

MWA DATA ACCESS POLICY

Version 0.1 2012 July 01 (Tingay)

Version 1.0 (Heald), approved by the MWA Board on 2019 December 13

- Updated for consistency with MWA Phase II Collaboration Agreement

Version 1.1 (Walker), 2021 December 13

- Inclusion of data licensing details as new Item 11, approved at Dec 10 Board meeting

Version 1.2 (Snadden), 2025 September 9

- Inclusion of beamformer data products at item 3, approved at Aug 28 Board meeting
- Inclusion of immediate public access and non-restriction by the proprietary period of calibration observations at item 11, as approved at Aug 28 Board meeting

Version 1.2 (Snadden), 2025 December 11

- Inclusion of the capture of MWA VCS data for testing of the MWAX Beamformer at item 11, approved at Dec 11 Board meeting

We here present the Data Access Policy for the Murchison Widefield Array (MWA).

1. This policy will be periodically reviewed and revised by the MWA Board, according to changes in project conditions;
2. If users of this policy identify issues relevant to this policy, but not explicitly covered by this policy, these issues can be raised in writing to the MWA Board Chair, for consideration by the Board;
3. Raw Data are defined as the output of the MWA sub-systems up to and including the output of the voltage capture system, correlator, real-time beamformer and the All-Sky Virtual Observatory (MWA-ASVO);
4. The MWA collaboration will be provided with access to Raw Data on a best-effort basis. Transport and processing of MWA Raw data beyond the last point of deposition will be the responsibility of an individual researcher or relevant science collaboration.
5. This policy applies to all Raw Data taken with the full MWA during the operations phase of the instrument. It applies to MWA data acquired both with standard MWA hardware, and also with external or third party instruments. The MWA operations phase began when the MWA commissioning period was declared complete. Data access during the preceding pre-operations phase was described in the *MWA Data Access Policy (MWA pre-operations phase)*.
6. This policy is superseded by any requirements on data access imposed by the NCRIS funding agreement made between Astronomy Australia Ltd and Curtin University.

7. Calibration observations (that is, MWA observations tagged in the metadata as calibrators, including "observatory" scheduled calibrators and project-specific calibrators) are all immediately available to the public and are not restricted by the proprietary period (see clause 11). This exception to the proprietary period reflects the universal utility of calibration observations to all users of MWA data.
8. For observations conducted under Guaranteed Time (GT) as defined in the *MWA Time Allocation Policy*, all Individual Members of the MWA Collaboration (as defined in the *MWA Individual Membership Policy*) will have full and immediate access to all Raw Data as defined in item 3, with the exception of Epoch of Reionisation (EoR) data as described in item 13;
9. For observations conducted under Open Access (OA) as defined in the *MWA Time Allocation Policy*, Individual Members of the MWA Collaboration (as defined in the *MWA Individual Membership Policy*) will not have access to Raw Data as defined in item 3, until the proprietary period described in item 10 below has passed;
10. The individuals and teams awarded observing time under OA have sole access to the Raw Data generated from those observations, for the proprietary period described in item 12;
11. Engineering/test data collected by the MWA Operations team (under project codes starting with "C") are not verified for science, consequently such data will be made available to the MWA Operations team only by default. MWA Members can apply to the MWA Director to have such data released for science purposes, at which point any released data will be available to the full collaboration (until the embargo period ends at which time it will become publicly available);
12. The proprietary period for Raw Data will be 18 months from the date of observation, with the exception of EoR data as described in item 14;
13. At the end of the proprietary period, Raw Data will be made available to the wider astronomical community on a shared risk basis, under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) Creative Commons license.
14. MWA Science Working Groups are formed as described in the *MWA Science Working Group Policy*. In some cases, the respective scientific collaborations may process Raw Data generated from GT observations into higher-order data products and/or special purpose archives. In such cases, the corresponding scientific collaborations may set their own policies for access to and public release of these higher-order data products. The enactment and any subsequent modification of such policies must be approved by the MWA Board as described in the *MWA Science Working Group Policy*.

15. MWA Raw Data taken specifically for Epoch of Reionisation experiments are subject to additional restrictions on data access, as follows:

- a. The proprietary period for EoR Raw Data will be 18 months from the end of the corresponding observing season.
- b. Access to EoR Raw Data that are still within their proprietary period will normally be restricted to members of the MWA EoR collaboration. Individual Members of the MWA Collaboration who are not members of the MWA EoR collaboration and who wish to analyse these data for non-EoR purposes may seek access to these data by making a request to the MWA Director.

16. In the event of a dispute over data access, the MWA Director will make a recommendation to the MWA Board, whose decision on this issue will be final.