ResearchDataGov.org (RDG) User Guide

Updated September 2024

About ResearchDataGov.org

ResearchDataGov.org (RDG) is the official portal for the Standard Application Process (SAP). RDG is a product of the federal statistical agencies and units, created in response to the *Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act* of 2018. The site includes a data catalog, which allows users to search for confidential federal data, and an application, which allows users to apply for access to data.

ResearchDataGov.org was built by and is hosted at Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan, under contract and guidance from the Project Management Office (PMO) at the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics within the National Science Foundation.

Table of Contents

Participating Agencies and Units

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recognizes 13 agencies and 3 units as having the production of statistics as their primary mission. For brevity, the term “agency” will be used to cover both agencies and the units within them.

- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
- Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS)
- Census Bureau
- U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)
- Federal Reserve Board (FRB): Microeconomics Survey Unit
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS): Statistics of Income (SOI) Division
- National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)
- National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)
- National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)
- Social Security Administration (SSA): Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics (ORES)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): Economic Research Service (ERS)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS)

Using ResearchDataGov

The SAP portal allows you to track your application from data discovery to final determination. This guide will focus on use of the site by applicants and potential applicants. Please note that there is a similar guide for data providing agency staff who review SAP applications.

The steps below outline a typical application process:

- If you determine that restricted access data is necessary for your research, search for a restricted access data asset relevant to your statistical research or browse available data assets
- Evaluate whether a data asset meets your needs by reading the metadata for each asset
- Add relevant data to your basket
- Complete and submit an application
  - Enter researcher information
  - Enter research description and the demonstrated need for restricted access data
  - Complete and upload required documents (for some applications)
  - Submit
- Track the status of your application by logging into ResearchDataGov after receiving email notification of a change in status of your application
- Use ResearchDataGov to view the agency's determination and comments from agency reviewers

Finding data

You can browse the entire data catalog by leaving the search box at researchdatagov.org empty and selecting the magnifying glass icon. However, you can also search for data by keyword, topic, agency, or a combination of these.

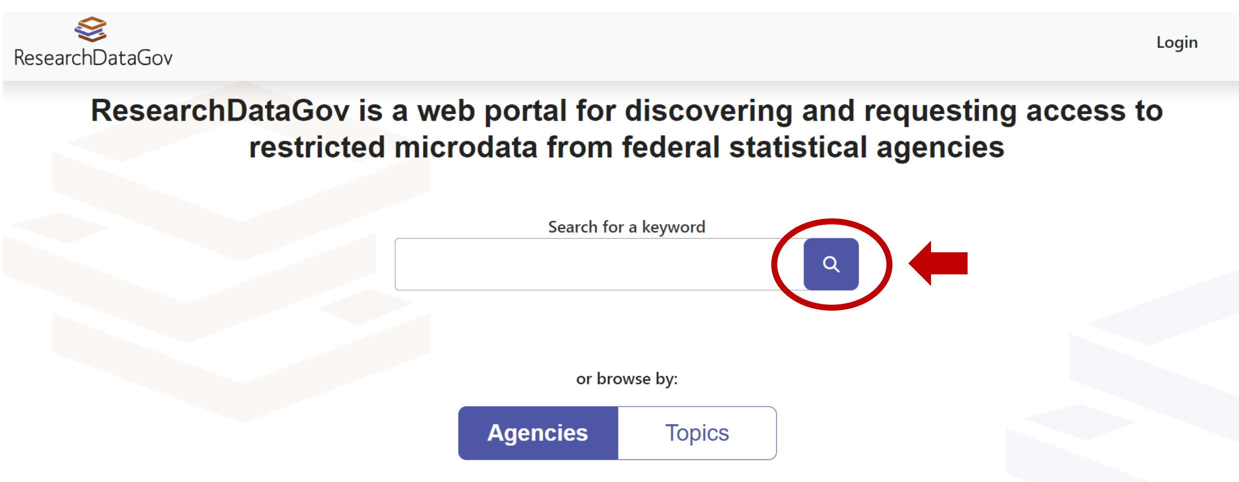

Figure 1. Magnifying glass icon and empty search box

Additionally, you can filter search results by other metadata fields, as shown in the image below. In Figure 2, we have searched for the keyword "families" in data from the Census Bureau.

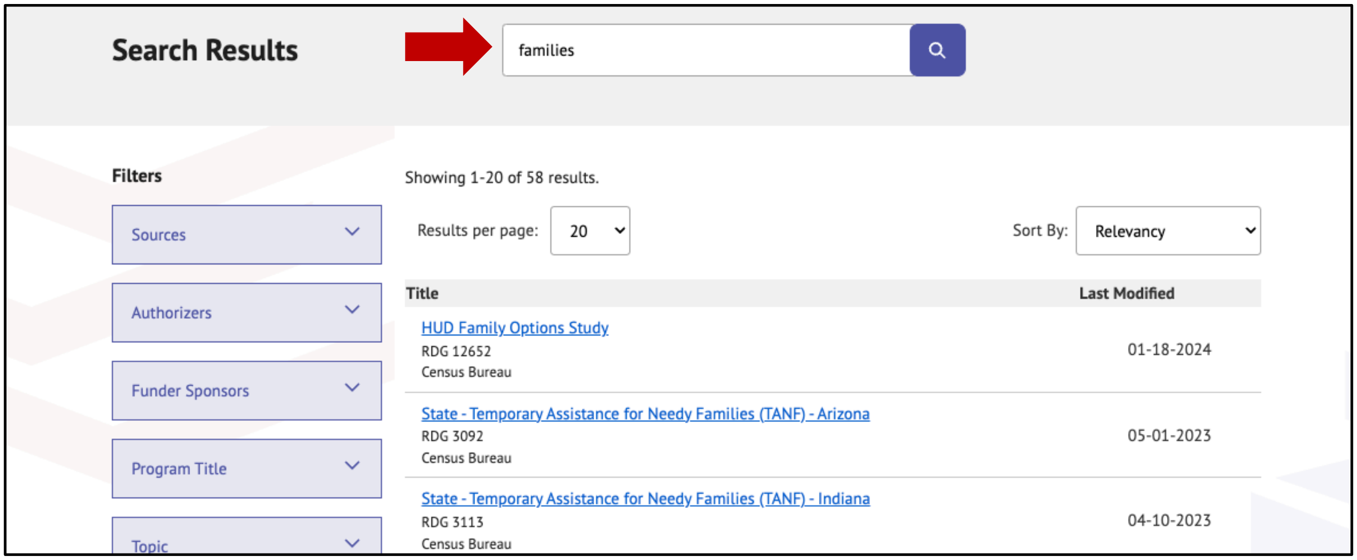

*Figure 2. Search box containing the term "families" and **Sort By** menu dropdown.*

Select the hyperlinked dataset title to view the metadata for a data asset as shown in the figure below.

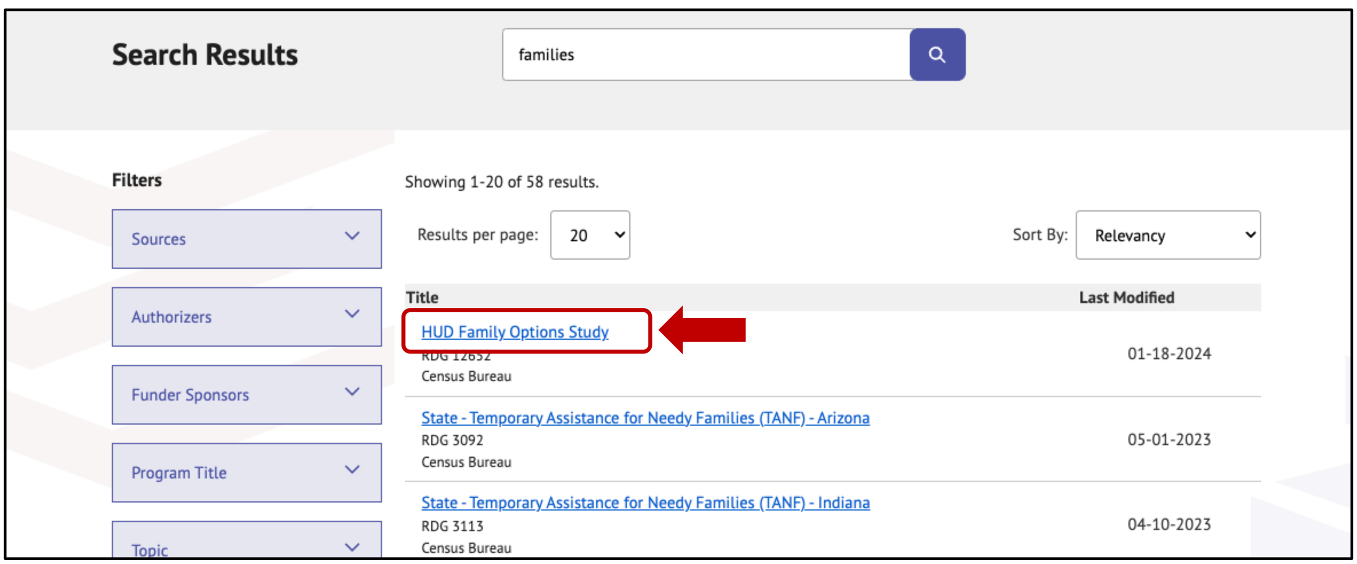

Figure 3. Hyperlinked dataset title

The **Metadata** menu on the left of the page outlines the information available for each data asset as shown in the figure below.

