DARE UK (Data and Analytics Research Environments UK)

DARE UK Interest Group (IG) Charter Template

Name of proposed Interest Group: *International Secure Data Facility Professionals Network (ISDFPN)*

The WHY

Introduction: [A brief articulation of what broad-based challenge(s) or issue(s) the IG will address, how this IG is aligned with the DARE UK mission, and how this IG would be a value-added contribution to the sensitive data research community]

The International Secure Data Facility Professionals Network (ISDFPN) is a forum to share expertise, experience, and collaborate on new ideas relating to secure data facilities in national and international contexts.

The Network is open to different disciplines, including: social sciences, health and humanities. ISDFPN is unique in discussing issues not only in relation to quantitative secure data but also options for making qualitative secure data available in the future. The Network is managed and administered in the UK, jointly chaired by the UK Data Service and GESIS, Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences, in Germany. ISDFPN was set up in 2022, and currently has over 30 individual members, from over 20 organisations across 9 countries.

User scenario(s) or use case(s) the IG wishes to address: [what triggered the desire for this IG in the first place]

As the secure data landscape is fast-changing and continuously evolving, ISDFPN provides a vital international platform to bring together professionals working in secure data facilities to share knowledge and collaborate on common challenges, specific and newly emerging issues and challenges. Internationally, secure data facilities are at different stages in their development, which makes the Network a great forum for staff to learn from each other. A similar network, set up in 2011 to support secure data facility professionals based in the UK, Secure Data Access Professionals (SDAP), is a DARE UK-recognised community of practice.

The WHAT

Objectives: [Set of focus areas for discussion linked to the driving user scenario(s)/use case(s) above, articulate how this group is different from other such groups inside or outside of the DARE UK programme, which specific strategic theme within the DARE UK programmes recommendations (see page 19) is this IG primarily aligned with. *]

The ISDFPN is different from other groups inside/outside the DARE UK programme because it allows members to join from beyond the UK. This broadens essential discussions on the challenges and concerns of professionals working in secure data facilities in the UK and abroad and provides opportunities to learn from other expert staff in the international TRE community. The Network also allows professionals to learn about similarities and differences in UK and overseas TRE-related legislation, with a view to establishing common ground in international 'best practice'.

The ISDFPN aligns with several strategic themes from the DARE UK programmes recommendations:

- 'Demonstrating trustworthiness' recommendation 6: "Standardise, centralise and unify processes enabling access to sensitive data for research across the UK where appropriate and feasible" by extending the learning opportunities of UK professionals to secure data facilities beyond the UK, who may be facing the same challenges and potential solutions.

- 'Data and discovery' recommendation 2, "Explore the implications of new data types on approaches to making these data available for research", by learning from the experiences of secure data facilities worldwide. A practical example of this is a recent presentation to ISDFPN meeting on the provision of access to secure qualitative data.

- 'Capability and Capacity' recommendation 2, "Improve recruitment pathways for technical roles in data research infrastructure" by providing a forum for international secure data professionals to network with each other, enabling the sharing of information on job opportunities.

- 'Capability and Capacity' recommendation 3, "Improve the availability of resources and training for career development in data research infrastructure", by providing an international forum to learn from the practice of other secure data facilities, and share training documents and information.

Outcomes: [What does this IG intend to achieve including outputs that may lead to WG topics, any initial ideas on outputs that could be delivered through WGs spawned under this IG]

The ISDFPN intends to enable secure data facility professionals across countries to share knowledge and collaborate on common challenges, by:

- establishing working groups to investigate and tackle various issues of interest to secure data facility professionals, such as: the possibility easement of output checking with AI tools; and the comparison of legislation between the UK and other countries to facilitate potential international secure data sharing.

- providing opportunities between members for collaborative authorship of academic papers to add to the body of knowledge in this field.

The HOW

Participation/Collaboration: [Which communities will be involved, and what relevant skills/knowledge/experience should they have, are there other adjacent or relevant IGs/WGs this group will coordinate and/or collaborate with]

ISDFPN is currently free to join and is available to those who are working in, or involved in, secure data facilities around the world. The UK members of ISDFPN are also involved in other DARE UK interest groups, such as the UK TRE Community – Community Management and Engagement, Public Engagement and Data Research Initiative (PEDRI) and Statistical Disclosure Control – Reducing Barriers to Outputs from TREs (SDC-REBOOT), and communities of practice such as the Secure Data Access Professionals (SDAP) and which provide plenty of opportunities for collaboration and coordination.

Mechanism: [Describe how often the group will meet and sustain progress between meetings]

ISDFPN meetings are held bi-annually, and, for reasons of inclusivity, online. There are two presentations at each meeting exploring and discussing issues related to quantitative and qualitative secure data. Progress is sustained between meetings by a dedicated email address by which members can communicate with each other, and ad hoc meetings between individuals and groups of members.

Potential members: [Including a minimum of two proposed chairs and all members who have expressed interest]

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	EMAIL	(Co-)Chair / Member
UK Data Service	Beate Lichtwardt Dr Sharon Bolton	blicht@essex.ac.uk, sharonb@essex.ac.uk	Co-chair Co-chair
GESIS	Dr Deborah Wiltshire	deborah.wiltshire@gesis.org	Co-chair
Existing ISDFPN members		isdfpn@ukdataservice.ac.uk	Members

* Note, please do not hesitate to point out gaps in the current DARE UK set of strategic themes and/or recommendations that the programme should consider as it continues to evolve these. Community feedback and input is welcomed.