BASIC STEPS
PSEUDONYMIZATION
in small-scale quantitative research

↘ replacing directly identifiable variables in a dataset with a pseudonym. Also known as coding.

Contact a specialist within your own organization if you have questions about implementation of (one of) the measures described below. **Institutional policy** always takes precedence over the general basic steps listed here.

PLAN AHEAD

In the data management plan, describe **why** and **how** you are going to pseudonymize data, how **access** to the elsewhere stored key file and the dataset is regulated and what happens to the key file and the data when the project is **completed**

SPLIT

Identify the following categories:

- data necessary for identification to organize research or to communicate with *participants*

Store these data in a **key file**

- data required for *analysis*

Preferably stored in a **data management system**

- data *not needed* (e.g. coming with a supplied dataset)

These data should be **deleted**

ACT

Pseudonymize the data **as quickly as possible** (i.e. immediately when collecting data and after receiving a dataset sent by another party)

DIFFERENTIATE

Use **different pseudonyms** for different datasets. This prevents that data from participants who feature in multiple datasets can be linked via the pseudonym

SEPARATE

Store the key file **separately** from the research data

PLAY SAFE

Make sure that the key file and the data are adequately **backed up** and **secured**

OUTSOURCE

Access to the key file should preferably be managed by someone who is **not involved** in the research project

PREVENT

Take **technical** and **organizational** measures to prevent unauthorized people from linking the key file to the research data. After the data collection, persons in the **role** of the researcher should be **denied** access to the key file

ENSURE ACCESS

Limit access to the key file, but ensure that within the organization there is always **someone** who has access

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Landelijk Coördinatiepunt Research Data Management