Policy document regarding distribution and storing of generated data:

The DNA sequencing unit generates DNA and RNA sequence data as well as genotyping data for researchers of the University of Stellenbosch as well as various clients from outside the university. The volume of data varies depending on the specific application. This document details how we make the data available to our clients and how long we keep the data.

General data safety and security:

The DNA sequencing unit stores the data it generates on networked storage devices that is only accessible by the staff of the unit. However, security breaches are always possible. Security breaches include both the loss of data as well as the theft of data. In addition to security breaches, hardware and software failures can also lead to a loss of data. To guard against loss of data, we aim to always have data on more than one storage server.

Capillary sequencing and fragment analysis:

Capillary sequencing and fragment analysis generate relatively small datasets per experiment. After the data is analysed, the data is placed in folders, zipped and e-mailed to the submitter. We recommend that project leaders ensure that they regularly get copies of the sequence data their students generate. The sequencing unit will retain the sequence data for up to 5 years. After 5 years the data will be deleted!

Next-Generation Sequencing data:

The volume of data generated by modern NGS sequencing instruments are much higher than capillary sequencing and fragment analysis and as a result, the Sequencing unit cannot keep NGS data for prolonged periods. After data analysis, the sequence data is made available on our password-protected FTP site for download and the relevant username and password is sent to the sample submitter. The sample submitter then has one month to download the data from the FTP site. After one month the data will be deleted from both the FTP site as well as the sequencing instrument and the sequencing unit will have no copy of the data. We recommend that project leaders ensure that they regularly get copies of the sequence data their students generate and that they keep safe copies of the data in an archive.

Quality assessment data for Next-Generation Sequencing projects:

The DNA sequencing facility will retain the quality assessment information relating to samples submitted for NGS for 5 years. After 5 years the data will be deleted!