

Data policy for facilitating inter-institutional research collaboration: Case study of the RIHN

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The Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN) was founded in 2001. It is part of the National Institutes for the Humanities, a Japanese inter-university research institute corporations. RIHN's mission is to conduct integrative and cooperative research that examines and clarifies the interactions between human and biophysical systems, to identify the key aspects and processes of environmental change and to suggest how harmonious human-environmental relations can be established or enhanced (see http://www.chikyu.ac.jp/rihn_e/goals.html). The RIHN solicits, develops, funds, and hosts fixed-term research projects in collaboration with researchers affiliated with universities and institutes, as well as diverse stakeholders. Most researchers employed by RIHN are not tenured, and tend to leave the institute within a few years. Given the absence of an explicit policy regarding research outcomes, this high academic fluidity has disturbed the accumulation and utilization of research outcomes at the institute.

To address this structural problem, the RIHN established a data policy in 2014. The policy respects the rights of the individuals and groups who create research outcomes as much as possible. Under this principle, the RIHN will not inhibit the execution of contracts required for creating outcomes. Moreover, the RIHN will not prevent individuals and groups from utilizing or giving to third parties the research outcomes they created. These rules are designed to avoid conflicts with the data policies of other institutions as much as possible. Respecting rights of researchers is expected to facilitate the accumulation and utilization of research outcomes.

Keywords: data policy, inter-institutional research collaboration, accumulation and utilization of research outcomes