

# DAT – Frequently Asked Questions



## 1. What is DAT?

DAT is a data research platform, focused on the collection, consolidation and curation of data to generate insights that have social impact. The concept and platform is being developed through a co-innovation relationship between Western Sydney University and Dimension Data.

The platform enables Data Explorers (i.e. researchers) to connect with Data Rangers (i.e. students and general public) to provide and collect data for the purposes of research projects. The data collected can then be consolidated with external data sets (such as Australian Bureau of Statistics sources) to identify data relationships and insights. These relationships and insights may be used to better understand societal issues.

## 2. What is the focus of current activities?

The DAT project team is running a proof of concept to gauge users' experience and engagement patterns over a period of time. The trail comprises a range of surveys on current affairs, news, on-campus events as well as, subject to human research ethics approval, an academic-led research project. A significant objective of the exercise is to understand users' attitudes to providing information like this and elicit their feedback.

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## 3. What will be done with data collected through the trial?

There are multiple types of data that will be collected through the trial, each of which will be handled differently at completion of the trial:

1. Users' responses to the survey posed on, otherwise unrelated, 'news of the day' type issues will be permanently deleted from the platform at the completion of the pilot.
2. Users' responses to directed survey content targeted towards a University program/event/initiative may be used for internal process improvement.
3. Data collected for the approved 'traditional' research project will be provided to the Research team and retained in accordance with Western Sydney University's research data retention requirements. It will also be permanently deleted from the platform.
4. User profile data will remain on the platform in order to retain the user base in the event the DAT platform is re-launched at a later stage.
5. Usage statistics will remain on the platform for analysis purposes, specifically focusing on understanding patterns of use. This data will be anonymised to protect users' privacy.

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## 4. Why do you need my personal information?

Researchers will often need to identify users with certain characteristics in order to address a specific research question. The information collected in your profile can be used as search parameters by researchers though they cannot access the names of those users or contact them outside of the App.

## 5. How is my personal information protected?

Maintaining the privacy of users' data is critically important to the success of the DAT platform. Within the platform, a range of controls are embedded to protect users' data:

1. Segregation of role duties between Data Rangers, Data Explorers and Administrators. Data Rangers will only be able to view their own survey submissions and average responses of other users. Data Explorers will be able to view and access anonymised individual responses. Administrators will only be able to view and access usage data. This separation means that, aside from technical support staff, no one can link a user's profile with the data they provide or collect.

2. DAT's data is stored on secure IT Infrastructure managed by Dimension Data. This infrastructure is used by Dimension Data's corporate and government clients.

3. Western Sydney University and Dimension Data Australia adhere to government standards concerning data protection and privacy, including the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.

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## 6. Who is the DAT team?

The DAT team is comprised of staff from WSU Research Engagement, Development and Innovation (REDI) team, Dimension Data and Britehouse (a subsidiary of Dimension Data). The consolidated team is led by the WSU's Deputy Vice Chancellor of Research and Dimension Data's Chief Technology Officer.

Additional resources are engaged as needed from the abovementioned parties to facilitate the ongoing development activity. This includes representatives from WSU's Institute for Culture and Society, School of Business and Research Ethics Committee.

## 7. Why has Western Sydney University decided to partner with Dimension Data?

Dimension Data is a leading ICT Infrastructure business that has strong capability in providing infrastructure solutions to its clients, one of which is WSU. WSU and Dimension Data share a common interest in innovation and together identified an opportunity to develop this new tool for the use of researchers and students. This common interest drove the co-investment made by both parties and has culminated in the platform as it currently stands.

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## 8. What types of questions will be asked through the Experiment?

Through the trial period the focus of questions will be on current affairs and topics of interest to university students. The surveys are designed to be short and engaging, and will exercise different aspects of the platform’s technology and user experience. Participation in a project or completion of a survey is completely optional.

## 9. What considerations have been made toward Research Ethics?

For the purpose of validating the platform’s useability and engagement, the Research Ethics Committee has advised that specific research ethics approval is not required. However, a research project will be conducted through the platform at a later stage in the pilot. This project will obtain formal Research Ethics Approval before being launched through the application.

Future iterations of the platform will continue to consult on questions of research ethics in the design of the overall system. As with any research involving human subjects, future projects conducted on the DAT platform will also require research ethics approval.