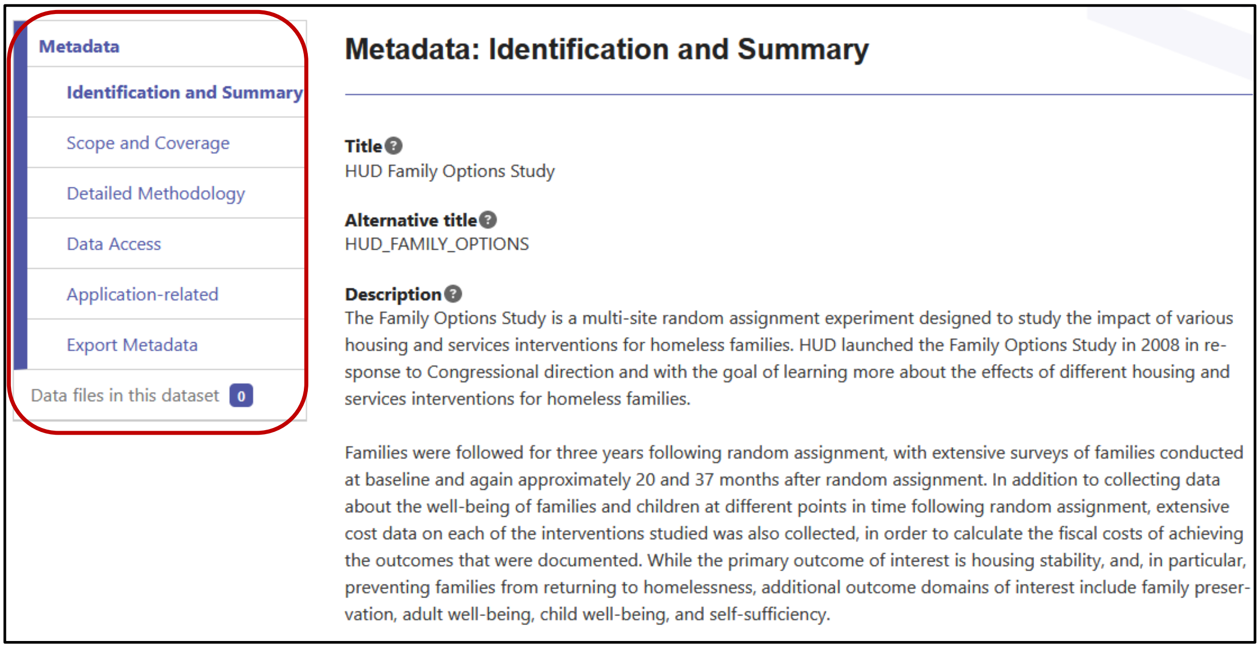

*Figure 4. The **Metadata** menu on the left of the dataset page*

Adding Data to your Basket

Select **Request Access** to add the data to your basket.

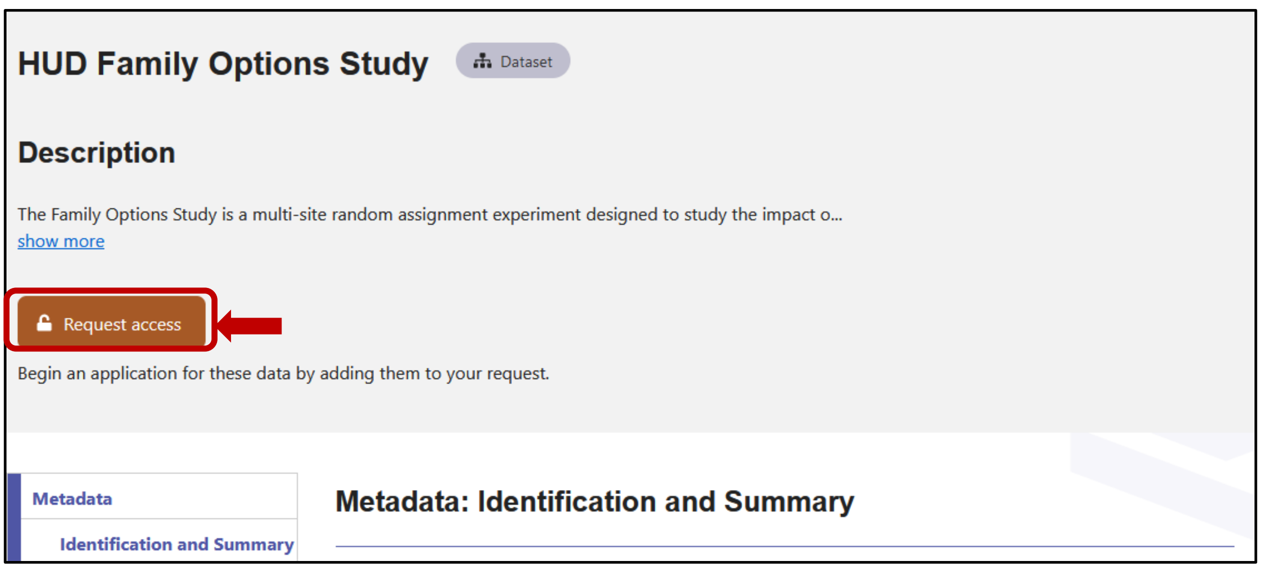

*Figure 5. **Request access** button at the top of the dataset homepage*

After requesting access, you will be prompted to login. If you do not have an account, you will be asked to create one. You will use this account to access your application dashboard and view your application progress.

You may add multiple datasets to your basket for inclusion in a single application. However, you should verify that the data can be accessed in the same location. The access modality in the "**Data Access**" tab of the dataset homepage lists where the data can be accessed.

If you are applying to access datasets from multiple agencies, it is best to contact the agency responsible for making the data available (listed as the source in the metadata identification summary) to make sure their data can be combined. You can find agency contact information in the Participating Agencies and Contact Information section.

Getting Help

As you navigate the SAP Data Catalog and add data to your basket, you may have additional questions not answered within the metadata. These may include questions about potential linkages, access modalities, and expected responses to application questions. Please contact the agency responsible for making the data available (listed as the source in the metadata identification summary) if you cannot find an answer within the Data Catalog. Contact information can be found in the Participating Agencies and Contact Information section at the beginning of this guide.

If you need help using the site or have trouble with the application system itself (e.g., uploading files or submitting the application), please contact help@researchdatagov.org.

Starting an application

You can navigate to **Basket** at any time to view the datasets you have selected.

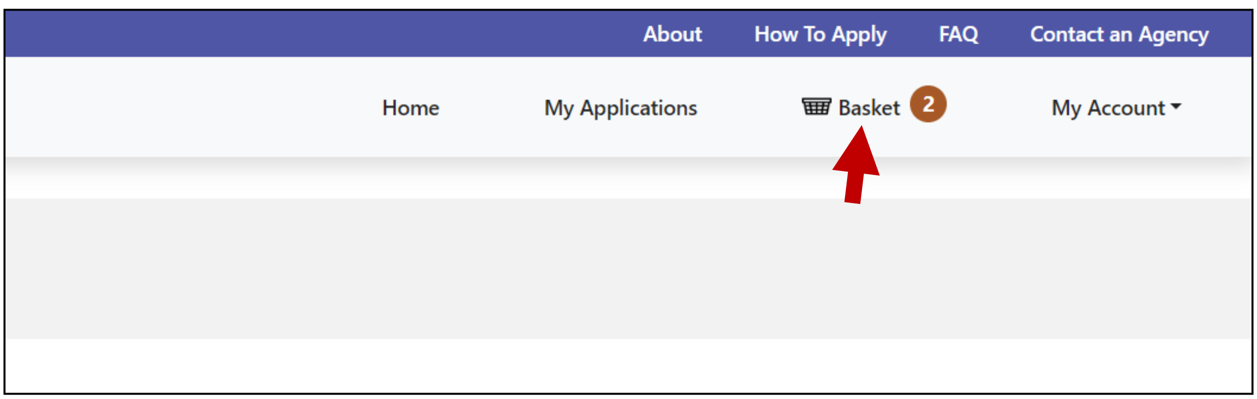

Figure 6. A basket with two datasets.

