy concerns.

3. *Choosing an open Data Repository*

Authors are encouraged to publish their research data in an open data repository, once their manuscript has been accepted for publication in SComS. Authors can select a data repository of their choice for archiving their research data related to SComS articles. For those who have not yet chosen one, we suggest the repositories mentioned below which have been chosen based on the following criteria aligning with SComS's philosophy: They are relevant to the social sciences and/or humanities, are free of charge, accessible to all without the requirement of affiliation with a specific institution, comply with the FAIR principles, allow new versions of the deposited data, and align with Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) guidelines.

List of suggested repositories:

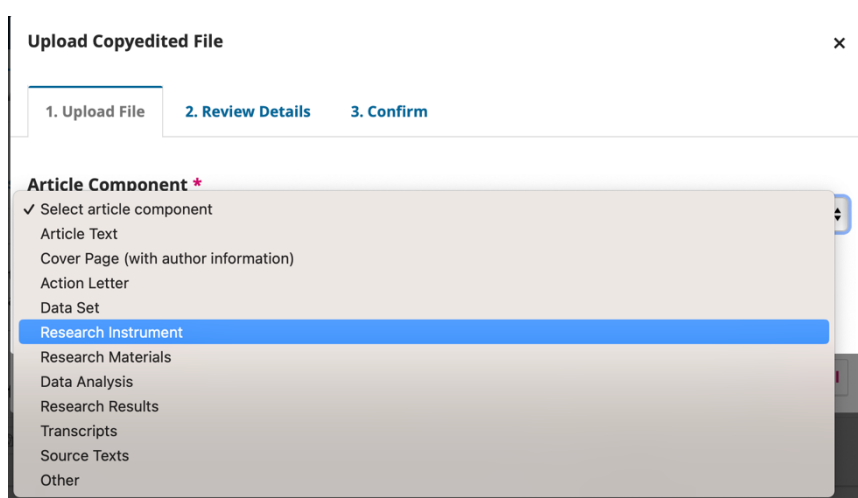
- **DaSCH Service Platform** (<https://www.dasch.swiss/plattform-characteristics>): Swiss repository for research data in humanities primarily funded by the SNSF.
- **SWISSUbase** (<https://www.swissubase.ch/en/>): Swiss repository for research data in social sciences operated by a consortium consisting of FORS (Swiss Centre of Expertise for the Social Sciences) and the Universities of Lausanne, Neuchâtel and Zurich. Data are checked prior to publication.
- **Zenodo** (<https://zenodo.org/>): Swiss general repository for data and publications hosted by CERN. Open Access uploads are displayed on the front-page and have extra benefits. Storage limit 50 GB; for EU communities 200 GB. Data are immediately published, with no prior check.
- **Harvard Dataverse** (<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/>): US general repository of Harvard University.
- **Open Science Framework** (<https://osf.io/>): US general repository for data and publications. Data are reviewed prior to publication. Possibility of having an anonymized link for double blind peer review.

4. Handling Data for Review Process

To facilitate transparency during blind peer review, it would be ideal to provide an anonymized link to the uploaded data. However, since most repositories currently do not offer this option (except for Open Science Framework), we advise authors to upload research data as supplementary material in the SComS submission system. Only once the manuscript is accepted, research data should be uploaded to a repository and linked to the manuscript.

When preparing your manuscript for review, ensure that your submission, including attachments, supplementary files, and any data, is fully anonymized. Specifically, during the article submission process, authors can select different types of supplementary files. Below is a list of available categories with corresponding explanations:

- *SComS' journal manager should provide here a complete list of the categories available on the submission platform, each with a short description.*



5. Data Availability Statement

Authors are invited to include a Data Availability Statement in the papers published on SComS. The statement provides a standardized format to acknowledge the availability of data underlying the article. The statement should be included under the heading "Data Availability Statement" at the end of the paper, before the "References" section.

Example: "The data underlying this article are available in [repository name] at [DOI link]"

We also encourage authors to refer to provided research data and supplementary materials in the text of their manuscript.

6. Dataset in the Reference List

Furthermore, the publicly available datasets should be fully referenced in the reference list with a digital object identifier (DOI) once the manuscript has been accepted for publication. This citation must include author(s), title, year, and a DOI or a persistent link enabling readers to directly access the open data repository where data has been stored.

Example: Authors (Year). Title, Publisher (repository name), identifier/link.

7. Ethical Considerations

Authors are required to meticulously consider privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, and research ethical principles when sharing data. All shared data must comply with national and institutional frameworks governing the ethical conduct of academic research. We encourage authors to provide information about ethical approval from their institutions and affiliations. Where data are collected from participants, authors must ensure that participants provided informed consent for the collection, use, and sharing of their data. Personal data must be treated with strict confidentiality and should be anonymized or de-identified before sharing. Special caution must be exercised when dealing with sensitive data. Authors must acknowledge and respect any legal restriction on data sharing (e.g., [Federal Act on Data Protection](#), [European General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR](#)). For further guidance on personal and sensitive data and anonymization in research, consult the [DMLawTool](#).

8. Compliance

Failure to comply with open data guidelines may result in manuscript rejection or a delay in the publication process. Authors with concerns about data availability or compliance should contact the editorial office at [Journal Manager e-mail address].