

NIMBioS Data and Information Policy

Introduction:

NIMBioS is committed to making the data, models and software derived from NIMBioS activities available publicly to the broader scientific community. All visiting researchers will be asked to follow this Data and Information Policy except when this is in conflict with the policies of their employer or is in conflict with policies of the owners of the data or software.

Scope:

This document defines the policies for sharing data and software source code that are created, generated, used, hosted, replicated, sponsored, or made available by a NIMBioS-sponsored researcher, project, or activity, or by a collaboration in which NIMBioS materially participates (e.g. involves expenditure of NIMBioS resources).

In the remainder of this document, data and software source code within the scope of this policy are collectively referred to as NIMBioS-sponsored data and software source code, respectively.

Data or software used in NIMBioS activities that have more restrictive terms of use and dissemination than those set forth here are exempt from this policy. However, NIMBioS strongly encourages its participants and collaborators to consider alternatives that do not restrict sharing and free dissemination.

NIMBioS-sponsored Data:

NIMBioS is committed to making all scientific and any other data within the scope of this policy readily available to the broader scientific community. To meet this goal, NIMBioS-sponsored data or datasets are to be accessible from a web-based interface, with no restrictions for use and dissemination. Alternatively, at the choice of those generating the data, data should be made available under a Creative Commons license or compatible terms of use. Such data are to be made available in a timely manner, generally no later than one year after the conclusion of the NIMBioS-sponsored activity in which it was generated, or immediately upon publication of an associated article, whichever comes earlier, and are to be kept current if they undergo continuing updates, and are to be sufficiently documented using appropriate standards and conventions agreed upon by the biology community, including registration and deposition at a public meta-data registry and data repository if such a registry or repository exist. This documentation must include appropriate acknowledgment and attribution of any data used from other researchers or sources, as required by the copyright, license, or terms of use of such data.

NIMBioS will assist as appropriate to provide mechanisms for owners of data to effectively share these data among participants in NIMBioS activities. This includes assisting in developing any appropriate Memoranda of Understanding or Confidentiality Agreements necessary for the data useful in a NIMBioS activity to be made available for participants in that activity.

NIMBioS recognizes that there are many questions associated with the open licensing of scientific data collections and encourages sponsored researchers to familiarize themselves with the issues (<http://sciencecommons.org/projects/publishing/open-access-data-protocol/>).

NIMBioS-sponsored Software:

NIMBioS is committed to open-source software development and distribution. Software developed with NIMBioS support or participation is expected to become readily and freely available to the broader scientific community. Specifically, NIMBioS-sponsored software is to be made accessible on a web-accessible site hosted by NIMBioS, or at Sourceforge (<http://sourceforge.net>) or a similar site, for

download in source code, and the source code is to be licensed under an OSI-approved Open Source license (<http://www.opensource.org/licenses/>). The source code is to be made available in a timely manner, meaning as early as possible but no later than the termination of the activity that generated the code, the Fellowship, or publication of an article involving the software or data generated using the software, whichever comes earlier. The source code is to be sufficiently documented, stating at a minimum the purpose, copyright and license, and acknowledging and attributing any other software or software libraries that the NIMBioS-sponsored software uses or depends on, as required by the licenses of such software. Copyright and license must be stated in every source code file, and the licenses for all the files constituting the software must be compatible.

Support By NIMBioS IT:

The NIMBioS IT staff will assist those supported by NIMBioS to select the most suitable Creative Commons or Open Source license for the data or software generated through NIMBioS support, and place the license appropriately on the website for the dataset or the software, as well as assist in depositing data, meta-data, and software source code in the pertinent public repository.

Continuation of Support:

NIMBioS IT staff will schedule a meeting with all NIMBioS Fellows approximately one month before their term at NIMBioS ends. The goal of this interview is to identify any data, data sets, and source code that the Fellow created with NIMBioS support, and to develop a recommendation for what type of continued support NIMBioS should provide for the data or data collection (for instance, hosting a database) and for the software (e.g., responding to user questions, bug resolution, or continued feature development). The recommendation will be communicated to the NIMBioS Director for consideration and approval.

NIMBioS is not positioned to guarantee hosting of a database or application for the long term. NIMBioS will, however, help to establish or secure such long-term hosting if recommended.

Requests for NIMBioS Support and Data/Software:

Applications for NIMBioS support should include an estimate of the data products, models and software expected to be developed and a timetable for making these publicly available. NIMBioS Fellows must agree, before initiating NIMBioS research activities, to make these products publicly available. Four months after NIMBioS Fellows arrive at NIMBioS, or after the first meeting of a Working Group, these research products must be identified and the timetable for their release refined. The results will be tracked to ensure that appropriate research products are made openly available. The NIMBioS IT staff will assist with the development of a realistic plan and timeline for the archiving of NIMBioS-sponsored data and software.

Copyright and Acknowledgment:

Data or datasets, software, published books and scholarly articles generated or created by a NIMBioS Fellow or through a NIMBioS-sponsored activity must appropriately and conspicuously acknowledge NIMBioS and the National Science Foundation. Suggested formats for such acknowledgement are available at <http://nimbios.org/research/acknowledgment>.