From this page, select **Continue Browsing** to return to the catalog and search for more data. Select **Start Application** if your basket includes all the datasets you would like to include in your application and **Add to Existing Application** to add data to an application you have started.

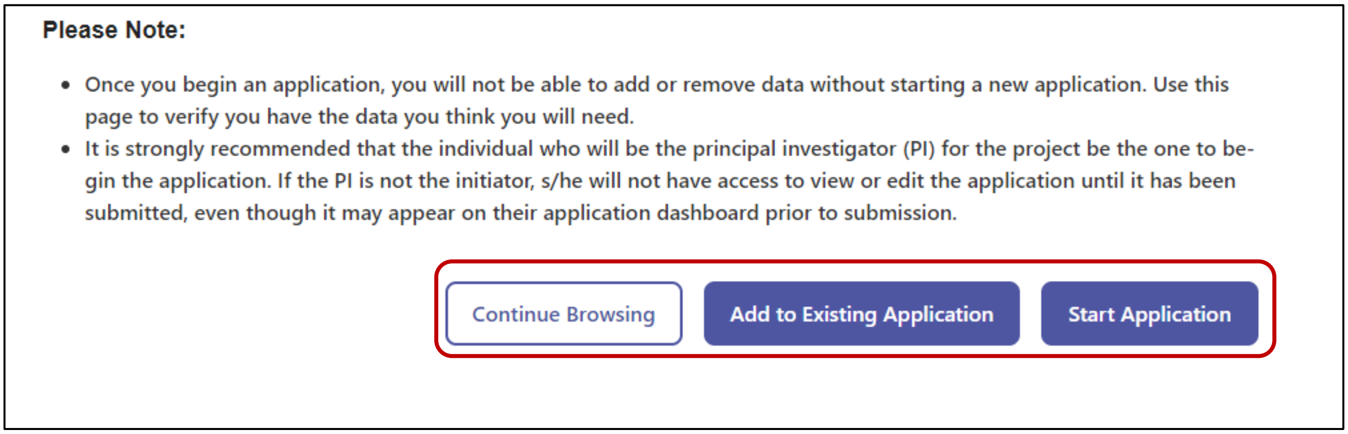

*Figure 7. **Continue Browsing, Add to Existing Application** and **Start Application** buttons on the basket page.*

PLEASE NOTE: We strongly recommend that the principal investigator (PI) or co-principal investigator (co-PI) create the application. Only the PI or co-PI can make edits to the application. Researchers can view the application but cannot make edits.

Completing an application

The application requests information about the research team and the project. You may preview the application questions in the appendix. Most fields are text boxes, but some fields instead require a text document (PDF or .docx) upload. The fields requiring an upload are those that may need formatting, such as tables and formulas.

The **Welcome** tab provides further details about the application and the review process.

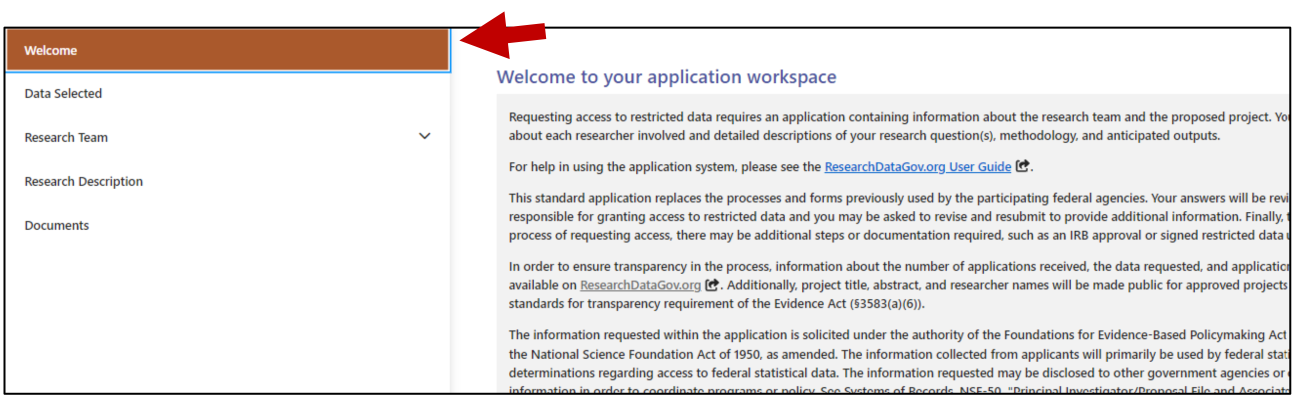

*Figure 8. The **Welcome** tab on the application homepage.*

You do not need to finish the application in one session as your answers will be automatically saved. You are also able to save your work using the **Save and Continue** button at the bottom of the screen. Note that it can only be saved after you have completed all the required fields in the section you are working on.

If you find or wish to select additional data after you have begun the application, you may add it by navigating to the "**Data Selected**" section on the left side of the application and selecting the "**View**

Other Data Available" button (shown in the figure below). This button will return you to the ResearchDataGov.org homepage where you can search or browse for additional data.

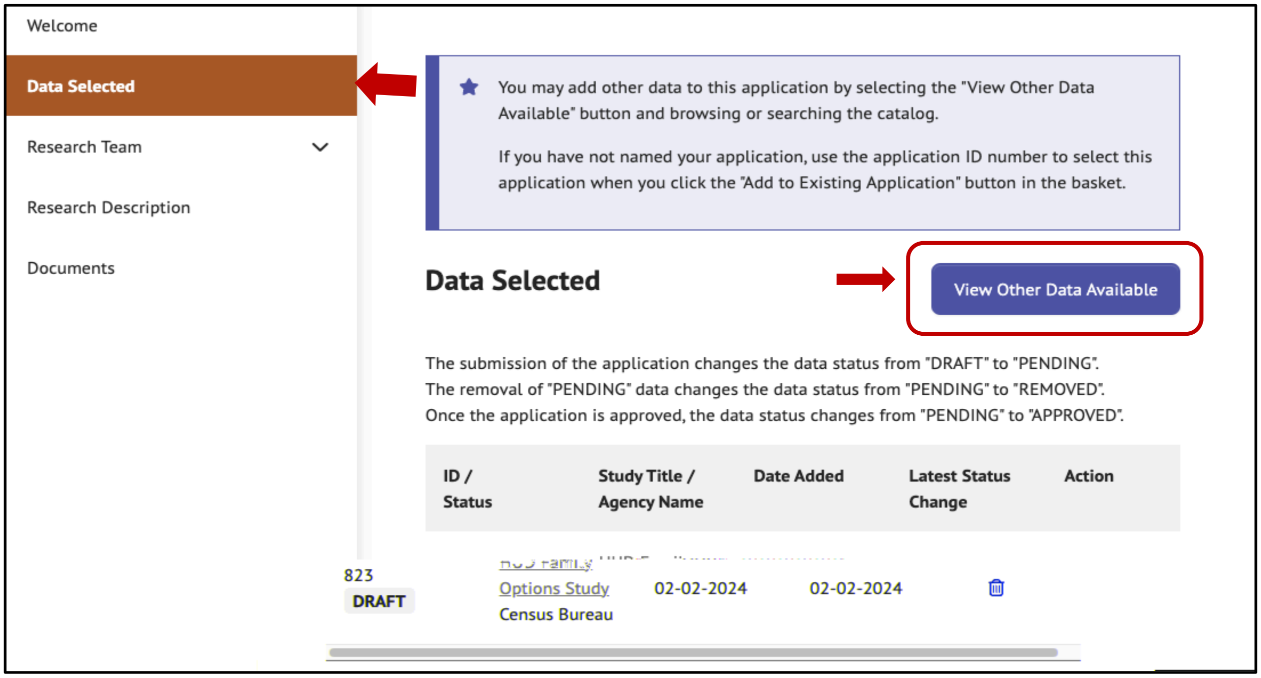

*Figure 9. The "**Data Selected**" section of the application and the "**View Other Data Available**" button that allows users to browse for additional data.*

Researcher Information

Please review the [Eligibility Requirements](#) section in this User Guide before completing your application. Eligibility requirements are unique to the data-owning agency and may include items like a specific institutional affiliation or U.S. citizenship.

