

Abteilung Methodenforschung

About us: Qualiservice is a research data center with expertise in acquiring, curating and providing access to qualitative social science research data from a broad range of topics (<http://www.qualiservice.org>). It offers secure, flexible and research-oriented procedures to store qualitative data and to prepare and share them for secondary use.

Qualiservice originated in 2010 from the Archive for Life Course Research (Archiv für Lebenslaufforschung – ALLF), which had developed from the Collaborative Research Center (CRC) 186 “Status Passages and Risks in the Life Course” at the University of Bremen. The Archive for Life Course Research acquired the qualitative research data of the CRC, creating an original corpus of about 700 interview transcripts that were digitalized and anonymized.

From 2011 to 2014 Qualiservice was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) to develop workflows for archiving and data processing of qualitative data in close cooperation with the scientific community. In 2015 Betina Hollstein, Professor of Qualitative Methods and Microsociology, at the

University of Bremen, integrated Qualiservice in the SOCIUM Research Center on Inequality and Social Policy.

Since 2018 the German Research Foundation (DFG) supports the implementation of Qualiservice as a permanent nationwide data service center for qualitative social science research data. Since February 2019 the DFG also funds the cooperation between Qualiservice and the Specialised Information Service (Fachinformationsdienst) Social and Cultural Anthropology. This project aims at extending the services to the full range of qualitative research data, also including audio and video data, field notes and ethnographic field notes and observation protocols. In June 2019 Qualiservice was accredited by the German Data Forum (RatSWD).

Partners: Archiving is organized together with the internationally operating certified data archive PANGAEA – Data Publisher for Earth & Environmental Science and the State and University Library Bremen (SuUB). Furthermore, a coordinated archiving and representation of mixed methods studies will be created together with GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences.

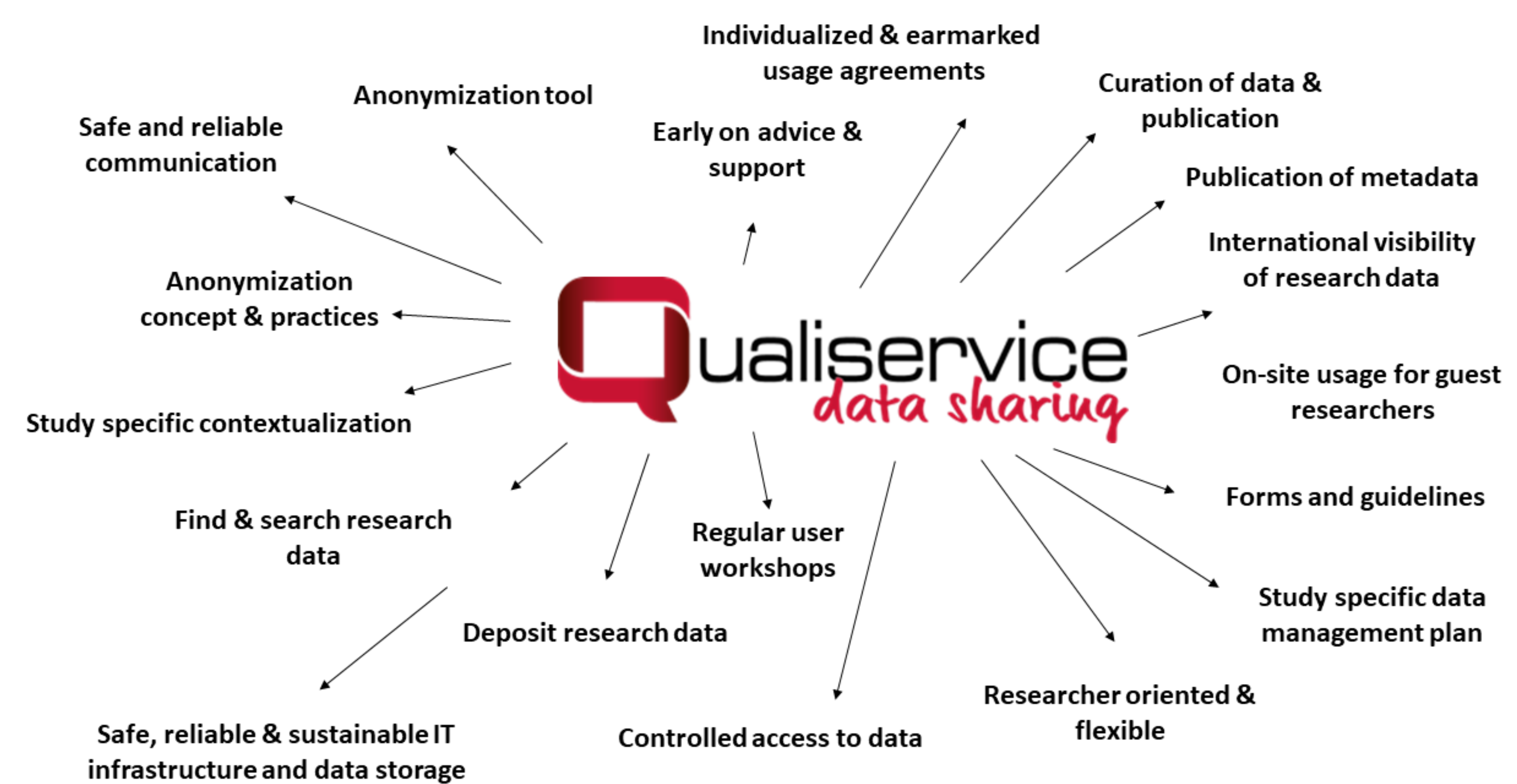
Benefits of archiving data at Qualiservice

