Welcome to Module 2, A Practical Approach to Data Management. The three sections of this module will introduce best practices in data management around three important topics:

1. Data management planning
2. Data organization and documentation
3. Data storage and backup

In Module 1, we covered what content needs to be included in a two-page data management plan. Writing a data management plan from scratch may be challenging and stressful when the submission deadline for your grant proposal is fast approaching. In this module, we begin by introducing a data management planning tool called DMPTool that helps you efficiently create a plan. With this tool, faculty members of Virginia Tech are able to request institutional review service while developing their plan.

First, we recommend logging in as a Virginia Tech affiliate.

Once you are logged in, you will see the DMPTool site customized for VT researchers with resources and consulting services designed for the VT community. If you need assistance at any time, you can contact Library Data Services by sending an email to dmpreview@vt.edu.

If you click “Create New DMP”, you are ready to start creating a plan using a template that is specific to the funding agency that you are applying to. Once you select a template by agency or program, within NSF for example, Computer and Information Science and Engineering, you will be asked to entitle your plan and include any relevant information. For visibility, you may want to keep the default “private” so that your plan will be kept to only you and co-PIs. Even with this private setting, data consultants will be able to see and review your plan if you request an institutional review.

Data management plan structure and content are quite similar across funding agencies as represented with the five essential questions presented in Module 1. However in some cases, you may want to follow the exact plan structure suggested by a funding agency, by using one of the provided templates. For instance, let’s say you are applying to the NSF Computer and Information Science and Engineering. You will see that this template includes 5 sections and within each you will find instructions to help you fill in the appropriate information.

You will also a “Links” tab, under which you will find resources compiled by the data consultants at University Libraries. In addition to general resources, in almost every template we also provided boilerplate language in the section related to “plans for archiving and preservation”. If you plan to use the institutional repository at Virginia Tech, you can cut & paste the text into the section box. You will be guided through each section until all sections are complete.
Once you are done with drafting your data management plan, you can review your plan on one page. Once you reach this point, you will have two options. First, you can save a draft or export your plan in a selected format and second: you can submit the draft plan for institutional review by clicking here. You will receive an email notification upon submission and will be contacted by a data management consultant shortly.

This is one useful tool that we encourage you to use however it is not required. Throughout this process, we encourage you to contact the Library Data Services unit for any assistance.