What does it mean to 'delete' a DOI that's in Hold status?

You may notice in your Dashboard's My DOIs tab that some of your DOIs have a trashcan icon in the 'Status' column.

DOIs that are still in a pending or 'Hold' status in the DOI Tool have not been published to DataCite, likely because the data release has not been approved, or work is still ongoing to populate the information in the DOI itself.

In the past, users occasionally found that a pending DOI was no longer needed; sometimes a duplicate DOI was accidentally created, or the data release was canceled. The 'delete' option for a pending DOI was created to allow users to remove that DOI from their account if the DOI was no longer needed. In some cases, users simply left the DOI in the 'Hold' status in their account, intending to recycle it for their next data release, with all of the relevant metadata updated to reflect this completely different release.

Users are free to decide for themselves if they want to keep an unused and unpublished DOI in their Dashboard in a Hold status for a future release, or delete it entirely from their account if they feel it may be distracting or confusing to keep in their Dashboard indefinitely. We recommend that if you decide to recycle an unpublished DOI for future use, you update its pending title to say something like 'Use this DOI for next data release,' so that you'll know at a glance why this unpublished DOI continues to remain in that status in your account.

IMPORTANT: Once an unpublished DOI is deleted in the DOI Tool, that unique alpha-numeric DOI sequence is gone for good. The DOI generator can create that sequence only once, and we cannot manually add a deleted sequence back into the database. Therefore, before you delete an unpublished DOI, make sure you intend not to use it, or haven't already applied it to another data product.

It's important to note that once published to DataCite, a DOI cannot be deleted. If the DOI was published prematurely and no data is yet available at the endpoint, you should update the DOI record itself to change the 'Dates Relevant to the Data' section on the Supplemental Information tab to 'withdrawn,' and update your repository landing page endpoint to inform users who reach that landing page from the DOI URL that the data are not yet available. Once the data are available, go back to your DOI, update the Supplemental Information tab's 'Dates Relevant to the Data' section to 'available,' and publish your data to your repository landing page.