



**STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–2019**

**NSD**

**NORWEGIAN CENTRE  
FOR RESEARCH DATA**

**A TOOL FOR RESEARCH**

# NSD

## A tool for research

### **STRATEGY 2016–2019**

“The purpose of state ownership of NSD is to guarantee that data are properly managed and services are provided to the research sector.

The company collaborates with national and international organisations in developing such efforts in accordance with its statutes.”

Report to the Norwegian Parliament (White Paper) no. 13 (2010–2011)

NSD's Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for, and the principal objectives of, its activities for the next four years. The changes that are taking place in NSD's environment and its core technology make it difficult to predict how its role will evolve. Nevertheless, it is possible to suggest both its general direction and the prerequisite conditions for heading in that direction.

The plan is intended to act as a tool for development and change, and to support NSD's efforts to deal with both expected and unanticipated challenges. It will also provide guidelines for setting NSD's priorities, for its allocation of resources to different purposes and for assessments of what NSD is achieving in specific areas.

The plan has been prepared through a process of broadly based, open participation, both internally and by NSD's Board of Directors. This started in January 2015 and has taken place as a process of internal evaluation that has benefitted from input from all parts of the organisation as well as contributions from all its employees. These efforts have been coordinated by NSD's executive team.

The plan was adopted by NSD's Board of Directors on October 16, 2015.

## **Social mission and mandate**

NSD is a national archive for research data, and is one of the largest of its kind in the world. Its principal objectives are to ensure free and open access to research data, and improve conditions for performing empirical research by providing an extensive range of data and support services.

NSD is owned by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. It has existed since 1971 as a unit attached to the Research Council of Norway, until it was reconstituted as a limited company in 2003. The reason for the change in ownership was to improve NSD's ability to provide data management and other services to the research sector.

The research community is the target group for all of NSD's services. Broadly defined, this sector encompasses the following groups:

- Researchers and students
- Research institutions
- Finance providers
- National authorities

NSD's academic centre of gravity still lies in Norwegian social science research. A number of major projects, particularly in the field of facilitating register data, have offered insight into the potential of NSD's competence to several fields of research. Such fields are utilising the services to an ever-increasing extent, and this has expanded NSD's academic base. NSD currently operates in accordance with its multi- and interdisciplinary mandate.

## Services

NSD is a tool for research. Research data are a major, and ever more important, resource for research and the evolution of national and international society in general. As a national infrastructure for research data, NSD offers a range of services that frees resources and capacity for research within its sector. NSD's strategies and instruments for fulfilling its social mission and performing its tasks on behalf of Norwegian research are continuously changing and evolving in step with the needs and frame conditions of research.

NSD works to ensure that researchers and students enjoy access to data by acquiring, processing, archiving, maintaining and disseminating data to the research community. Research data are currently disseminated to researchers and students both in Norway and abroad.

NSD is also a national centre of expertise in the protection of personal data used in research. The organisation's top-level competence in this field is unique at international level. NSD evaluates national and European regulations for the use of personal data on an on-going basis. The aim is to contribute to the valuable and legitimate use of personal data in research to the benefit of the society.

In collaboration with other national and international centres, NSD develops tools and services within its field and participates in the international supply of services to research.

## Values and vision

NSD will offer data and services that promote and improve opportunities to successfully perform empirical research. Research data are a common good that ought to be shared. This is the basic value that underlies all of NSD's activities.

The principles of open access, equality of treatment and sharing of research data (the Open Access Principle) guide all NSD's activities.

In order to improve the opportunities available to Norwegian empirical research, NSD is required to work for open, easy and efficacious access to relevant high-quality data and services.

NSD shall:

- be an organisation recognised for its high level of competence, quality and relevance
- remain at the leading edge of technology
- be recognised within the research community
- be the supplier of choice of services to the research sector within its defined field of activity
- be a world leader within its field of activity and an active participant in international collaborative efforts in, and the supply of, services to the national and international research sector.

