

**CRCD-P4: Secure Research Computing and Data Environment Usage Policy**

Adopted on: 7/21/25

**Purpose:** This policy outlines the framework governing usage of the Secure Research Computing and Data Environment, particularly the aspects pertaining to access, account duration and data retention.

**Scope:** The Secure Research Computing and Data Environment is accessible exclusively for projects that require heightened security protocols to manage access to specific data. This policy applies to all approved users, including internal and external researchers. The Open Science Research Computing and Data Environment is regulated by a separate usage policy, CRCD-P3.

**Definitions:**

- **Secure Research Computing and Data Environment (SRCDE):** a restricted-access environment (comprised of computing, networking, and storage infrastructure, software, and standard operating procedures) protected behind heightened security protocols to comply with regulatory requirements for data access. The SRCDE is NIST SP 800-171 Rev. 2 compliant (self-attested) and is suitable for satisfying controlled-access data requirements from NSF and NIH. **Important Restriction:** This environment is unsuitable for Department of Defense (DoD) contracts involving Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI).
- **Data retention:** the duration for which data is maintained and made accessible.

**Policy Governing Access:** All University of Pittsburgh faculty or center directors, who are working with regulated research data, can request access to the Secure Research Computing and Data Environment. Access will be contingent on approval from the appropriate unit within Pitt Research; for human research, approval is provided through the IRB process; for regulated data that is covered under a data use agreement, the Office of Sponsored Programs is responsible for approval. Approval must address what will be in the secure environment, why, and for how long.

- **Active Duration:** The period during which the project is designated as active will be stipulated in the application and approval documents. An active project is a requirement for access to the SRCDE.
- **Data Retention Period:** Data can remain within the SRCDE as long as it pertains to an active project.

**Cost of Service:** This service will require financial support from PI or their units except to the extent it's subsidized by central funding.

**Contact Information:** If you have questions about the above policy governing the secure research computing and data environment, please contact the Center for Research Computing and Data at [crchd@pitt.edu](mailto:crchd@pitt.edu).