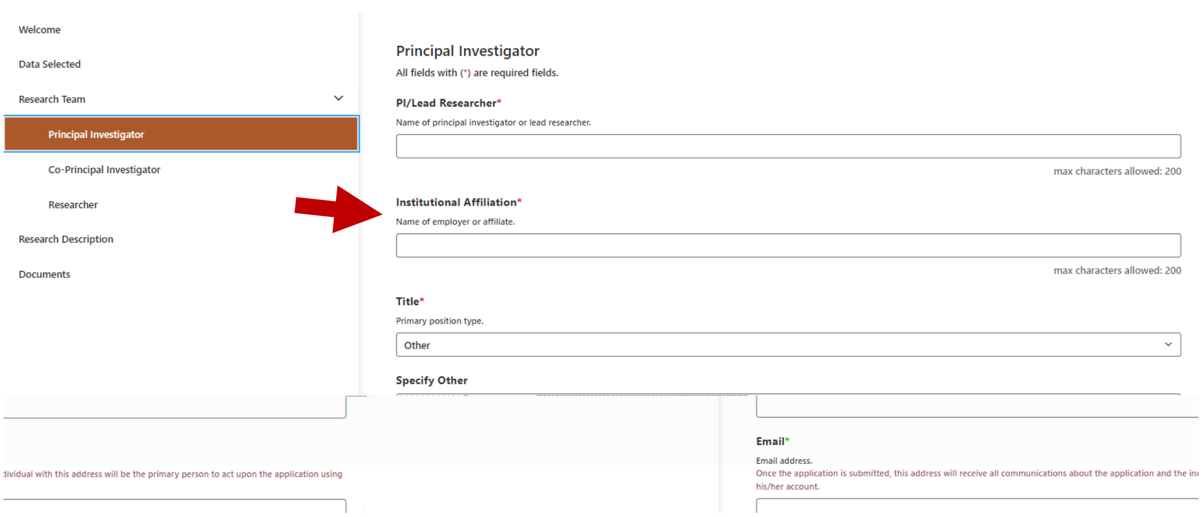

*Figure 10. Fields of the **"Principal Investigator"** sub-section of the **"Research Team"** section, such as a specific institutional affiliation.*

Research Description

Responses to some application fields in the Research Description section may be subject to agency or access modality-specific requirements, such as the **Project Duration** as shown in figure 10 below. This information may be found within the application or in the Agency-Specific Information section at the end of this guide.

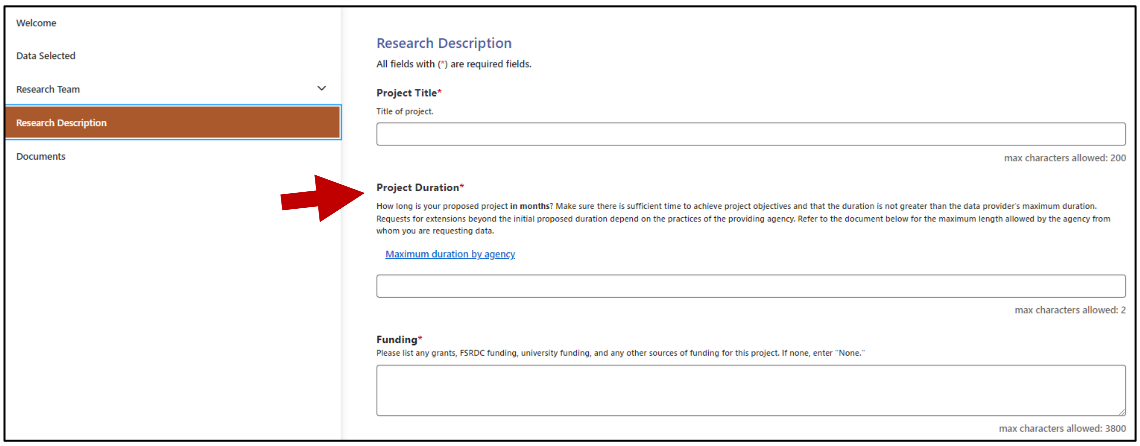

*Figure 11. Fields of the **"Research Description"** section, such as "**Project Duration**".*

Additionally, you may need to refer to the metadata listed in the SAP Data Catalog to respond to some application fields. For example, look at the "Application-related" tab of the metadata menu for each dataset you are requesting to see if there are "Provisioned by…" fields, and if so provide the years, states, or other units you are requesting when answering the **Time, Geographic, and Other Units Requested** part of the application.

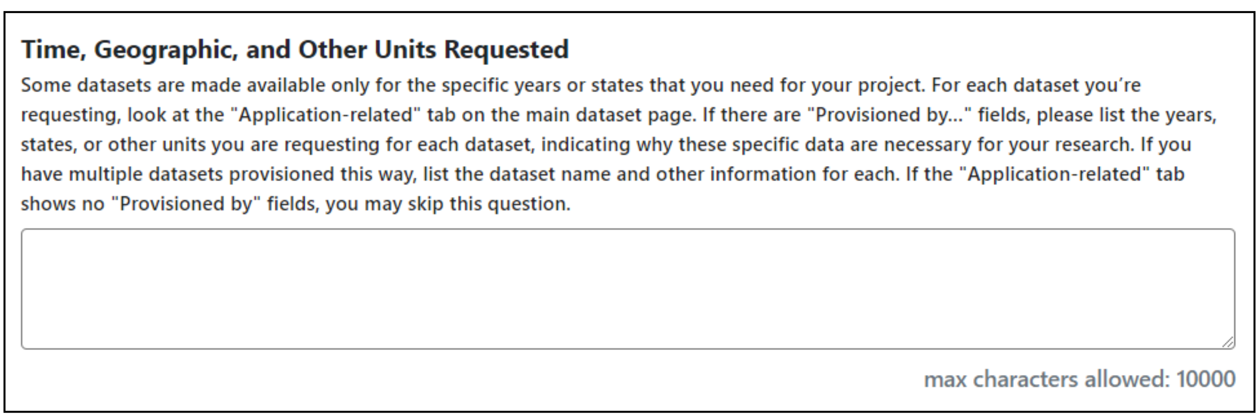

*Figure 12. **Time, Geographic, and Other Units Requested** require applicants to refer to the metadata "Provisioned by" fields.*

Another important example is **Work Location**. To complete this field, refer to the access modality listed in the **Data Access** metadata tab and make one selection (although you can select multiple locations within a top-level access modality that allows for multiple locations such as the Federal

Statistical Research Data Centers (FSRDC) network). This is the only place where that data can be accessed.

Work Location*

Where will the data be accessed? If you and, if applicable, other members of the research team plan on using data in multiple places, please mark all that apply. Note that there are often fees for accessing data in a Federal Statistical Research Data Center (FSRDC), please contact the FSRDC location you intend to use for more information. Other data may have fees for access as noted in the "Fees" field in the "Data Access" section of the information about the asset.

- [ ] BEA Network
- [ ] BLS Onsite
- [ ] BLS Virtual Data Enclave
- [ ] BTS Onsite
- [ ] FRB Onsite
- [ ] FSRDC

Figure 13. ***Work Location*** *field.*

Work Location*

Where will the data be accessed? If you and, if applicable, other members of the research team plan on using data in multiple places, please mark all that apply. Note that there are often fees for accessing data in a Federal Statistical Research Data Center (FSRDC), please contact the FSRDC location you intend to use for more information. Other data may have fees for access as noted in the "Fees" field in the "Data Access" section of the information about the asset.

- [ ] BEA Network
- [x] BLS Onsite
- [ ] BLS Virtual Data Enclave
- [ ] BTS Onsite
- [ ] FSRDC

  Northeast Region

  - [ ] Boston
  - [ ] New York - Baruch
  - [ ] New York - Cornell
  - [ ] Penn State
  - [ ] Philadelphia
  - [ ] Yale

  Midwest Region

  - [ ] Central Plains
  - [ ] Chicago

Figure 15. The ***Work Location*** *field allows researchers to select more than one location within a top-level access modality.*

If you are applying for multiple data assets from more than one agency, you should make sure that they can be accessed in the same location by contacting the agency or agencies.

Documents

Some agencies or data assets require additional documents to be completed and uploaded. If additional documents are required for your application, they will appear in the Documents section of the application. If no additional documents are required, you may skip this section.

