

Research Drive: Service Description

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is SURF Research Drive?

SURF Research Drive is a data sharing service with a specific focus on the sharing of research data. This document will provide a service description of SURF Research Drive.

1.2 Background

Scientific research is becoming more and more a collaborative effort which spans over multiple individuals and organisations who may be distributed all over the world. These organisations may be scientific institutes, universities, colleges and private industry. To enable this research it is essential that people have a way to easily share data. Until recently, data sharing has been difficult. This is where SURF Research Drive comes into play. SURF Research Drive provides users with an easy to use user interface similar to SURFdrive, but at the same time, it is specifically targeted at the diverse requirements of the scientific research community.

Key elements of SURF Research Drive are flexibility and self-service. Flexibility is needed in order to easily adapt to the needs of the research community and self-service to allow people to configure their own user accounts and manage quota etcetera.

SURF Research Drive supports the coupling with external storage systems, which may be anywhere in the world. This feature allows you to have one view on your data regardless of where the data is stored. From that same user interface you will also be able to share that data. These external storage systems can, for example, be storage systems inside your own organisation or storage systems of SURF like our tape archive or your home directory on the national super computer.

Another important feature is the flexibility in authentication mechanisms. We support authentication with the user ID of your own organisation through SURFconext, or your user ID in SURF's central user administration.

1.3 What you will not find in this document

Request, change, terminate services

For the application, modification or termination of a service you can use the helpdesk or contact your primary contact at SURF. Our procedure related to application, modification or termination of a service is described in detail in the Service Level Specification document.

Conditions

You can find the conditions relating to services in the SURF offer.

2. Services

2.1 Overview

Research Drive is offered in two different varieties:

- Community instance
Here you share the Research Drive service with other users from other organisations
- Your own branded instance
Here you can have your own private Research Drive instance with the branding of your own organisation.

2.2 Functionality

General

The SURF Research Drive is flexible data sharing service with a specific focus on the sharing of research data.

Accounts and roles

Research Drive offers a dashboard where different roles with associated privileges can be defined to manage users and project folders in order to make everything completely self-service. More detailed information may be found at: <https://edu.nl/nqhu9>.

Authentication

Access may be via SURFconext using your institutional account, SURF CUA accounts or local Research Drive accounts.

Collaborative editing

Apart from just a data sharing service Research Drive will also provides additional functionality such as OnlyOffice which provides collaborative editing of office documents.

Jupyter (experimental)

Further, for the branded instances we offer Jupyter where Jupyter notebooks can run in the Research Drive environment. This way Jupyter notebooks are also easily shared by users. This service is still in the pilot phase. The notebooks environment is fit to perform some light tasks but not fit for heavy number crunching.

A number of different notebooks are offered such as a “Data Science Notebook” or a “R notebook”. Upon request we may expand the selection of available notebooks to fit your needs. Investigating possibilities to have customisable notebooks is on our roadmap.

Note that the notebooks are not persistent, so changes made by users to the software installed on the notebook will vanish when the notebook is stopped.

2.3 General Support Window:

At working days from 9am to 5pm.

2.4 Getting Access to Research Drive

If you are interested in purchasing SURF Research Drive or you want more information, please contact info@surf.nl.

3. Support and Helpdesk

3.1 The SURF Helpdesk

Our support can be contacted through our [Servicedesk](#). This helpdesk is manned during office hours (from 09:00 until 17:00). You will receive a response within two hours.

If you need consultancy regarding how to integrate SURF Research Drive in your scientific work, then have a look at our [consultancy service](#)

3.2 Support

It is always to contact us for questions, requests, complaints or reporting malfunctions through the channels mentioned in the previous section. However, support on external clients to use with the service or end-user support on Jupyter notebooks is out of scope of this service.

4. Maintenance

We are continuously working on improving our service. Many changes can be executed without down time. However sometimes it may be necessary to put the service in maintenance in order to perform the necessary activities. For this we have a fixed maintenance window on Tuesdays from 18:00 until 24:00.

Maintenance will be communicated at least two weeks in advance.

5. Roadmap

SURF Research Drive is a service which is undergoing continuous development. Improving the service is an ongoing activity. We would very much like to involve you in this process. If you have ideas about functionality that you miss and would like to have then we really value your input. We may contact you and ask for such information.

Of course the development we do for SURF Research Drive is subject to constraints related to available resources, finances and priorities.

6. Quality

6.1 Privacy, Security and GDPR

The SURF Research Drive service provides you guarantees and transparency regarding ownership, confidentiality, and availability of your data. SURF Research Drive aims to be fully compliant with the “[Juridisch Normenkader Cloud Services Hoger Onderwijs](#)” and GDPR. SURF can enter into a Data Processing Agreement (verwerkersovereenkomst) with an institution, such agreement is required under GDPR when an organisation shares personal data with SURF.

The SURF Research Drive service will be subject to yearly security audits. These audits will not only consider the security aspects of the service but also compliance with ISO27001 and the “Juridisch Normenkader Cloud Services Hoger Onderwijs”.

6.2 Service Management

SURF is implementing [FitSM](#). FitSM is an ITIL-based standards family aimed at enabling effective IT service management in the broadest range of organizations operating in federation.

6.3 Client satisfaction

Surveys are conducted on a frequent basis to assess user/client satisfaction. This includes regular service reviews with key stakeholders in the community.

6.4 Service Level Specification

The Service Level Specification of this service may be found here soon.

6.5 Availability

The service is 24x7 available. However, the service is only monitored during office hours. Although the service is redundant to a large degree, both in terms of hardware and software, the risk still exists that the service experiences an outage during the weekend or at night time which will not be addressed until the first working day after the incident has occurred.

The availability and maintenance of the Identity Provider (IdP) used by SURFconext is the responsibility of the Institute.

The availability that we will deliver is 99.9% on a yearly basis, planned maintenance excluded. With availability we mean the ability to download your data from the service.

The availability of this service is monitored every few minutes. For this we need to use a dedicated account on both the shared as well as the branded instances to check the availability and other functionalities of the service. This dedicated account is only used for this purpose and nothing else.

6.6 Backups

SURF Research Drive does not provide backups for erroneously deleted or modified files. However, there is trashbin and versioning functionality in the application. This can be used to retrieve such files.

In case of a disaster or hardware failure we use our disaster recovery backup for retrieving the data; the Recovery Point Objective is 24 hours. For a branded instance the disaster recovery backup is included in the offer. These backups are made every 24 hours.

6.7 Encryption

The data at rest in Research Drive is always encrypted on the server. Data in transit transported to or from Research Drive is also encrypted.

7. Reporting

We will report on the usage of the service monthly. These reports will contain information on storage usage and number of users and more.

8. Financial

8.1 Pricing

Please contact klantsupport@surf.nl

8.2 Invoicing

The usage of SURF Research Drive will be billed once a month.