

# Terms of Reference: Policy Committee

## Context

---

Research Data Canada (RDC) is a stakeholder driven and supported voluntary organization dedicated to advancing the vision for research data management in Canada. The membership of RDC is drawn from a wide variety of stakeholder organizations, all of whom have an interest in and role to play in ensuring that the infrastructure, processes, and supports are in place to realize this vision.

Research Data Canada develops strategy, facilitates communication and partnerships among data initiatives, promotes education and training in data skills, measures progress in implementing the vision, brings attention to gaps, develops national guidelines, and acts as single point of contact for Canada in international data initiatives.

In 2014, the wider research community reported that support for research data management, and for RDC as a key instrument for furthering the cause of research data management in Canada, was critical. CANARIE heeded the community's call to fund the ongoing activities of Research Data Canada (RDC). Given its role as a convener, RDC maintains a level of independence from CANARIE, which allows it to act as a neutral third party. Therefore, while ultimate responsibility for the governance of RDC funds rests with the CANARIE Board of Directors, the RDC Steering Committee (SC) acts as the source of strategic direction for the organization and its Executive Director.

## Roles and Responsibility

---

The role of the Policy Committee is to identify, compare, and note current data management practices and policies; compare with national and international best practices, noting gaps and barriers; and make recommendations to support effective data management practices, including intersections with international efforts. Based on direction from the Executive Director and the Steering Committee, the Policy Committee will establish Working Groups that will carry out activities and generate appropriate outputs. These will be approved by the Committee and forwarded to the Steering Committee for distribution through the appropriate channels.

The Committee's work will embody the core values of openness, transparency, sharing, and collaboration, ultimately leading to a high degree of access, interoperability, and preservation for Canadian research data. An important approach for all RDC Committees and Working Groups is to encourage participation of individuals with knowledge in the area, as well as to provide a forum for building the capacity of Canada's research data management community.

The Policy Committee will have virtual meetings quarterly. Policy Committee Chair(s) will also meet semi-monthly with the RDC Executive Director and other Committee Chairs to review progress and special needs and requirements. A core principle of the RDC, and one that highlights its support for open data, is to make the outputs of the Steering Committee, Committees, and Working Groups available to the full stakeholder community, and where feasible, to the broader public.

## Members

---

Membership terms are 2 years, renewable. The Committee will work via consensus and refer to the Steering Committee for matters requiring a formal decision. Members will include:

- 1 from CANARIE (1)
- 1 from CASRAI-CA (2)
- 1 from the TC3++ (3)
- 1 from an international research data management agency (4)
- 1 from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (5)
- 2 from the Canadian university research administration community (7)
- 1 from the Canadian academic/college library community (8)
- 1 from a research information system software vendor (9)
- 1 from the Canadian CIO community (10)
- 1 from Canadian Privacy Officers (11)
- 1 from a federal research agency (12)
- 1 from a provincial funding agency (13)
- 2 at large (15)
- RDC Executive Director (16)

Additional participants may be invited by members, or may attend as Observers at their own request.

## Working Groups

---

The Policy Committee will respond to stakeholder interests and direction from the RDC Steering Committee and Executive Director by directing ad hoc and permanent Working Groups to focus on specific tasks and activities. Proposed Working Groups for 2016-17 include:

1. RDC RDM Principles - Policy Templates
2. Best Practices: Research Data and Data Governance Policy
3. Best Practices: Research Data Intellectual Property Policies
4. Survey: Canadian Research Institutions and Existing RDM Policies