

# The life-changing magic of sharing your data

The benefits of data sharing to the scientific community are widely agreed upon. But does data sharing also benefit individual scientists? I argue that data sharing may carry tangible benefits to one's own research that can outweigh any potential associated costs.

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It is increasingly expected that scientists not only publish results from their research but also freely share their data and analysis pipelines leading to those results. Data sharing is widely considered beneficial by other scientists, journals, funding agencies and by society as a whole.

It remains less certain whether similar benefits are conferred upon the scientists who share the data. Does the ambitious scientist really want to spend their time tidying data and scripts to freely share with their competitors? Mightn't their current findings be undermined or their future discoveries scooped? Couldn't this time be better spent advancing their own career, running new experiments and publishing yet more papers?

In this commentary, I argue that data sharing is in fact beneficial to even the most avaricious and self-interested scientists, as well as those who are more munificent and public-spirited in nature. Data sharing may actually lead to the advancement of one's own career, accelerate the pace of one's own scientific discoveries and increase the impact of one's own research output.

Although there are legitimate concerns that must be carefully considered by the scientific community as data sharing is increasingly mandated, there are also concrete benefits among those who share data as well as growing enthusiasm for data sharing.