

## **IRIS Membership FAQ**

### **How does my institution become a member?**

Download our [Membership Agreement](#) and return either a redline copy (if your internal process of evaluation leads you to wish to propose changes) or a signed copy (if no changes are needed) to Karen Woollams (woollams at umich.edu) and Jason Owen-Smith (jdos at umich.edu). We will route the agreement through our internal processes and an attorney from the University of Michigan will be in touch.

### **Who is the primary legal contact if I have questions about the agreement?**

The primary legal contact is Patrick Woods, Office of Research & Sponsored Projects.

Address: 3003 S State Street 1034 WT

Ann Arbor MI 48109-1274

Phone: 734-764-8566

Email: pajwoods at umich.edu

You may also direct questions to Jason Owen-Smith, IRIS Executive Director.

### **Why do you need identified data?**

We plan to use the identified data entirely for the purposes of linkage to other data sources. In particular we'll be making links to patents, publications, and potentially (depending on agreements we're negotiating) to things like Proquest dissertation data using computational name matching methods. These linkages allow us to conduct research and report much more fully on the process and products of research.

### **How long will you keep my restricted data?**

The identifiable data are retained by IRIS until a campus determines that it does not want to continue participation at which point (as described in the [Membership Agreement](#)) they will be destroyed. The de-identified data that they were used to produce will not be, we will retain that for the purposes of replication. We anticipate returning to members with a request for renewal as the three year term of initial agreements comes to an end.

### **Are you IRB approved?**

IRIS is an IRB approved data repository at the University of Michigan (IRB # REP00000017).

### **Who else will have access to my restricted data?**

Under the terms of the IRIS [Membership Agreement](#), access to restricted data from your institution is limited to approved IRIS Nodes and IRIS partners. Nodes are organizations under contract with IRIS to improve the data using the IRIS data system. Partners are organizations that are approved to receive whole or partial copies of restricted data for the purposes of improving them in their own data systems. Nodes and partners will both need to be approved by the IRIS governing board, which will be empaneled by the beginning of 2016. The only partner currently participating in IRIS is the U.S. Census Bureau.

### **What will happen to my data at the U.S. Census Bureau?**

When the data arrive at Census they the PII data to make a match between the UMETRICS data and a restricted file at Census called the Numident. That match allows Census to assign an individual a

Protected Identification Key (PIK). In pilot studies we found that name plus month and year of birth yields about a 99.3% match rate. With name alone we get about 75% and primarily miss people who have the same surname. Without the PII the match and assignment of a PIK at the individual level is impossible. Once the match is made PII is stripped from the data and all future individual level data integration and work in the Census context proceed using the PIK. Those de-identified data will eventually be made available through the Census Research Data Center System (see an [example of the RDC at Michigan](#)). Access to data through the RDC is managed by Census and requires that a project be approved by the Census Bureau and that a researcher receive special sworn status as a Department of Commerce contractor, a process that requires a full background check. The RDC system releases statistical results from approved projects after a strict disclosure proofing process that is designed to prevent the secondary re-identification of an individual or organization. It is a felony to disclose any information about organizations or individuals from the Title 13 and Title 26 protected Census data.

### **Does signing the Membership Agreement obligate me to submit every data field?**

While the quality and completeness of the reports your campus will receive depend on the data you submit, you are not obligated to provide every data field we request. You may choose to participate in IRIS while only submitting some data.

### **How will IRIS protect my data?**

IRIS has a FISMA compliant security architecture that combines technical, physical, and institutional safeguards to insure the security of data submitted by our members. More details are available in the [IRIS Data Management Plan](#).

### **What does my campus need to do to participate fully?**

In addition to preparing to submit data, each participating campus must make a yearly financial contribution that will be used solely to support the infrastructure necessary to maintain IRIS as an independent data resource built by and for universities and their researchers. In addition each campus must identify a primary communications contact and a primary data contact who together will serve as a point people for IRIS to work with your campus.

### **Does the inclusion of students in the research administration data trigger FERPA?**

Ultimately, this is a question each campus must answer with its own Office of General Counsel. If your campus determines that information about student employees is protected under FERPA, the [IRIS MOU](#) includes provisions that can enable you to share these data under the FERPA study exception (34 C.F.R. 99.31(a)(6)). Please do not hesitate to [contact us](#) directly if you have any questions or would like us to arrange an attorney-to-attorney conversation with the Michigan Office of General Counsel.

We hope your campus will decide to include student information in the dataset so that IRIS can return complete data reports to you and to facilitate systematic study of the value of research and research investment using the de-identified secondary data IRIS produces in its role as an IRB approved data repository.