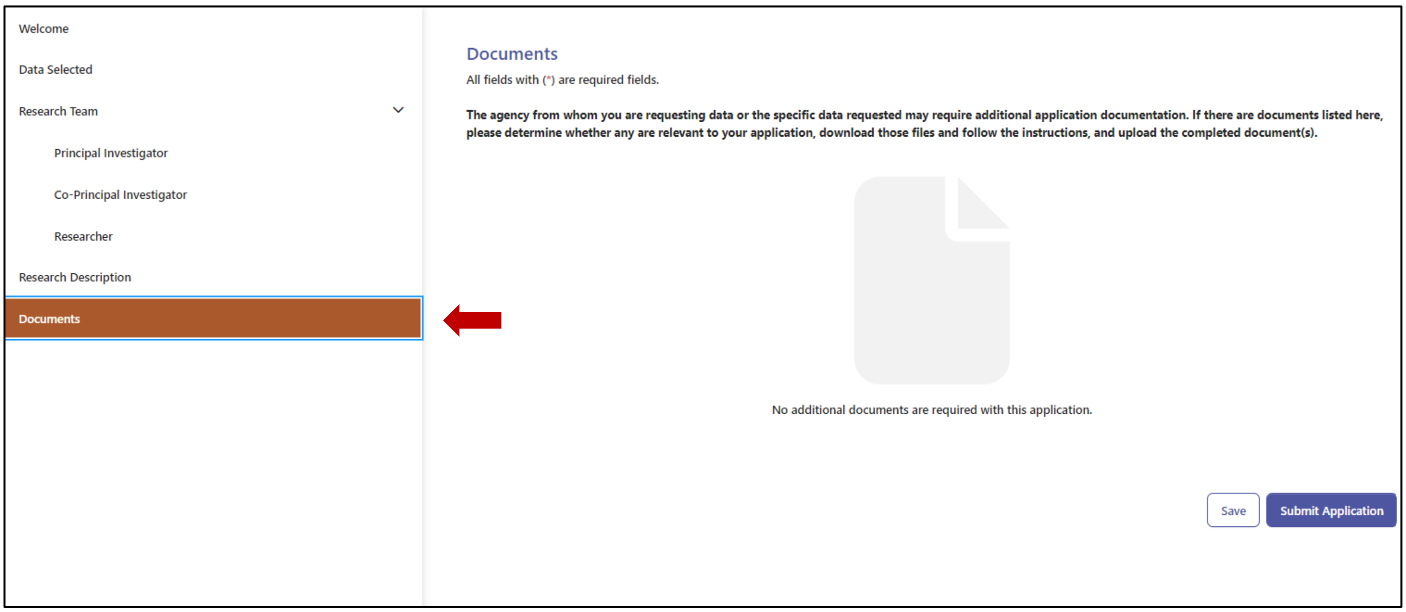

*Figure 16. Required documents will appear in the **Documents** section of the application.*

Submitting an application

Once all required sections have been completed, select “Submit Application”.

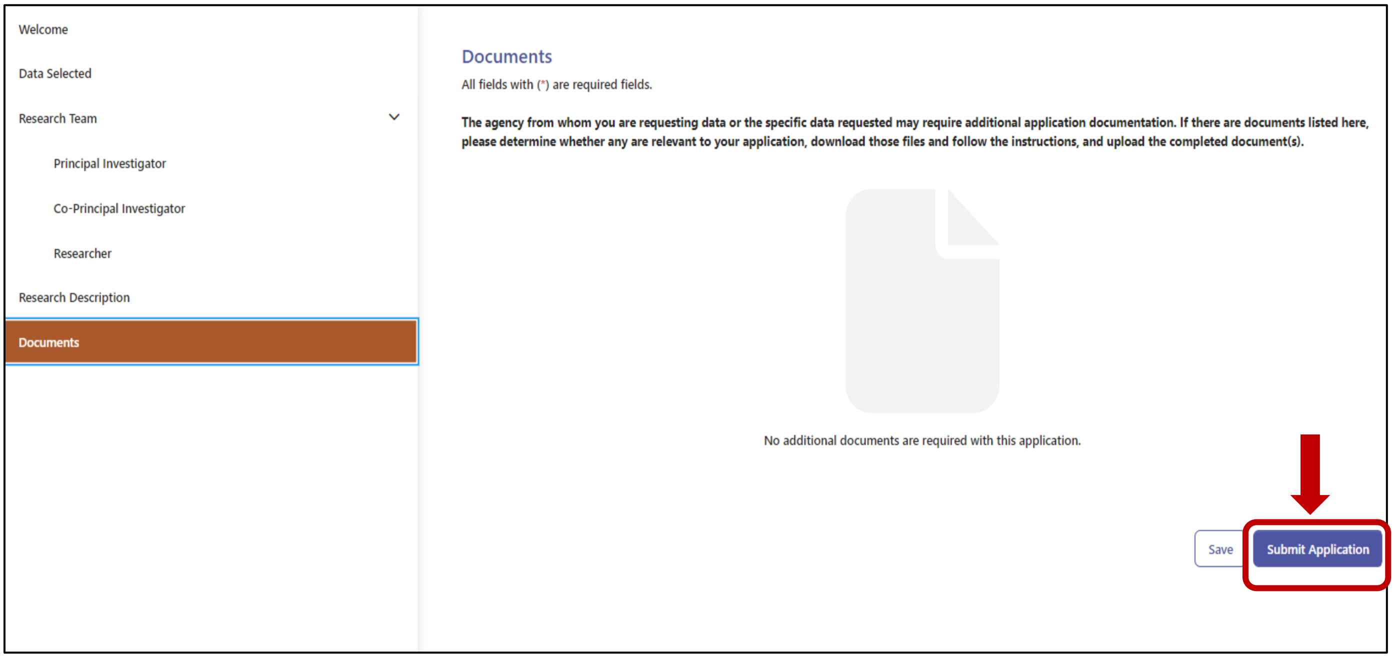

*Figure 17. **Submit Application** button*

Once your application has been submitted, you will see a **Congratulations** screen. You will also receive an email with a link back to the application. You will not be able to edit the application further unless asked to do so by one of the reviewing agencies.

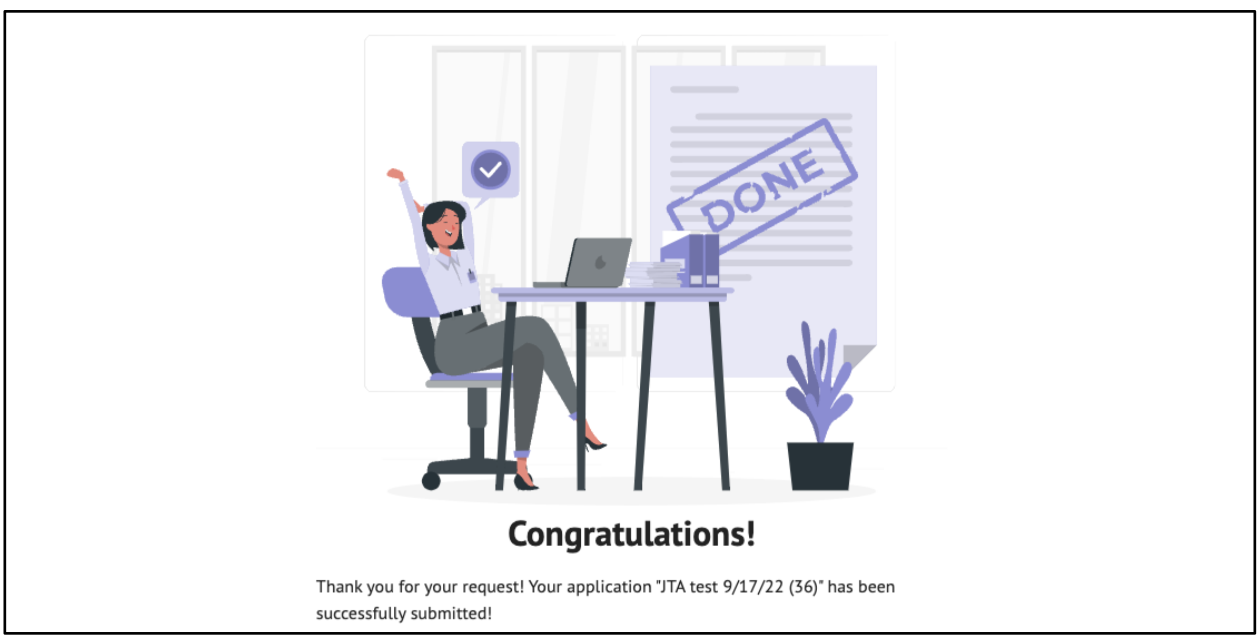

Figure 18. A Congratulations screen after successful submission of an application.

Review Process

Applications are reviewed by agency staff responsible for granting access to restricted data. Agencies evaluate applications according to a standard set of review criteria, outlined in the SAP Policy M-23-04 (section 4.1). Agency reviewers will make one of three determinations upon completing their review: Approved, Not Approved, or Changes Needed. For Changes Needed, you will be able to edit the application fields to address their requested changes.

SAP agencies also follow set timelines in reviewing applications for data that they fully control:

- If you request data from one agency or unit, the agency typically has 12 weeks to review your application and provide a final determination of Approved or Not Approved.
- If you request data from multiple agencies or units, the agencies typically have 24 weeks to review and collaborate to provide a final determination of Approved or Not Approved.

However, if the data you have applied for requires approval from an organization or entity outside of the SAP (such as a state or local government), the SAP and non-SAP agencies do not have a time limit on providing a final determination of Approved or Not Approved.