## Strategies and choice of directions

NSD shall be an important tool for Norwegian empirical research. In order to achieve this aim, at a time when both NSD itself and the research community are undergoing major changes, NSD will prioritise three strategic areas of effort:

- 1 NSD's role as the national archive of research data** for the social sciences, humanities and medicine and the health sciences will continue to be developed, strengthened and reaffirmed. (*Keywords: new types of data, legal, ethical, secure and simple storage.*)
- 2 NSD's role as the national node for access to important research data** will continue to be developed, strengthened and reaffirmed. (*Keywords: efficient, easy and open access to data.*)
- 3 NSD's national role as the privacy protection official for the research sector** will continue to be developed, strengthened and reaffirmed. (*Keywords: privacy protection official, internal control and services that help to preserve the responsibility of institutions and create suitable conditions for research within the framework of legal regulations.*)

## Means

### Communication

Communication with the research sector is a prerequisite for highlighting, clarifying and promoting NSD's social mission and the tasks that the organisation performs on behalf of the sector. The principle aim of the communication strategy is to put NSD on the map in a new era, through greater coordination of efforts with the research sector and the wider use of NSD's services.

NSD's communications will:

- make NSD's range of services to research and teaching clearly visible to a wide range of disciplines, the research sector and the wider community.
- be adapted to the needs of different user groups, disciplines and complex user requirements.
- meet target groups on their own professional (interest and research profiles), methodological and technological grounds.
- focus on institutions' need for guidance in their efforts to draw up internal control systems.
- develop a tailor-made course for institutions on personal data protection and the requirements regarding internal control.
- develop an online course in personal data protection and data management, including the storage, use and analysis of data within the legal framework.
- increase the use of NSD's services (i.e. become the supplier of choice).
- reinforce the relevance and usefulness of NSD.
- advance trust and confidence in NSD, and its reputation and legitimacy within the research sector and the wider community.

## **ICT**

- NSD's use of ICT and software development will be rooted in strategic aims and will help to meet the needs of the research sector.
- NSD's solutions for ICT and software will be timely, future-oriented and relevant to the purposes they are intended to serve.
- NSD will contribute to the implementation of the "open by default" principle by offering tools that make it easy to satisfy legal requirements while continuing to protect the interests and needs of researchers.
- NSD will develop ICT solutions that lower the threshold for depositing, storing and sharing data.
- NSD will contribute to the development of new user-friendly state-of-the-art solutions and services that will ensure that storage and sharing research data, including data generated via digital media and video, are safe and secure.
- NSD will offer the research community user-friendly cost-effective systems for storing and sharing data.

## ***National and international collaboration***

NSD will offer a range of comprehensive, integrated and high-quality services to the research and education communities. Cooperation with institutions that provide common services to the national and international research sector is a prerequisite for this.

NSD will:

- continue to develop and reinforce its collaboration with the research sector at institutional and researcher level within its three strategic areas of effort: archiving, access and personal data protection.
- continue to develop and reinforce its collaboration with the Research Council of Norway.
- prioritise collaboration with service providers to support the higher education sector.
- continue to develop and reinforce its collaboration with important partners, including Statistics Norway, the National Archives of Norway, the Norwegian Data Protection Authority and the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees.
- prioritise international cooperation, accept responsibility for and assume tasks related to the development of a common European research infrastructure within the framework of CESSDA and ESS.

### ***Organisation, funding and competence***

NSD will be organised in a way that promotes its strategic objectives, good communication, competence development and capacity for change.

NSD operates to an ever-increasing extent in open competition with other organisations for national and international funding for the development of national and international infrastructure. Efforts to win funding for the development of common infrastructure projects have had positive repercussions for Norwegian research, while changing the financial basis of the organisation.

NSD will develop a financial model that will ensure long-term secure financing for the primary tasks. In an extended sense of this lies NSD's principle of open and equal access to basically free services to all academic users.

NSD is a knowledge organisation with a staff whose experience, insight and ability to solve its users' problems are central to its very existence. The infrastructure that is established and the services provided must be first-class. This means that NSD must be subject to a frame work that leaves room to develop and renew its competence while retaining key personnel.

- NSD's personnel management practices are a means of ensuring that it provides high-quality services.
- NSD will be at the leading edge in matching the needs, operating practices and technological potential of the disciplines it serves.
- NSD will recruit, develop and retain relevant high-quality competence.



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NORWEGIAN CENTRE  
FOR RESEARCH DATA

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