

# Policies for Open Access to Research Data

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*Mark Thorley*

*NERC / RCUK / CODATA*

*[mark.thorley@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:mark.thorley@nerc.ac.uk)*

*@MarkRThorley*



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# The challenges of research in a digital age

Life was so much simpler in the 'good old days'



Laurentius de Voltolina - Liber ethicorum des Henricus de Alemannia  
See: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Laurentius\\_de\\_Voltolina\\_001.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Laurentius_de_Voltolina_001.jpg)

# Creative destruction

- Schumpeterian creative destruction
  - The disruptive process of transformation that accompanies innovation.
- Francis Bacon (1620): comparing the invention of printing to those of firearms and the nautical compass
  - These three have changed the whole face and state of the world; first in literature, second in warfare, third in navigation; whence have followed innumerable changes, in so much that no empire, no sect, no star seems to have exerted greater power and influence in human affairs than these mechanical discoveries
- Add to this digital technologies

# Common Principles on Data Policy



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## RCUK Common Principles on Data Policy

Making research data available to users is a core part of the Research Councils' remit and is undertaken in a variety of ways. We are committed to transparency and to a coherent approach across the research base. These RCUK common principles on data policy provide an overarching framework for individual Research Council policies on data policy.

### Principles

- Publicly funded research data are a public good, produced in the public interest, which should be made openly available with as few restrictions as possible in a timely and responsible manner that does not harm intellectual property.
- Institutional and project specific data management policies and plans should be in accordance with relevant standards and community best practice. Data with acknowledged long-term value should be preserved and remain accessible and usable for future research.
- To enable research data to be discoverable and effectively re-used by others, sufficient metadata should be recorded and made openly available to enable other researchers to understand the research and re-use potential of the data. Published results should always include information on how to access the supporting data.
- RCUK recognises that there are legal, ethical and commercial constraints on release of research data. To ensure that the research process is not damaged by inappropriate release of data, research organisation policies and practices should ensure that these are considered at all stages in the research process.
- To ensure that research teams get appropriate recognition for the effort involved in collecting and analysing data, those who undertake Research Council funded work may be entitled to a limited period of privileged use of the data they have collected to enable them to publish the results of their research. The length of this period varies by research discipline and, where appropriate, is discussed further in the published policies of individual Research Councils.
- In order to recognise the intellectual contributions of researchers who generate, preserve and share key research datasets, all users of research data should acknowledge the sources of their data and abide by the terms and conditions under which they are accessed.
- It is appropriate to use public funds to support the management and sharing of publicly-funded research data. To maximise the research benefit which can be gained from limited budgets, the mechanisms for these activities should be both efficient and cost-effective in the use of public funds.

# Framework for the data policies of the individual research councils

#### Latest Tweets



Research Councils UK @research\_uk 12 Jan  
Via STFC: STFC supported astronomer a

#### Efficiency & Effectiveness

- Improving how we work
- Efficiency 2011-15: Ensuring

#### RCUK International

Find out more about RCUK's  
International activities and Overseas

see: [www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/datapolicy/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/datapolicy/)