In most cases, application review takes less time than the time limit. However, in some cases, application review may take longer.

- Agencies can request review extensions if needed.
- The review timeframes are paused while you are responding to agencies' comments on an application that is in a "Changes Needed" state (see below).

Changes Needed

An agency may ask you to make changes to your application. Agencies will request changes when they determine that an application does not yet meet the standard review criteria but could do so with minor adjustments.

You will receive an email notification if an agency requests changes. You can then log in to your application dashboard to view the agency's comments and to revise your application. If you have questions or are unclear about the agency's comments, please contact the agency. Contact information can be found in the Participating Agencies and Contact Information section at the beginning of this guide.

Public Reporting

The Standard Application Process is required to provide the public with information surrounding applications to access confidential data. This includes both approved and unapproved applications.

For applications with a final determination of Not Approved, the following information is reported to the public:

- Requested data assets

- Statistical agencies and units involved
- The date the application was received
- Proposed project duration
- Status of application
- Unmet review criteria

For approved projects, the following information is reported to the public:

- Requested data assets
- Statistical agencies and units involved
- The date the application was received
- Project title
- Project abstract
- Approval date
- Project duration
- Names of the principal investigator/lead researcher and other persons requesting access

SAP Standard Review Criteria

The SAP policy (M-23-04), section 4.1, establishes the standard review criteria. These are summarized below. To view the full criteria, please refer to M-23-04. When reviewing applications, agencies **must use** the standard review criteria as outlined in M-23-04. Agencies may take into account other considerations only where required by law or regulation.

Criteria for Application Review

Standard Review Criteria	Description
1. **Statistical Purpose**	Project proposals must have a statistical purpose. Statistical purpose means the data is used to describe or understand groups of individuals or other units, without identifying individual persons or economic units. Examples of non-statistical purposes include using data for law enforcement, regulatory, or legal purposes.
2. **Allowed Use**	The data use described in the project proposal must be consistent with any restrictions on use of the requested data asset(s). These restrictions often stem from promises or commitments made to information providers or from statutes.
3. **Statistical Disclosure Limitation**	Project proposals must show they are able to apply Statistical Disclosure Limitation (SDL) approaches and techniques. SDL approaches and techniques minimize the risk of re-identification of individuals, organizations, or establishments.
4. **Demonstrated Need**	Project proposals must demonstrate that goals and objectives can **only** be met using confidential data assets, and that public data assets (where available) are insufficient to accomplish the project's goals and objectives.

	This is important to justify the disclosure risk associated with accessing confidential data.
5. **Feasibility**	Project proposals must demonstrate that their objectives are achievable with the confidential data assets they are requesting. When reviewing applications for feasibility, agencies will consider three elements: • *Project Design*: This includes the methodology, technical aspects, physical requirements (e.g., the capability of the researcher's computing environment to handle the proposed volume of data and Federal cybersecurity requirements), practicality (e.g., the availability of computing space in a data enclave), logistical requirements (e.g., whether the data assets can be physically co-located for analysis), and timeliness (e.g., whether the project can be executed within the available timeframe). Applicants must provide adequate background information on the proposed methodology to enable assessment. • *Agency or Unit Support*: This involves assessing whether the agency is able to adequately support the project. This may include physical requirements (e.g., whether the research can be hosted at the agency/unit), practicality (e.g., the adequacy of available technical or programming support), logistical requirements, timeliness (e.g., whether the requested data/extract/series can be prepared in time for the researcher), and other resource limitations. • *Applicant Ability*: This focuses on whether the applicant has the ability to execute the proposed project. This shall include a consideration of the applicant's knowledge, skills, and capabilities. Applicants must provide adequate background information to enable assessment.
6. **Maintaining Public Trust**	Agencies must assess whether a project proposal supports their ability to maintain trust, credibility, and public confidence. If an agency determines that a proposed project could diminish its ability to carry out its mission or collect data from the public and other data providers, it may reject a project.

To ensure that review criteria remain standardized across statistical agencies and units, additional review criteria are only permissible when necessary to meet agency or data asset legal or regulatory requirements. These may include:

1. **Programmatic benefit**: Project proposals must define contributions to the program under which the confidential data asset was collected. (For example, access to confidential Census Bureau Data may only be granted if the proposal provides a benefit to the Census Bureau's Title 13 programs.)
2. **Additional criteria**: This applies only when the additional criteria are deemed necessary based on a statutory authority or regulatory requirements applicable to the data collection or the statistical agency or unit. This may vary by agency according to statutory or legal requirements.

Criteria for Applicant Review

Note: Some of the criteria below are verified following application approval.

Standard Review Criteria	Description
1. Identification	This involves verifying that each applicant's identity, position, institutional affiliation, and skill level align with the legal requirements for accessing the requested confidential data asset (e.g., citizenship for some agencies) and the feasibility criteria for Application Review.
2. Training	Applicants must complete data use, data stewardship, and confidentiality and cybersecurity training as required by certain agencies. This is done after application approval.
3. Agreements	Some agencies require nondisclosure or data use agreements. For example, applicants may be required to create a security plan that outlines the security protocols the applicant will undertake when storing and using the data.
4. Investigation	This involves a background investigation, such as a National Agency Check with Inquiries (NACI) clearance or moderate background investigation (MBI). This is required by some agencies and for access to some datasets. This is done after application approval.

Accessing Confidential Data

Submitting an application is one step in the process of gaining access to confidential data. If your application is approved, there will be additional steps and documentation required. These may include background investigations, data security training, and licensing. After your application is approved, the data-owning agency or agencies will contact you to initiate their data security protocols.

Providing Feedback

Your feedback is essential to improving the SAP user experience. Please provide feedback via the Feedback Form, located on the FAQ page of the SAP Portal.

Getting Help

For questions about the data (including potential linkages), access modalities, and expected responses to application questions, please contact the agency responsible for making the data available using the information on the "Contact" page. If you need help using the site or have trouble with the application system itself (e.g., uploading files or submitting the application), please contact help@researchdatagov.org. You may also provide feedback on the site or report a bug using the "Feedback" form linked here and from the FAQs and Contact page.

Agency-specific Information

Eligibility requirements

Applicants for data from some agencies must meet specific requirements as shown below. The majority of agencies do not allow access from overseas. If you have questions about accessing data from outside the US, please work directly with your agency.

Agency	Eligibility requirements
BEA	US Citizenship
BJS	Affiliation with an educational institution, research arm of a government agency, or non-profit entity and evidence of fulfillment of human subjects requirements
BLS	Affiliation with a US educational institution or non-profit entity
Census	Residency in the U.S. for three out of the last five years. Affiliation with a US educational institution, research arm of a US government agency, or US non-profit entity.
EIA	US Citizenship Affiliation with a US educational institution or non-profit entity Residency in the U.S. for three out of the last five years
FRB	US Citizenship
IRS SOI	US Citizenship Affiliation with a US educational institution or US non-profit entity
NASS	Research must be conducted in the U.S. Graduate students are not eligible to be principal investigators
NCES	Affiliation with a US educational institution or non-profit entity Residency in the U.S. for three out of the last five years
NCSES	Affiliation with a US educational institution or non-profit entity Residency in the U.S. for three out of the last five years

Access Modalities and Available Software

The “access modality” is the place where the requested data can be accessed and used. Some are physical locations and others are virtual. This table provides a list of the access modalities, including the agencies who use them and software available within each.

