RESEARCH FOUNDATION CUNY

RESEARCH FOUNDATION
of The City University of New York
230 West 41st Street
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RFCUNY Data Request Procedure

Executive Summary

The Research Foundation of the City University of New York (RFCUNY) is committed to providing data that supports the City University of New York (CUNY) research mission in a transparent, accurate, and timely manner, pursuant to Section 6, Data Sharing and Data Use, of the 2026 amended and reinstated Operating Agreement between CUNY and RFCUNY.

To facilitate and properly manage the many data requests RFCUNY receives, we follow a centralized process outlined in this document. This process ensures: compliant data sharing practice, accurate and consistent reporting; efficient collaboration across CUNY and RFCUNY; efficient use of limited RFCUNY staff resources; and proper internal review and quality control of data that can then be confidently used for assessment, evaluation, analysis, decision-making, and public communication.

All data requests to RFCUNY must be coordinated through the Office of the President at RFCUNY by submitting a **Data Request Intake Form**, which:

- Requests information on the purpose, scope, and timing of the data request, and
- Must be filled out in its entirety before being sent to PresidentOffice@rfcuny.org.
- Must include a subject line that contains the words, "**RFCUNY Data Request**."

Once received, RFCUNY will assign the request to the appropriate staff and review it. It is important to note that RFCUNY regularly shares downloadable annual award and financial statistics (which are readily available on our website), quarterly reports with CUNY leadership, and board-level and executive summaries. These resources are often sufficient for routine reporting and should be reviewed before submitting a new data request. Customized analyses or time-sensitive requests will be prioritized based on institutional need, complexity, time required to complete the request, and available staff resources. Clear deadlines in the request and context will help facilitate timely responses.

RFCUNY looks forward to continuing to support CUNY leadership, campuses, and partners through strong data stewardship and collaboration.

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Research Foundation of CUNY (RFCUNY) Data Request Procedure

I. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a clear and coordinated process for requesting, producing, reviewing, and disseminating data related to grants, sponsored programs, and financial activity administered by the Research Foundation of the City University of New York (RFCUNY).

This procedure is intended to ensure compliant data sharing practice, the accuracy and consistency of data; efficient use of RFCUNY staff resources; clear communication and accountability; and responsible and appropriate use of RFCUNY data by internal and external stakeholders.

II. Scope

This procedure applies to all data requests submitted to RFCUNY including, but not limited to those from:

- The CUNY Central Office and all its departments (including the Office of Research)
- CUNY campuses and leadership
- RFCUNY internal units
- External stakeholders, as applicable

It covers all requests for:

- Award, expenditure, and financial data
- Analytical tables, summaries, or reports
- Customized or ad hoc analyses
- Data extracts intended for secondary analysis
- Direct or expanded access to RFCUNY systems, reporting tools, or data repositories.

III. Centralized Request Process

All data requests **must be submitted via email to the Office of the President at RFCUNY (PresidentOffice@rfcuny.org)** with a subject line containing the words "RFCUNY Data Request."

Requests submitted outside this process, including those sent directly to RFCUNY staff or departments, will be redirected to the President's Office and will not be acted upon until properly submitted.

The RFCUNY President's Office is responsible for reviewing and clarifying requests; assigning requests to appropriate staff; prioritizing requests based on purpose and urgency; and reviewing all outputs prior to dissemination.

IV. Confidential Data and PII

RFCUNY takes the confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) seriously and maintains compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing such data. PII is any information about an individual that can be used to distinguish or trace a natural individual's identity. Confidential/Regulated data includes information for which there is a legal obligation not to disclose. These data elements require the highest level of restriction due to the risk of harm that will result from disclosure or inappropriate use. This may include, but is not limited to, social security numbers, credit card numbers, health information, or a combination of RFCUNY user IDs and passwords.

