



University of Pittsburgh

Office of the Provost

801 Cathedral of Learning
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260
Fax: 412-383-9640

April 8, 2004

Dear Fellow Researcher:

I wanted to call to your attention the recent NIH Policy on data sharing, which now is mandatory on specific grants. The text of this communication relies heavily on the NIH wording on this topic, which may be reviewed on the NIH website at:
<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-03-032.html>

The University has a long history of commitment to the dissemination of research results through publication and other forms of scholarly exchange. NIH has further determined that data sharing is essential for expedited translation of research results into knowledge, products, and procedures to improve human health. To ensure that NIH-funded research results are shared broadly, under the new NIH Policy, any investigator submitting an NIH application for \$500,000 or more in direct costs in any single year must, as part of that application, either include a plan for sharing data that results from the research, or state why data sharing is not possible for this study.

While the sharing of research results is important, the NIH has recognized that protection of research subjects' privacy is paramount since some research results include potentially identifiable information about human research subjects. Therefore, in crafting a data sharing plan, researchers should consult with the University IRB on mechanisms to protect research subject identities. The University IRB will require that the NIH data sharing plan be addressed as part of the IRB protocol for the study. In some cases, researchers may need to inform their research subjects of any planned dissemination of their research results. In addition, investigators should discuss their data sharing plans with their program contacts at NIH at the time they negotiate their agreements with the Institute/Center (IC) staff to accept assignment of their applications.

While the NIH Policy applies in all cases to grant applications seeking more than \$500,000 in direct costs, in some cases, Program Announcements (PA) may request data sharing plans for applications that are requesting less than \$500,000 in direct costs in any single year. So read the PA carefully. Please direct any questions regarding the application of this NIH Policy to the appropriate grants officer at the Office of Research.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George E. Klinzing".

George E. Klinzing
Vice Provost for Research