ICPSR
The Data Consortium
Strategic Plan
2017 — 2021

June 2018
Mission

ICPSR advances and expands social and behavioral research, acting as a global leader in data stewardship and providing rich data resources and responsive educational opportunities for present and future generations.

Vision 2017 – 2021

ICPSR will maintain its mission and its leadership as a premier institution providing valuable data to the research community. ICPSR makes data accessible with its globally recognized curation techniques and standards-based metadata and by training researchers to make use of data in scientifically innovative ways. ICPSR builds and maintains the highest value social science data archive for both the global research community and the broader public. ICPSR’s data resources are appreciated for their quality, accessibility, usability, and durability. ICPSR focuses on data that has the greatest likelihood to have a transformational scientific impact and make a difference in future research.

ICPSR Strategic Direction (2017 – 2021)

Organizational Paradigm Shift: Building ICPSR’s Capability to Support Research Data for the Future

Innovation: ICPSR is transforming its organization and its data platform to connect and integrate its archival, stewardship, and educational activities. ICPSR will draw on its unique status as a membership consortium to bring the highest value data and educational services to its members and to the broader research and evidence-building communities.

Security: ICPSR’s transformation will allow it to support increases in the quantity and variety of research data, as well as changes in how researchers seek and use information. ICPSR will support access to and interoperability of non-designed, organic data such as social media, administrative, imaging, health, and commercial data. ICPSR will embrace data stewardship standards that support ethical, privacy-protecting, and reproducible research and interoperable data resources.

Preservation: ICPSR’s administrative structures will promote greater resource efficiency, consistent implementation of best practices, and prudent investment in strategically-identified priorities, including continuous technological improvement. ICPSR will strengthen its capacity to ingest, curate, preserve, and disseminate more data, and more types of data, at lower cost and greater user accessibility.

Access: ICPSR will leverage its experience over the last half-century in training thousands of students in quantitative methods to build new, innovative tools for researchers, teachers, and students so that they can understand and participate in the twenty-first century data revolution.
Selected Key Elements of the ICPSR Strategic Plan

- Complete an organizational paradigm shift to improve ICPSR’s effectiveness, decision-making, and efficiency
  - Update policies, systems, and work environment to facilitate staff development, effectiveness and career growth, to attract and develop a diverse, world-class staff
  - Improve ICPSR’s financial systems for better organization and project management and proposal development
  - Diversify ICPSR’s funding sources and increase its revenue by pursuing mission-driven activities that are appropriate to the hybrid, non-profit nature of the institution
  - Assess the broader environment in which ICPSR operates to identify and implement strategies for partnerships and collaborations
  - Invest judiciously in technology and infrastructure to support state-of-the-art research data services and position ICPSR for future growth
- Serve ICPSR’s membership with a persistent focus on providing valued data services and training, increasingly equitable consortium fees, support for under-resourced institutions, and development of a member infrastructure to provide feedback to assist in ICPSR improvements and strategy development
- Undertake targeted acquisition and dissemination of data that has high value for current and future research and training purposes
  - Acquire and develop high value data resources from novel, naturally occurring data sources, such as:
    - Commercial data
    - Administrative data
    - Social media data
    - Digital video and imaging data
    - Health and biological data
  - Develop and maintain relationships with key stakeholders to establish and maintain ICPSR as the repository for valuable social science data resources
- Strengthen ICPSR’s leadership role in providing social science data and data stewardship expertise to the research and evidence-building communities
  - Set the standard for best practices for data preservation and stewardship and the inter-operability of repositories, so that ICPSR serves as both a model of and a nexus for innovative and responsible data access
  - Re-conceptualize and re-engineer the ICPSR data curation process to increase efficiency and data quality
  - Streamline restricted data access to improve data security while reducing unnecessary barriers to access
  - Improve metadata to increase data discovery and facilitate data integration
  - Leverage new technologies to reduce costs and increase the comprehensiveness of the data-related bibliography
  - Work closely with researchers in design and implementation of studies to ensure data produced are interoperable, discoverable, and amenable for re-use
- Expand the disciplinary and content scope of ICPSR’s Summer Program
  - Maintain the reputation and status of ICPSR as a global leader in providing the highest caliber of methodological training
  - Leverage the Summer Program training to create data-related teaching materials for ICPSR’s membership and the broader community
- Expand ICPSR’s audience, remaining grounded in academia, to serve the broader public in accessing and analyzing data for evidence-building and civic engagement
  - Unify ICPSR messaging and branding to improve communications to members, current and potential users, and the global research community