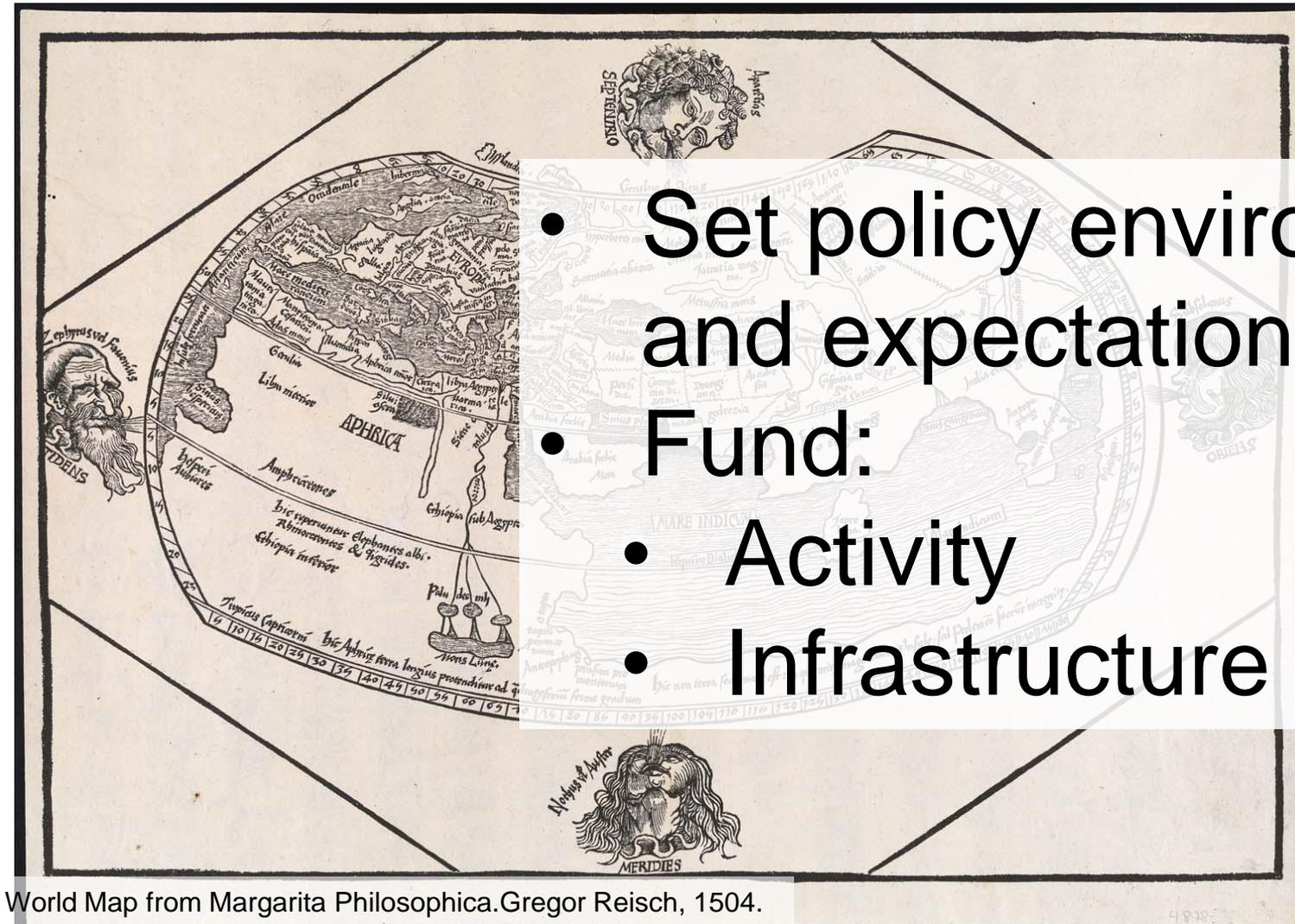
Why funders are interested in data

# The 3 Rs

- Re-use
- Re-purpose
- Re-produce

# What can funders do?

- Set policy environment and expectations.
- Fund:
  - Activity
  - Infrastructure

