

Guidelines for the use of long-term experiments

Principles

The long-term experiments funded by the Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences (NJ Faculty) at SLU and the data collected in these experiments constitute a unique and valuable resource for research, teaching and advisory work. The Faculty is happy to see the experiments themselves and the data collected in the experiments being used for research, teaching and information purposes by people other than those directly involved. However, in order for the material and data from the experiments to be used correctly, there is a need for good knowledge of experiment management, sampling methods and statistical design. The design and management of the experiments have frequently been altered over the years, making interpretation of the results particularly sensitive.

The final responsibility for the quality and use of the experiments rests with NJ Faculty. The responsibility that NJ Faculty has for the experiments and the costs and work that the experiments generate mean that NJ Faculty requires all potential users to make contact with the respective experiment manager before the experiments, or data from the experiments, are used. The responsibility for individual experiments is delegated to departments at the Faculty, which in turn have appointed an experiment manager for all experiments. The work is coordinated by the Steering Group for Long-term Experiments.

Anyone wishing to use the long-term experiments must contact the experiment manager and define what they would like to use the experiments for. The experiment manager provides information on the resources available and, in the case of research and/or environmental assessment, ensures that a project partner representing the department in question is appointed.

Experience has shown that good dialogue between users of the experiments and researchers at the department responsible, who have good knowledge of the experiments, improves the quality of the research conducted. The project partner at the department must therefore approve publications in which data from the experiments are used. All publications must state that material from NJ Faculty's long-term experiments have been used. The project partner at the department must be co-author if he/she meets the accepted requirements for co-authorship (to be negotiated before the contract is agreed).

When the long-term experiments or data from these form part of an application for research funding, the costs of this must be discussed with the experiment manager before the application is submitted.

Terms

- Researchers who need data from the long-term experiments, or who need access to the long-term experiments for sampling, intended for inclusion in a scientific publication are never refused this unless it causes great problems or decreases the future value of the experiments.
- Sampling must be carried out under the supervision of the experiment manager
- Students can gain access to the experiments via their supervisor on the same terms as researchers. The supervisor is the official project partner in such cases.
- If the proposed use of the long-term experiments incurs more than marginal costs for the department responsible, that department has the right to demand full cost compensation from the user. The costs can be covered by setting a fixed amount, as additional costs are often difficult to estimate.
- The experiments may gladly be used for commercial research, but this may require a special contract to be drawn up with the help of SLU's legal department.
- Data or material from the long-term experiments may not be supplied to a third party without the written permission of the project partner at the department responsible.
- The right of users to use data which they have not actually collected or funded the collection of, and which are not freely available, ceases four years after the contract has been signed. Use after this date requires a new application. Users do not have the right to retain a copy of such data after the contract period has expired.
- The project partner at SLU must approve all publications and use of material or data from the long-term experiments, and ownership of the experiments and the data must be acknowledged in all publications.
- Users who contravene the above terms may be denied access to the long-term experiments upon re-application.

Guidelines on the procedure

1. The user contacts the experiment manager. Contact details can be on the SLU website for long-term experiments

(<http://www.slu.se/sv/fakulteter/nj/om-fakulteten/ovriga-enheter/langliggande-forsok/>)

2. Requirements and resources are discussed. In most cases, a project partner at the department responsible is appointed. This can be the experiment manager or someone else with specialist knowledge within the subject area. The terms of the agreement are clarified, e.g. with regard to co-authorship and compensation.
3. A formal application for access to the experiments and the data is completed and submitted to the experiment manager, with a copy to the coordinator of the long-term experiments.
4. The application is processed by the experiment manager. The Steering Group for the Long-term Experiments can make a recommendation if the user or experiment manager so wishes, but the decision to approve the application is taken by the person appointed by the department as experiment manager.
5. The user has access to the experiments and/or data when the application has been approved.
6. The experiment manager provides information on upkeep and sampling methods and the project partner appointed provides assistance in scientific matters.
7. Before the research is published, the project partner/co-author at SLU is given the opportunity to check and approve the manuscript in the accepted manner for partner projects.
8. The published work is sent to the project partner at SLU for archiving.