

# Top 9 DMP Writing Best Practices

The eight most important principles to consider when writing your Data Management Plan.

1. Create a DMP prior to initiating research as required by USGS policy. ([reference](#))
2. Consider available DMP tools and templates, along with their intended use. ([reference](#))
3. Write DMP content that is descriptive of the project's data acquisition, processing, analysis, preservation, publishing, and sharing (public access) of products as described by the [USGS Science Data Lifecycle](#).
4. Identify any proprietary or sensitive data in the DMP prior to data acquisition or collection to legally justify the need to withhold them from public access if necessary.
5. Define roles and responsibilities for management, distribution and ownership of data and subsequent metadata or, if available, reference existing Memoranda of Understanding, Memoranda of Agreement, and/or Data Sharing agreements.
6. Add content to supplement a DMP template provided by a funding source if that template does not allow you to fully describe your project, data assets, and products and the required investments needed for any software (developed or purchased) and any hardware that are needed to support the research.
7. Establish a schedule for reviewing and updating a DMP in combination with project events such as funding approval, project review, and publication. ([reference](#))
8. Ensure DMP content contains a level of detail that enables stakeholders (funders, project staff, and repository managers) to understand the reality of the project activities.
9. Ensure that DMP content and outlined procedures reflect USGS Fundamental Science Practices (FSP) requirements and Science Center guidance.