Data Seal of Approval

An overview
The Data Seal of Approval (DSA)

- The Data Seal of Approval was established by a number of institutions committed to the long-term archiving of research data. By assigning the seal, the DSA community seeks to guarantee the durability of the data concerned, but also to promote the goal of durable archiving in general. The Data Seal of Approval is granted to repositories that are committed to archiving and providing access to scholarly research data in a sustainable way. It is assigned by the DSA Board.
- The Board consists of members from the following institutions: CINES (France), DANS (The Netherlands), ICPSR (USA), MPI for Psycholinguistics (The Netherlands), Deutsche National Bibliothek (Germany) and UK Data Archive (United Kingdom).
- Institutions that have achieved the Data Seal of Approval have the right to display the DSA logo on their websites, thereby demonstrating the reliability of their archival processes and procedures, without this entailing new thresholds, regulations or high costs.

The DSA Assessment

- Achieving the DSA means that the data archive or repository is in compliance with the sixteen DSA guidelines, as determined through an assessment procedure. Although these guidelines pertain to three stakeholders – the data producer (three guidelines), the data consumer (three guidelines) and the data archive (ten guidelines) – the data archive is seen as the primary implementer of the guidelines. The data archive as an organization should assume responsibility for the overall implementation of the DSA in its own specific field.

Procedure

- The completion of a DSA self-assessment in the online tool is the starting point for the awarding of the Data Seal of Approval: http://assessment.datasealofapproval.org/apply
- The assessment lists the sixteen Data Seal of Approval guidelines. In the online assessment tool, the organization describes how these guidelines relate to the repository and how they have been implemented. The assessment reflects the current situation of the repository in a transparent and open manner.
- The assessment is then reviewed by peers to determine whether an organization will be granted the Seal of Approval. This is not an audit, or a certification, just a review based on trust. The peer review is performed by a member of the DSA Board or another qualified individual appointed by the Board, depending on the subject matter coverage of the repository.
- When approval is granted by the Board, the DSA logo may be displayed on the front page of the repository’s website. Appropriate HTML code will be provided by the Board. The code includes the DSA logo for the appropriate Seal period and a link to the organisation’s assessment.
- After the DSA is awarded, the Board places the approved assessment of the new DSA repository on datasealofapproval.org, using the name of the specific repository and a logo if provided.
- The Data Seal of Approval is valid indefinitely but will need to be updated periodically if the repository wants to stay compliant with newly released standards by the Board. DSA repositories will be contacted automatically when an update is obtainable.

Contact

www.datasealofapproval.org
info@datasealofapproval.org
The Data Seal of Approval Guidelines

1. The data producer deposits the research data in a data repository with sufficient information for others to assess the scientific and scholarly quality of the research data and compliance with disciplinary and ethical norms.

2. The data producer provides the research data in formats recommended by the data repository.

3. The data producer provides the research data together with the metadata requested by the data repository.

4. The data repository has an explicit mission in the area of digital archiving and promulgates it.

5. The data repository uses due diligence to ensure compliance with legal regulations and contracts.

6. The data repository applies documented processes and procedures for managing data storage.

7. The data repository has a plan for long-term preservation of its digital assets.

8. Archiving takes place according to explicit workflows across the data life cycle.

9. The data repository assumes responsibility from the data producers for access to and availability of the digital objects.

10. The data repository enables the users to utilize the research data and refer to them.

11. The data repository ensures the integrity of the digital objects and the metadata.

12. The data repository ensures the authenticity of the digital objects and the metadata.

13. The technical infrastructure explicitly supports the tasks and functions described in internationally accepted archival standards like OAIS.

14. The data consumer must comply with access regulations set by the data repository.

15. The data consumer conforms to and agrees with any codes of conduct that are generally accepted in higher education and research for the exchange and proper use of knowledge and information.

16. The data consumer respects the applicable licences of the data repository regarding the use of the research data.