

Regulations for the Use of the Core Unit Research Data Management (cRDM)

at the IZKF, University Hospital Würzburg (UKW)

Valid from: February 2026 · Only the German version is legally binding

1. General Information

The Core Unit Research Data Management (cRDM) is a central facility of the Medical Faculty of the University of Würzburg and the Interdisciplinary Centre for Clinical Research (IZKF). Its purpose is to provide a sustainable, FAIR- and GDPR-compliant research data management (RDM) infrastructure for clinical and preclinical research projects at the University Hospital Würzburg (UKW) and the Julius-Maximilians-University Würzburg (JMU).

The cRDM supports researchers in organising, documenting, analysing, and publishing their data in accordance with the FAIR principles – Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability – as well as the institution's IT and data protection regulations. These Regulations define the conditions for access, user obligations, and the cost structure for all cRDM services.

2. Services of the Core Unit Research Data Management

The cRDM provides researchers with the following services and infrastructures:

- Consulting and RDM planning: preparation of project-specific Data Management Plans (DMPs) and metadata schemes in accordance with DFG and NFDI guidelines.
- FAIR onboarding and structured questionnaires: guided onboarding through digital questionnaires integrated into individual DMPs.
- Infrastructure and collaboration tools:
 - **Nextcloud**: secure data storage, versioning, and sharing
 - **OnlyOffice**: collaborative document editing
 - **Labfolder (ELN)**: structured experiment documentation and metadata templates
 - **HPC / JupyterHub**: computing environment for data analysis (on request for Advanced tier)
- Metadata and standardisation support: consulting on community standards (e.g. Dublin Core, Darwin Core, REMBI, FHIR, Bioschemas).
- FAIR-compliant publication support: advice on selecting suitable repositories (e.g. ArrayExpress, IDR, HDP), DOI/PID assignment, and data citation.
- Training and capacity building: workshops, user meetings, and targeted support for research projects and consortia.

3. Leadership and Contact

Scientific Directors:

- Prof. Dr. Philip Tovote (Systemic Neurobiology, Institute of Clinical Neurobiology)
- Prof. Dr. Katrin Heinze (Rudolf Virchow Centre for Integrative and Translational Imaging)

Operational Management and Coordination:

- Dr. Johannes Balkenhol, Hamidreza Alimohammadi

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4. Access and Registration

All members of the Medical Faculty, UKW, and JMU are entitled to use the services of the cRDM. Access requests must be submitted via the electronic request form available on the cRDM website.

After registration, users are invited to an onboarding meeting where project-specific requirements, technical access, and DMP development are discussed. External researchers and cooperation partners may be granted access upon agreement with the cRDM leadership.

5. Onboarding and Data Management Plans (DMPs)

Each project is accompanied by an individual Data Management Plan (DMP), developed jointly by the researchers and cRDM data stewards. The DMP covers:

- Basic information: project title, funding, consortium, contact persons
- Data characterisation: data types, volumes, formats
- Storage and infrastructure: local, cloud, or HPC environment
- Documentation and metadata: standards (e.g. Dublin Core, Darwin Core), ELN templates, file naming
- Publication and repositories: timing, repositories, embargo periods, licences
- Compliance and data protection: GDPR, institutional policies, NFDI affiliation

6. User Categories

User groups are differentiated according to institutional affiliation and funding context:

- Internal users: researchers of the Medical Faculty, UKW, and JMU
- Consortium users: researchers in DFG- or IZKF-funded projects, including cooperation partners and external institutions

7. Use of Infrastructure

Access to Nextcloud, OnlyOffice, Labfolder, and JupyterHub is granted after successful onboarding and DMP registration. Each user receives personal login credentials and must comply with the institution's IT and data security policies.

The cRDM ensures role-based access control, versioning, and regular data backups in cooperation with the University Computing Centre (RZ, JMU) and the Medical Information Systems Unit (SMI, UKW).

8. Data Handling and Storage Policy

Users are responsible for the accuracy, completeness, and legal compliance of stored data. Data containing personal or patient-related information may only be processed in GDPR-compliant environments (e.g. FEX, HDP). Retention periods and publication timelines are defined within the DMP. Unauthorised data sharing or access to other projects' data is prohibited.

9. Compliance and Legal Framework

All users must comply with:

- the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- the DFG Guidelines on Good Scientific Practice
- the FAIR Data Principles

Research data management must adhere to institutional IT security and backup policies, NFDI recommendations, and any specific funding agency requirements. The cRDM reserves the right to revoke access in cases of non-compliance or data misuse.

10. Training and Awareness

The cRDM offers continuous training and informational events, including:

- FAIR-RDM and ELN introductory sessions
- Data management workshops and open consultation hours
- Tailored training for consortia and early-career researchers

Participation in an introductory FAIR-RDM training session is mandatory for all new users.

11. Acknowledgement in Publications

When using the cRDM infrastructure, workflows, or consulting services, the following acknowledgement must be included in scientific publications:

“We thank the Core Unit Research Data Management (cRDM) of the Medical Faculty of the University of Würzburg and the Interdisciplinary Centre for Clinical Research (IZKF) for their support in research data management.”

12. Liability

Users and their institutions are liable for damages resulting from improper use or negligence in data processing or infrastructure use. The cRDM assumes no liability for data loss caused by user error or local storage failures.

The fee schedule is provided as a separate document: “Fee Schedule of the Core Unit Research Data Management (cRDM)”