

COMMUNITIES SEEK GREATER INFLUENCE OVER RESEARCH DATA



SCAN CARD · 02

DESCRIPTION

Community-engaged research relies on data collected with and from local communities — citizen science, participatory research, surveys and digital platforms. Communities are increasingly aware of how data about them is stored, shared and reused.

Data collected locally is often used for academic publications, policy advice or innovation without meaningful community involvement. Growing concerns about extractive practices drive demands for stronger control, clearer consent and transparency about who benefits — pressures that will intensify as data-driven research expands.

RELEVANCE

Data governance is becoming central to trust in university–community partnerships. Without fair and transparent data practices, communities may disengage from research altogether.

For universities, failure to adapt creates ethical, legal and reputational risks — undermining long-term engagement strategies.

NEED

Universities need new models of shared data governance that treat communities as legitimate co-owners or stewards of data. Policies must move beyond basic legal compliance toward participatory decision-making.

Researchers also need support and training to navigate ethical and power-sensitive data practices. Without such changes, communities may reduce participation in research and trust in university-led knowledge production may erode.

CATEGORY

Ethical · Legal · Technological

SIGNAL STRENGTH

Weak



SCANNING METHOD

Literature · Participatory research

SOURCES

Cooper et al. (2023) Equitable Data Governance · Ada Lovelace Institute (2024) Data Stewardship · Brookings (2024) Community-led Data · UNESCO (2021) Open Science