EC FAIR How-to Series: Choosing a Repository for Your Data

EarthCube
Transforming Geosciences Research

"There's no place like home!"

"Sometimes it's better to hang out with your friends!"

"I guess I'll shop around!"

"So tell me about this place!"

Check your home institution first to see if they have a "data archive" or an "institutional repository" or a "preservation repository." You can usually ask your institution's data specialists or data librarians for advice on finding a repository.

You may want to look for a domain-specific repository that can handle the formats and complexity of your data, if your institution's repository cannot. You can search re3 Repository Finder and the DataCite Repository Finder for ideas, or check out the article in Nature on "Scientific Data."

If you cannot find an appropriate domain repository, there are a number of options for "generalist" repositories that accept a broader range of data. These include Dryad, Zenodo, Figshare, Open Science Framework (OSF), and Harvard Dataverse to name a few. You can find a handy comparison of generalist repositories on this Generalist Repository Comparison Chart (doi:10.5281/zenodo.3946720).

When you've found a likely repository, ask these key questions: "Does this repository meet criteria for FAIR Data?" "Will I be able to get persistent ID's for my data?" "What re-use licensing options are available?" "What are the size limits to the data I can deposit?" "What are my costs for data storage and services?" "Are there restrictions on the free and equitable access to my data?" "What kind of use metrics will track my data?"