

Making open data sharing easy



***Nature Photonics* has now integrated the Figshare data repository into its submission system.**

The practice of making the data behind a research paper open and shareable is increasingly viewed as an important responsibility in the world of science.

Indeed, a growing number of funding bodies and publishers have introduced open data policies. The list includes the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a major US funder of medical-related research and the publisher PLOS (Public Library of Science), which has mandated authors to make their data publicly available since 2014. According to a recent report from Digital Science entitled *The State of Open Data 2022*, which was published in October 2022 (https://digitalscience.figshare.com/articles/report/The_State_of_Open_Data_2022/21276984), more than 52 funders require data archiving as a condition of funding, while a further 34 encourage it.

In order to make it as easy as possible for authors to make their data open, *Nature Photonics* has now enhanced its submission

system with integrated access to the Figshare data repository, an internationally recognized and popular platform for sharing data. This new feature allows authors at *Nature Photonics* to provide open access to datasets related to their manuscript. Using Figshare, datasets can be uploaded either as part of an initial submission or also at the revise or accept in principle stage. If submitted prior to peer review the data will be held privately until publication but can be accessed and assessed by the reviewers and editors, which can be valuable in confirming the integrity and validity of the research. We thus encourage datasets to be added as early as possible. Importantly, the datasets are provided a persistent identifier with a DOI and protected from data loss. When the paper is published, the DOI to the datasets will be included in the paper's data availability statement and the data are made open.

The development is part of a broader initiative at Springer Nature to support open data sharing and this functionality has already been rolled out at several other Nature Portfolio journals, following a successful initial trial with seven journals in 2019.

At the time of writing (early March 2023) there are 22 Nature Portfolio journals featuring

Figshare integration, including *Nature Photonics* and this number is expected to grow. Graham Smith, Open Data Programme Manager at the Journals division of Springer Nature, who is managing the roll out says that the motivation behind the initiative is to make data sharing in repositories more attractive and accessible to authors at Nature Portfolio journals. "Research data are crucial evidence behind published claims. If an author hasn't already shared their data by the time they submit to the journal, a simple repository option can promote better practice rather than making data available on request, using supplementary information or simply not sharing at all," he explained.

It should be noted that while we strongly encourage authors to use this new data sharing functionality, *Nature Photonics* is not making it compulsory at present and the choice to use it or not ultimately remains with the author. To learn more about Figshare and its origins and views on data sharing, please read our [Q&A](#) with Figshare's founder and chief executive officer, Mark Hahnel, included in our April issue.

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