Modality	Description	Agencies	Software Available
NCES Remote Access	The Administrative Data Research Facility (ADRF) is a secure cloud-based computing platform designed to promote collaboration, facilitate documentation, and provide information about data use to the agencies that own the data. The ADRF has provided secure access to over 100 confidential government datasets from 50 different agencies at all levels of government. More information on ADRF is available at https://coleridgeinitiative.org/adrf/.	NCES	ArcGIS, Matlab, Mplus, Python, R and RStudio, SPSS, Stata, and Stat/Transfer
Requester Secure Site	Data can be used by the researcher(s) at their institutions via a method and following requirements set by the agency owning the data. These might include a non-networked computer, a secure office, or other provisions deemed necessary to ensure security.	BJS, NCES, SSA	
BEA Network	BEA is currently providing access at the user's domicile. A security clearance is required to access the BEA network.	BEA	MS Office, Python, R and RStudio, SAS, Stata, and Stat/Transfer
BLS Onsite	BLS Onsite access is available in a researcher room at the BLS national office in Washington, DC. Researchers with approved projects can reserve time during normal business hours to use BLS workstations connected to an internal server where all data and project files are stored. More information is available at www.bls.gov/rda/onsite-at-bls.htm.	BLS	Anaconda, Python, R and RStudio, SAS, and Stata
BLS Virtual Data Enclave	BLS offers offsite limited remote access to restricted data through a Virtual Data Enclave for two survey files: NLSY Geocode and CFOI-Masked data. More information is available at www.bls.gov/rda/offsite.htm.	BLS	Python, R and RStudio, SAS, SPSS, Stata, and Stat/Transfer
FRB Onsite	Access via a physical data enclave at the Federal Reserve Bank headquarters in Washington, DC	FRB	Python, R and RStudio, SAS, Stata, and Stat/Transfer
FSRDC	Federal Statistical Research Data Centers (FSRDCs) are Census Bureau facilities, housed in partner institutions, that meet all physical and information security requirements for access to restricted–use micro data of the agencies whose data are accessed there. Remote access via secure Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI) is permitted for researchers working with selected data, at the discretion of the data-owning agency. All FSRDC researchers must obtain the Census Bureau's Special Sworn Status (SSS) and successfully complete a thorough background investigation prior to accessing a RDC.	BEA, BJS, BLS, Census, NCSES, NCHS, SAMHSA	Anaconda, Gurobi, Intel Composer, Knittro, MADD, Mathematica, Matlab, OpenGeoda, R and Rstudio, SAS, Stat/Transfer, Stata, Stata-MP, SUDAAN, and Tomlab
IRS-issued Laptop	Remote access to the IRS network via secure VPN line using government laptop issued and configured by IRS IT.	IRS	Python, R, SAS, and Stata

Modality	Description	Agencies	Software Available
IRS Onsite	Access at IRS Headquarters, Submission Processing Center, or other satellite (field) offices.	IRS	Python, R, SAS, and Stata
NCHS RDC	Researchers may access restricted-use National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) data at Research Data Centers (RDCs) located in Hyattsville, MD, Atlanta, GA, Rockville, MD. The NCHS RDCs are open by appointment only during regular business hours. The NCHS RDC computers are not connected to the Internet, and they have standard statistical software. An RDC Analyst will review all materials brought into the RDC and will review any notes, code, or output the researcher may want to take out of the RDC. Electronic devices (e.g., cellphones and laptops) are not permitted in the RDC. Some NCHS projects are authorized to access NCHS data at Federal Statistical RDCs (FSRDC). Non-US Citizens: In general, non-US citizens are not granted access to NCHS RDCs and are encouraged to use Federal Statistical RDCs to access restricted-use NCHS data.	NCHS, SAMSHA	SAS, Stata, and SUDAAN
NCSES Secure Data Access Facility	NCSES Secure Data Access Facility (SDAF) houses NCSES restricted-use data and provides secure remote access to researchers. After researchers have submitted a restricted-use data application, received approval from NCSES, and have been trained on how to use the SDAF, they can login using an approved computer and a private internet connection. Each researcher has access to their own, personal file space and to a suite of software that can be used to store, access, and analyze data. For more information on accessing NCSES restricted-use data, please visit https://ncses.nsf.gov/about/licensing.	NCSES	Jupyter Notebook/Github, Microsoft Suite (e.g., Word, Excel, Access), R and RStudio, SAS, Stata, and Stat/Transfer
USDA Virtual Data Enclave	USDA offers offsite remote access via a secure internet connection using the researcher's own computer and web browser to approved datasets for data analysis within the Data Enclave. Each researcher has access to their own personal file space and to a suite of software that can be used to store, access, and analyze data.	ERS, NASS, USDA	DBeaver, Jupyter Lab with Python and R kernels, LaTeX, LibreOffice, MS Office, Python, PyCharm, R, RStudio, SAS, SQL Server Management Studio, Stata, and SVN
BTS Virtual Data Enclave	Remote access through a virtual data enclave.	BTS	
SSA Onsite	Access via a physical data enclave at the Social Security Administration in Washington, DC.	SSA	COBOL, Excel software (to access and store data), and SAS
ICPSR Physical Data Enclave	The ICPSR physical data enclave is located in the Perry Building on the campus of the University of Michigan.	BJS	R for Windows and RStudio, SAS, SPSS (including AMOS), Stat/Transfer, and Stata/MP

Modality	Description	Agencies	Software Available
ICPSR Virtual Data Enclave	The ICPSR virtual data enclave allows users access to restricted data via their own computers using a virtual desktop.	BJS	ArcGIS Desktop,Matlab, Mplus, Python, R and RStudio, SAS, SPSS (including AMOS), Stat/Transfer, Stata, and SUDAAN

Required agency-specific documents

Some agencies require documents beyond the application itself, as listed below.

Agency	Required Documents
BEA	Curriculum Vita (CV) for each applicant
BJS	CV for each applicant Signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
Census	Permission to use proprietary data
NASS	Signed MOU List of requested variables (*Census of Agriculture* requests only)
NCHS	CV for each applicant Permission to use proprietary data Table Shells Data dictionary for non-NCHS data
SAMHSA	List of requested variables

Project duration

Participating agencies differ in the length of time for which they allow access to restricted-use data. The chart below provides the maximum duration allowed for each.

Agency	Project duration (months)
BEA	60
BJS	48
BLS	48
Census	60
EIA	60
ERS	60
FRB	60
IRS	60
NASS	36
NCES	60
NCHS	36
NCSES	60
SAMHSA	36
SSA	60

Variables Requested

The following agencies require lists of specific variables requested. Please refer to the dataset's data dictionary to review the variables available. The agency will determine whether the proposed use of variables is appropriate and evaluate project feasibility based on the variables requested.

Agency	Requirement
NASS	For Census of Agriculture projects, complete the spreadsheet for all variables needed from NASS and email to SM.NASS.Data.Lab@usda.gov. Refer to the data dictionary for the dataset to see the available variables.
NCHS	List all variables needed from NCHS. Refer to the data dictionary for the dataset to see the available variables.
SAMHSA	List all variables needed from SAMHSA. Refer to the data dictionary for the dataset to see the available variables.
NAHMS	List all variables needed from NAHMS. Refer to the data dictionary for the dataset to see the available variables.

Agency Benefits

The following agencies require that applicants demonstrate how their projects will benefit the agency or agencies providing the data:

- BEA (Bureau of Economic Analysis)
- Census Bureau
- BLS (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- IRS-SOI (Internal Revenue Service – Statistics of Income Division)
- NCHS (National Center for Health Statistics)

Agency-specific criteria for evaluating the applicant's answers are provided within the application. If you have questions while completing this section, you are advised to contact the agency responsible for making the data available. Contact information can be found in the Participating Agencies and Contact Information section at the beginning of this guide.

Appendix

Appendix (Standard Application Questions)

The questions from the application are provided here so that you know what information you will need before you begin the application process. All questions, along with any help text or links, are included here, even though some are agency-specific and might not appear on the application you complete. An asterisk (*) designates required items and the question format, whether it is answered within the application (in app) or via file upload (upload), is noted for each. **Bold font** indicates that a question only appears when data from specific agencies are requested. These agencies have unique legal or contractual requirements for certain information to be provided.

Additional documents may be required depending on the data selected – these are typically presented for download, completion, and upload. Documents such as Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or security plans may be requested by the data owners upon approval of the application.

Research Description

Field Label	Field Wording	Format
Project Title*	Title of project.	text box
Project Duration*	How long is your proposed project in months? Make sure there is sufficient time to achieve project objectives and that the duration is not greater than the data provider's maximum duration. Requests for extensions beyond the initial proposed duration depend on the practices of the providing agency. Refer to the document below for the maximum length allowed by the agency from whom you are requesting data. **Note**: A pop-up window provides a table of maximum duration for each agency. This information is also provided in the User Guide.	text box
Funding*	Please list any grants, FSRDC funding, university funding, and any other sources of funding for this project. If none, enter "None."	text box
Timeline*	What is the timeline for completing project tasks? The document linked below should be used as an example of the level of specificity and format preferred. Projects that use data from the U.S. Census Bureau are required under Title 13, U.S.C. to contribute to the Census Bureau's mission. These contributions are called "benefits." The development of the timeline requires linking Census benefits to each of the project activities. Assistance from an FSRDC administrator will greatly reduce the need for future revisions to the timeline after submission. To find an FSRDC administrator near you, please check the list of FSRDC contacts. If you are unsure which FSRDC to contact or have a general question, please reach out to the Census Bureau at ced.fsrdc.info@census.gov. **Note**: A Project Timeline Template is provided and can be downloaded.	upload
Research Question*	What is the proposed research question?	text box
Demonstrated Need*	Explain why the research questions can only be addressed using the requested restricted-use microdata. Be as specific as possible, including	text box