RFCUNY provides guidelines for procedures when handling confidential information/regulated data (such as PII), which is publicly available on its **website, see excerpt below:**

An employee of the Research Foundation, or a designated individual who conducts business on behalf of RFCUNY, is required to take the following additional actions to protect confidential/regulated data:

- May not ask for confidential/regulated data if it is not necessary and relevant to the purposes of the RF and the particular function for which the RF employee or designated individual is responsible;
- May not disclose confidential/regulated data to an unauthorized person or entity;
- May not share confidential/regulated data with a third party except as required by law, with the consent of the individual to whom the confidential/regulated data belongs, or when a third party is an agent or contractor of the RF;
- May not send confidential/regulated data over the Internet or by e-mail unless using a secured link or the confidential/regulated data is encrypted or otherwise secured. Records containing confidential/regulated data may not be stored on RF or personal computers or other electronic devices unless secured by the Office of Systems and Information Services (SIS) or the College Information Technology Department against unauthorized access.

As a reminder, CUNY faculty, students, and employees are required to comply with CUNY's security policies and should consult their data security practices with CUNY's Chief Information Security Office.

V. Required Elements of a Data Request

Each data request must include, at minimum:

1. **Requesting Office and Primary Contact**
2. **Purpose of the Request**
    - e.g., CUNY Board briefing, executive leadership reporting, public communication, internal planning, sponsor requests, etc.
3. **Specific Data Requested**
    - Clear description of variables, data fields, years, units of analysis, and the required level of aggregation
    - If PII is required, this must include why it is necessary.
4. **Intended Audience for the Data**
    - Whether data will be shared internally at RFCUNY, externally (at CUNY or with wider public or used in public-facing materials).
5. **Deadline**
    - Including explanation for any time-sensitive or urgent requests

Incomplete requests will be returned for clarification prior to processing.

VI. Prioritization and Timelines

Requests will be prioritized based on:

- Institutional importance
- Time sensitivity and statutory deadlines
- Staff workload and operational constraints
- Availability of existing data or reports

RFCUNY is committed to timely and responsive service; however, clear, realistic deadlines must be given and, "urgent" or last-minute requests must be justified. Data requests not directly

related to grant management may be addressed after grant-related requests and are subject to organizational capacity.

VII. Data Quality, Review, and Governance

RFCUNY maintains responsibility for:

- Data accuracy and completeness
- Consistent definitions and methodologies
- Appropriate aggregation and disclosure levels
- Determining the authoritative data source and appropriate method of access or reporting

All data products are subject to internal review by the RFCUNY President's Office and other departmental leadership prior to release.

RFCUNY reserves the right to:

- Clarify or contextualize data prior to dissemination
- Decline requests that pose risks to data integrity, confidentiality, or misinterpretation
- Recommend alternative formats or the use of existing reports when appropriate

VIII. Data Access, Manipulation, and Export

RFCUNY regularly provides publicly available and downloadable internal reports, including:

- Annual award statistics
- Financial statements
- Quarterly and Board reports

Requests for direct system or reporting access will be evaluated separately from the data request, with RFCUNY determining the appropriate means of access.

RFCUNY will continue to explore mechanisms that improve accessibility and analytic flexibility (e.g., downloadable tables, descriptive summaries), while maintaining appropriate governance, quality control, and resource management.

Requests for granular or cell-level microdata, customized analyses, or exportable datasets must follow this Procedure and are subject to review.

IX. Citation and Attribution of the Data

All data provided by RFCUNY must be properly labeled and must reference the source using a citation style such as:

> "Data provided by the Research Foundation of the City University of New York "[Report Title]" ([Date Generated])."

X. Ongoing Review and Improvement

RFCUNY is committed to continuously improving data transparency, reporting practices, and collaboration with CUNY leadership.

RFCUNY welcomes feedback from data users, which will inform future enhancements, including the possible development of standardized annual or retrospective summaries to reduce ad hoc requests.

XI. Effective Date

This Procedure is effective immediately upon issuance and supersedes informal or ad hoc data request practices.