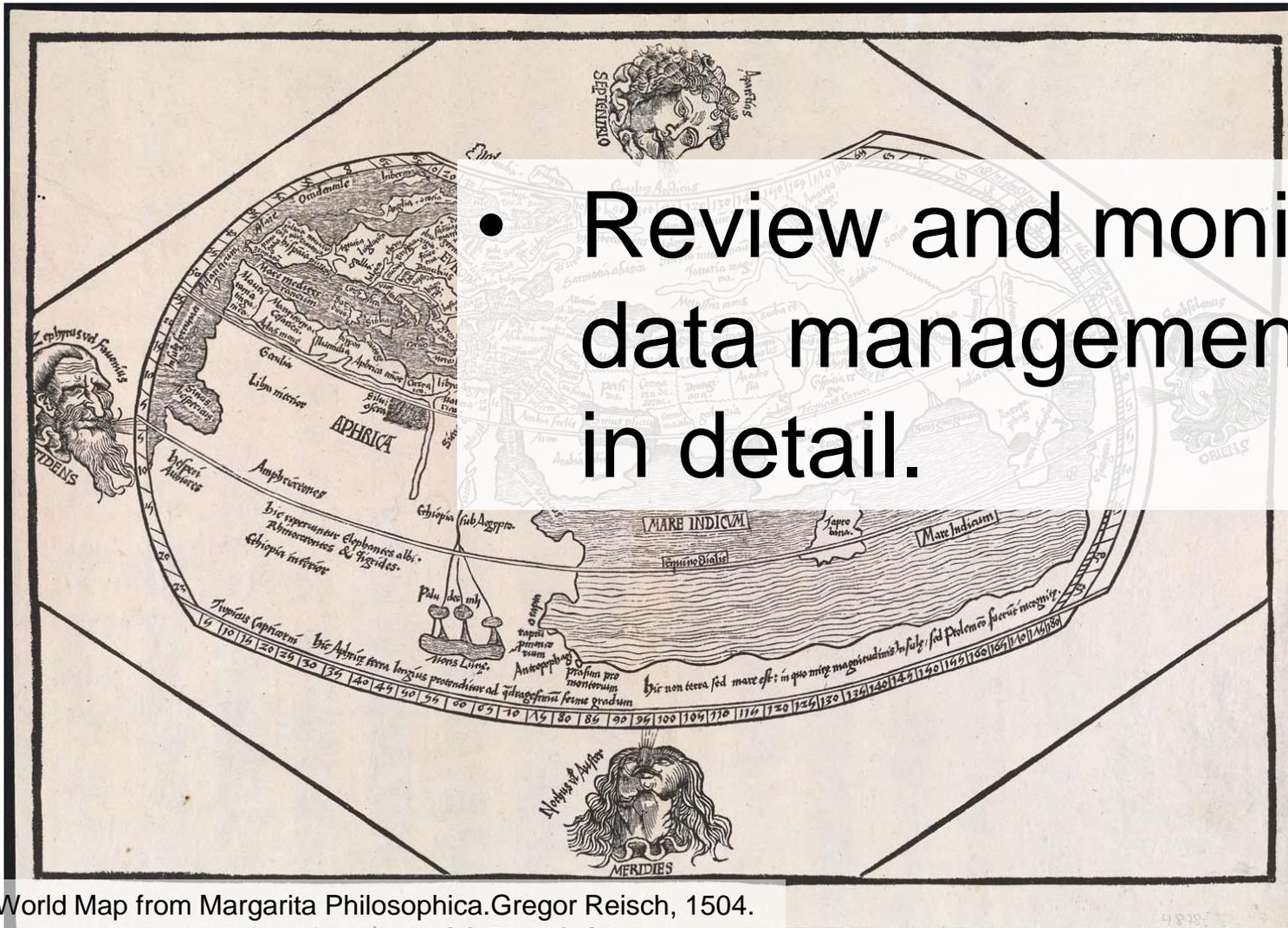


World Map from Margarita Philosophica. Gregor Reisch, 1504.

[www.oshermaps.org/map/241.0001](http://www.oshermaps.org/map/241.0001) CC-BY-NC-SA.

# What can funders not do?

- Review and monitor data management plans in detail.



World Map from Margarita Philosophica. Gregor Reisch, 1504.

[www.oshermaps.org/map/241.0001](http://www.oshermaps.org/map/241.0001) CC-BY-NC-SA.

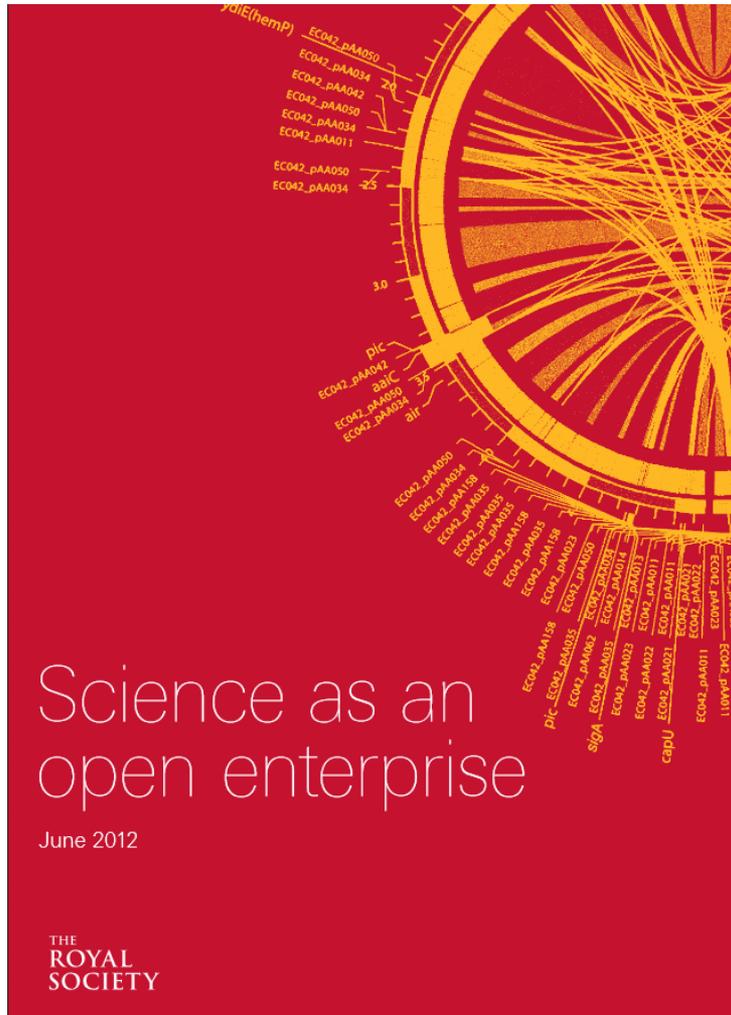
# The future

- Open data management becomes part of the fabric of research practice.
- Those who fund research will need to fund activity and infrastructure - the 'well-found-lab'.
- Research funders may pay for specific e-infrastructure, however, responsibility mostly lies with research institutions.

# Challenges and opportunities

- Data management is too important to be left to data managers!
- Open data management becomes part of the fabric of research.
- Recognition that open research (open data and open publication) may cost more than 'closed' research.
- Can we manage everything for ever? How do we become selective?

# Open data



Acknowledgement to Geoffrey Boulton and colleagues who have got issues of Research data onto the mainstream agenda.

The next  
**big challenge**  
for research institutions.

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Excellence  
with impact

# QUESTIONS ?