<table>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">listing key variables or methodological advantages of the restricted file compared to a public-use file (where available).</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Study Population*</td><td colspan="2">Briefly describe the study population or universe and how it relates to the research question.</td><td>text box</td></tr>
<tr><td>Project Abstract*</td><td colspan="2">Provide a project abstract of approximately the length that would be published for a journal article. The abstract should broadly describe the purpose of the research, the type of data to be used, and the hypotheses to be tested.</td><td>text box</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Variables Requested</td><td colspan="2">If you are requesting data from the Census of Agriculture from the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), please upload a data dictionary indicating which variables you will need to access following the instruction on their pages: <u>NASS</u>, <u>NCHS</u>, and <u>SAMHSA</u>. If you are requesting the Census of Agriculture, please email <u>SM.NASS.Data.Lab@usda.gov</u> for instructions on creating a variable list.</td><td rowspan="2">upload</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Note: This question only appears for applications to NCHS, SAMHSA, NASS, and ERS data.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Time, Geographic, and Other Units Requested</td><td colspan="2">Some datasets are made available only for the specific years or states that you need for your project. For each dataset you’re requesting, look at the “Application-related” tab on the main dataset page. If there are “Provisioned by…” fields, please list the years, states, or other units you are requesting for each dataset, indicating why these specific data are necessary for your research. If you have multiple datasets provisioned this way, list the dataset name and other information for each. If the "Application-related" tab shows no "Provisioned by” fields, you may skip this question.</td><td>text box</td></tr>
<tr><td>Work Location*</td><td colspan="2">Where will the data be accessed? If you and, if applicable, other members of the research team plan on using data in multiple places, please mark all that apply. Note that there are often fees for accessing data in a Federal Statistical Research Data Center (FSRDC), please contact the FSRDC location you intend to use for more information. Other data may have fees for access as noted in the "Fees" field in the "Data Access" section of the information about the asset.</td><td>check box</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="7">User-provided Data</td><td colspan="2">If you are planning to provide other data for use in this project, please describe those data below. Enter information about one dataset at a time, using the "Add User-provided Data" button to include additional sources.</td><td rowspan="2">Select, “Add user-provided data”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Note: If the applicant adds user-provided data, the following questions will appear:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Name and Description of Data</td><td>Provide the name of the dataset, a brief description of its contents, and the approximate size of the file.</td><td>text box</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ownership</td><td>Please indicate whether these data are publicly available or proprietary and provide the source (including URL) from whom you obtained the data.</td><td>text box</td></tr>
<tr><td>Anonymized</td><td>Will personal identifiers be removed – that is, will the data be anonymized?</td><td>Yes/No/ Don’t Know</td></tr>
<tr><td>Linkage</td><td>Will you be linking these to other data at the record (e.g., person, household, business) level?</td><td>Yes/No</td></tr>
<tr><td>Protected Identification Keys (PIKs)</td><td>Will you require Census protected identification keys (PIKs) to be applied to these data to link to other Census Bureau data?
Note: This question only appears for Census data.</td><td>Don’t Know/Yes/ No</td></tr>
</table>

Software Requirements	If your project requires statistical software other than that which is currently available in the location in which you will access the data, please indicate that here so the data providing agency can consider that in your application. **Note**: A pop-up window with a table of software by location is provided. This information is also listed in the User Guide.	text box
Methodology*	Explain the methodology that will be used for the project. The methodology should be clearly stated and appropriate for the research questions. The metadata catalog, agency publications and statistical products, agency web pages describing the restricted access data, and agency contacts are valuable resources for background information for drafting a strong methodology. Expected length: 5-10 pages. Your methodology may include, but is not limited to the following information, as appropriate: • How each requested data set will be used • Model equations to be estimated • Estimation methods • How previous research supports the feasibility of the methodology of the project • How model variables will be constructed • Strategies for addressing data quality issues • Expected sample size and subsamples • Unit of analysis including level of geography • Ability to link datasets • Availability of the study population in the data • Use of sample weights, design variables, and adjustments for use of complex survey design • Expected outcomes Projects that use data from the U.S. Census Bureau are required under Title 13, U.S.C. to contribute to the Census Bureau's mission. These contributions are called "benefits." The development of the methods requires linking Census benefits to each of the project activities. Assistance from an FSRDC administrator will greatly reduce the need for future revisions to the section after submission. To find an FSRDC administrator near you, please check the list of FSRDC contacts. If you are unsure which FSRDC to contact or have a general question, please reach out to the Census Bureau at ced.fsrdc.info@census.gov.	upload
List of References*	List any publications referenced in this application as well as any other works that are of importance to this project. Expected length: 2-5 pages.	upload
Project Products*	What are the anticipated journal articles, books, working papers, conference presentations, technical memoranda, dissertations, government reports, or other products for this project? Please include the names of journals that you plan on submitting your research papers to.	text box
Requested Output*	Describe the anticipated output for this project, including regression/modeling output, summary statistics, and any other output you intend to submit for disclosure review as well as anticipated methods to meet disclosure requirements (e.g., noise infusion). Please check with the agency contact if you are unsure of the agency’s output and disclosure requirements. • For modeling output include descriptions of the samples you anticipate using and variables you plan on reporting results on, including descriptions of categorical variables.	upload

	• For tabular output, describe the output needed for the project products in detail, including examples when applicable (i.e., state groupings, levels of output and how you will display restricted-use data, analytic methods to reduce disclosure, etc.). Each agency will assess this section based on its disclosure requirements. Some agencies' disclosure requirements only allow for projects that emphasize regression/modeling output and a limited number of summary statistics that support this output, while others require table shells of requested output be included in the application. Expected length: 2- 15 pages.	
Census Benefits*	Projects that use data from the U.S. Census Bureau are required under Title 13, U.S.C. to contribute to the Census Bureau's mission. These contributions are called "benefits." List each proposed criteria, explaining how the benefit will be achieved. The development of Census benefits that will be accepted during the application review process can be challenging for many researchers. Assistance from an FSRDC administrator will greatly reduce the need for future revisions to your benefit statements after submission. To find an FSRDC administrator near you, please check the **list of FSRDC contacts.** If you are unsure which FSRDC to contact or have a general question, please reach out to the Census Bureau at **ced.fsrdc.info@census.gov**. (List of the criteria with details about each is provided within the application.) Note: This question only appears for applications requesting Census data.	Dropdown of Census benefit criteria and text box
Agency Benefits*	This question is required by the agencies listed below. Failure to answer this question could delay the determination of your application. • The Bureau of Economic Analysis • The Nation Center for Health Statistics • The Bureau of Labor Statistics • The Statistics of Income Division of the Internal Revenue Service List the benefits to the agency from whom the data are being requested, explaining how the proposed work will achieve those benefits. Please click the link below to view specific guidance provided by the above agencies. (Guidance for completing this question is linked within the application.)	

Documents

BJS:

- Pre-approval documentation: Pre-approval documents include IRB determination documentation and a fully executed BJS Privacy Certificate. These documents are required to ensure that users of BJS restricted data will comply with applicable federal requirements concerning the protection of human subjects and the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person, consistent with the regulations at 28 CFR Part 46 and 28 CFR Part 22. These documents must be submitted before an approval can be issued in the SAP.
- Post-approval documentation: Post-approval documents include a fully executed NACJD Restricted Data Use Agreement, ICPSR Data Security Plan, ICPSR Confidentiality Pledge, and Certification of Training (when applicable). These documents are required to establish an agreement between NACJD (National Archive of Criminal Justice Data)/ICPSR (Inter-

university Consortium for Political and Social Research) and the user(s) who is approved to access BJS restricted data in accordance with the terms and conditions stated in the agreement, as well as to establish the technical, physical, and administrative controls that must be followed by the user(s) to protect data from unauthorized disclosure and misuse. These documents must be submitted before NACJD/ICPSR can provide access to BJS restricted data.

Census:

- LA County SNAP Employee Acknowledgment and Confidentiality Agreement: Required by data provider.
- CJARS Data Use Request Template: Required by data provider.
- CMS DUA Signature Addendum: Required by data provider.
- CPS Request Template: Required to determine if sponsoring agency review is needed.
- DOD DMDC form: Required by data provider.
- FSRDC Access Confirmation Form: Agency requirement - Used to ensure that the FSRDC location is aware of the potential project and to ensure that the FSRDC administrator has the opportunity to provide information on any fees and to give guidance on proposal and SSS requirements.
- IPUMS Research project application and researcher agreement: Required by data provider.
- Survey of Construction Template: Sponsoring agency requirement.
- VA Data Use Request Template: Required by data provider.
- SSA Data Use Request Form: Required by data provider.

NASS:

- MOU NASS: The MOU form must be signed at the time of application submission to ensure the project is supported and the institution has agreed to accept and enforce the responsibilities associated with using restricted microdata.
- MOU NASS-ERS: The MOU form must be signed at the time of application submission to ensure the project is supported and the institution has agreed to accept and enforce the responsibilities associated with using restricted microdata.