... for research

- Broad range of data for interdisciplinary and comparative use
- Secondary analysis (various designs, including longitudinal and panel studies)
- Inspiration for new research topics through exploration of primary data and studies
- Methodological research (e.g., modes of data collection, development of wordbooks and thesauri)
- Increased transparency and visibility of qualitative social research
- Data referencing to facilitate publication of research results and to increase the visibility and value of datasets
- Guidelines and best practices for data management and protection

... for teaching

- Knowledge packages for research-oriented teaching
- Insights into applying methods of data collection and analysis
- Introduction to research ethics and data protection
- Material for scientific theses



Services provided by Qualiservice

Find and Use Research Data:

Qualiservice presents information on all archived studies on its website. A broad range of metadata containing information on research topics, study designs and data characteristics enables researchers to find datasets fitted to their interests.

Qualiservice supports researchers in finding and using data by offering guidelines, regular user workshops, and individualized advice services during all stages of the access procedure.

Qualiservice provides access to anonymized files. Usage is restricted to scientific purposes. Upon request researchers can be granted access to less anonymized data in the Safe Center, where specific safety precautions apply.

Deposit and Share Research Data:

Qualiservice offers data storing and sharing options that are safe, flexible and research-oriented. We support researchers from the very beginning of their projects.

This includes calculating costs for data preparation and archiving as well as determining study-specific security requirements such as embargoing the reuse period or approval requirements. The study-specific agreements become part of the data transfer form.

After transfer, each dataset gets a unique and persistent identifier (DOI) and will be curated by Qualiservice (including checks for anonymization and contextualization). The study report will be published together with internationally readable metadata. A proof-read by the researcher finalizes the process.

Get Support in Managing Research Data:

In order to support data archiving and sharing, Qualiservice offers guidelines and advice for all parts of the research data life cycle. This includes information on contextualization and anonymization procedures, aspects of data protection and research ethics as well as the choice of data sharing strategies.

Guided by the FAIR principles for scientific data management and stewardship – Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Re-usability - we provide sustainable infrastructures. Consulting services are flexible and start with the funding application, where resources for data preparation and curation can be claimed. We support researchers in creating a study-specific data management plan that is aimed at preparing the data for archiving already during the research process itself and thus it prevents an accumulation of tasks at the end of the research project.

