

Addendum: Scientific and Research Integrity in Public Access Policies USDA Implementation Plan to Increase Public Access to USDA Funded Research Results: Persistent Identifiers

November 1, 2024

1. Introduction

This addendum plan complements the 2023 [Implementation Plan to Increase Public Access to USDA-Funded Research Results](#) 2023 and is not intended to replace it. The contents of this plan once implemented will strengthen public trust in USDA-supported research by improving transparent results support USDA provides for scientific research. This addendum follows guidance found in Section 4c of the 2022 White House Office of Science and Technology Policy memorandum: [Ensuring Free, Immediate, and Equitable Access to Federally Funded Research](#).

2. Increasing capacity for award persistent identifiers (PIDs)

USDA will develop or enhance infrastructures, systems, and partnerships necessary to assign digital persistent identifiers (PIDs) to all awards the Department provides to individuals and entities for scientific research and development. As defined by [NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance](#), a persistent identifier is “a digital identifier that is globally unique, persistent, machine resolvable and processable, and has an associated metadata schema.” Awards are inclusive of many different forms of support, consistent with NSPM-33, and may include but are not limited to in-house projects (called intramural protocols in the 2022 Office of Science and Technology memorandum), grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements.

The current goal of USDA is to coordinate with other federal agencies in using a unified and standard mechanism for assigning PIDs to research and development awards. Agencies and offices within USDA have significant autonomy in how they manage research award data. Component agencies and offices will be afforded as much flexibility as possible and will have various paths toward award PID compliance. For those that do not already assign identifiers for awards, they will be able to adopt the unified mechanism for award PIDs. Many USDA component agencies already assign some sort of identifier to awards, though these may not qualify as PIDs. USDA component agencies will have the option to transition to the new unified PID mechanism or they can continue using their current award identifiers while also using the new mechanism.

3. Coordination of efforts

Significant coordination will be required within USDA to assign award PIDs. Existing groups will coordinate implementation, most notably the Public Access and Open Science Forum, USDA’s intra-agency group tasked with coordinating on open science topics including public access to research products. USDA will continue engagement with other federal agencies through the National Science and Technology Council Subcommittee on Open Science. USDA will maintain membership in the Subcommittee and its various subgroups including the Persistent Identifier Subgroup. Coordination will

be especially important to define the scope of what constitutes research and development awards and at what granularity PIDs should be assigned.

4. Reviewing current persistent identifier services and procedures

One of the major benefits of assigning PIDs to awards is that they can be linked to PIDs associated with individuals (e.g., ORCIDs); research products (e.g., DOIs), and organizations (e.g., [ROR](#)). Research products is a broad category and includes peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, preprints, digital scientific research data assets, methods/protocols, software, curricular materials, extension publications, reports, and multi-media materials. To assure that USDA maximizes the benefits afforded by PIDs, USDA will review and update its current services and procedures for assigning, obtaining, collecting, and managing PIDs to ensure that the processes are user-friendly and efficient in time and resources.

5. Updates to USDA policy

Current USDA Departmental Regulation, Public Access to Scholarly Publications and Digital Scientific Research Data, [DR 1020-006](#), requires PIDs for USDA-funded research authors, peer-reviewed articles, and many digital scientific research data assets. Within one year of a federal-wide consensus on a mechanism for assigning PIDs to awards, relevant Departmental Regulations will be updated to require that all USDA research and development awards are assigned PIDs. USDA component agencies and offices will be given one year following the publication of the relevant Departmental Regulation to bring their policies and procedures in line with this updated policy. The USDA Public Access and Open Science Forum will coordinate to ensure that USDA component agencies and offices have the support they need to implement the components of this plan.