

Why join ICSU's World Data System?

The ICSU [World Data System](#) (WDS) concept aims at a transition from existing stand-alone services to a common globally interoperable distributed data system that incorporates emerging technologies and new scientific data activities. WDS strives to become a worldwide ‘**community of excellence**’ for scientific data, with searchable common data directories and catalogues, which ensures the long-term stewardship and provision of quality-assessed data and data services to the international science community.

Over 100 organizations have responded to a survey of organizations that manage scientific data and data services, showing their interest in joining the system. Candidatures are evaluated by the WDS Scientific Committee on criteria such as access to high quality data, data stewardship, and participation in broad harmonization and interoperability efforts.

So why join ICSU's World Data System?

For improving your data facility's local and international recognition

- Joining this international and interdisciplinary ‘community of excellence’ under the auspices of ICSU will heighten the profile of your organization without compromising its own identity, gaining worldwide exposure to potential users of the data, products and services offered. ICSU and its Members provide prestigious auspices under which to operate. This is because ICSU Members—121 National Members mostly represented by scientific academies covering 141 countries and 30 Scientific Unions (and their Associations)—provide the main forum for international scientific collaboration and exchange of information in the major areas of science.
- Improved visibility and engagement in international activities, programmes, and projects will improve your facility's reputation and peer recognition and in turn might also improve its standing within the host organization which will in many cases enhance funding opportunities: WDS membership will be an effective means of bringing international recognition of your data facility to the attention of decision-making people within the host institution (i.e. “WDS” is a “good name”). In addition, the non-governmental nature of ICSU allows WDS Members to interact with organizations which otherwise might not be possible.

For adhering to and promoting open data sharing principles for the benefit of all

- A WDS Member adheres to the [WDS Data Policy](#) which is built around the concepts of full and open access, and of data sharing provided at no cost or for no more than the cost of reproduction (i.e. “COFUR”: Cost of Fulfilling User Request). The full benefits of data sharing are only realized if someone initiates the sharing process as a matter of principle. In this way WDS Members initiate a “win-win” process that benefits not only themselves but also their partners in the scientific community and the scientific

community at large, which can be particularly useful when some are still reluctant to make their data available to the international community.

For displaying your commitment to data and service quality and long term data curation

- Joining the WDS means becoming part of a community recognized to have met accreditation criteria on scientific relevance, governance, data management, technical infrastructure and security, and open and equitable access to quality-assured scientific data, data services, products and information.

For improving your products and performance, as well as global data management and data exchange

- WDS opens worldwide prospects for collaborations that enhance products, services, or performance (e.g. easier sharing of data and information with other systems). This is especially the case when members of existing disciplinary groupings of services/centres join collectively (e.g. geophysics, oceanography, astronomy), thereby extending the scope of whole fields of science to others.
- WDS membership provides fertile ground onto which new, emerging international data exchange and management standards and activities could naturally graft themselves.

For facilitating the citation of your data

- WDS places a strong focus on data publication services as a new component of scholarly publishing. Data citability has an overall positive impact on the quality and availability of scientific data and is a major incentive for data providers. Data facilities frequently find that their data are used in scientific papers without any citation or acknowledgement of the source. WDS data publishing services will provide these facilities with an important avenue to highlight their contributions to the scientific community.

For increasing your disciplinary and interdisciplinary user base

- WDS data holdings, WDS services output, and WDS-provided information will be easily searchable, rapidly accessible, and satisfy national and international standards for data and data services. Enhanced interoperability through international standards could in turn be implemented at other levels, internally within the host organization and externally with its partners.

For more information: www.icsu-wds.org