GRASS CEILING

D7.4

Data Management Plan and Ethical Guidelines Update 2

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Data Management Plan and Ethical Guidelines – Update 2

1. Executive Summary

This Data Management Plan (DMP) encompasses the datasets and deliverables produced over the full lifecycle of the GRASS CEILING project. The project has generated qualitative and quantitative data aimed at empowering women innovators in rural and agricultural communities and supporting socio-ecological transitions. All data has been managed in accordance with FAIR principles. Findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability have been addressed through structured data storage, metadata creation, and open access dissemination routes, while fully respecting GDPR and ethical obligations.

This final version of the DMP confirms how data has been collected, processed, anonymised, shared, archived, and preserved beyond the end of the project. It also documents responsibilities for long-term data stewardship and confirms compliance with institutional, national, and European ethical and data protection requirements.

2. Updates on Data Management Plan - update 2

This final update to the Data Management Plan reflects the completion of all data collection, analysis, dissemination, and archiving activities within the GRASS CEILING project.

Human stories produced through blogs and VLOGs as part of Tasks 3.7 and 6.2 were collected with explicit informed consent. These materials have been published on the GRASS CEILING website and associated social media channels, with comment functions disabled to prevent harmful or inappropriate engagement. All audiovisual materials are managed, stored, monitored, and archived by the WP6 Leader, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute Zaragoza (IAMZ-CIHEAM), in compliance with GDPR and institutional data governance policies.

Data generated through the European Policy Forum for women-led innovation in agriculture and rural areas under Task 6.4, including stakeholder lists, consultation papers, surveys, participation records, and workshop materials, have been collected, processed, and stored in line with GDPR requirements. Access to personal data is restricted and limited to authorised project partners.

No additional unforeseen data types or ethical issues emerged during the final phase of the project.

3. Introduction

This final version of the Data Management Plan documents the completed data management

processes implemented throughout the GRASS CEILING project and confirms arrangements for the long-term preservation, accessibility, and stewardship of project data beyond the funded project period, in line with the Horizon Europe Grant Agreement.

All data collection, processing, analysis, dissemination, and archiving activities planned within the project have been completed. Qualitative and quantitative datasets generated across the nine case study countries were managed in accordance with FAIR principles and relevant ethical and legal requirements. Appropriate measures were applied to ensure data quality, security, anonymisation, and controlled access where personal or sensitive data were involved.

Research outputs intended for public dissemination have been made openly accessible through recognised platforms, including Open Research Europe, institutional repositories, and the GRASS CEILING project website. Persistent identifiers and structured metadata have been applied to maximise findability and reuse. Data not suitable for open access due to ethical or GDPR considerations are securely archived and remain accessible only under restricted conditions and subject to approval by the relevant data-holding institutions.

Arrangements for long-term data preservation are in place. Responsibility for archived datasets remains with the respective partner institutions that generated the data, in accordance with their institutional, national, and European data governance frameworks. Project administrative and shared documentation stored on the GRASS CEILING SharePoint platform will be retained for a total of ten years, with responsibility transitioning from NuaFund to South East Technological University (SETU) after five years, in line with SETU's Data Retention Policy.

This final DMP confirms that GRASS CEILING has met all data management, ethical, and data protection obligations set out in the Grant Agreement, and that no outstanding data management or ethical issues remain at the conclusion of the project.

4. Data Summary

Overview of academic datasets

The key objective of GRASS CEILING was to advance rural and farm women's socio-ecological innovations through primary data collection and secondary data analysis. All planned data collection activities were completed across the nine case study countries participating in the project.

The sharing of qualitative data generated within the project was governed by participants' informed consent, which determined the extent to which data could be shared or disseminated. All academic partners were responsible for ensuring the quality, organisation, management, and secure storage of data generated within their respective research activities, as well as for the preparation of data and associated metadata for publication, preservation, and archiving.

Primary data collection

Primary data were generated through three main strands of research activity:

1. **Foresight exercise (WP1)**
   A foresight exercise was conducted using datasets from across the nine Consortium member countries and at EU level. This activity explored the position of women in agriculture and rural innovation, identifying shared and divergent features between and within countries.

2. **Focus groups and interviews (WP2)**
   Four focus groups were conducted in each case study country, comprising two groups with men and two with women innovators, including one focus group conducted as part of the Living Lab process. In addition, fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted in each country: twelve with representatives of agricultural and rural support organisations, trainers and advisers, scientists, banks and funders, and policymakers, and two with digital experts. Data generated through interviews and focus groups were used to identify gender norms, structural barriers, and institutional factors influencing women innovators' participation, recognition, and support within AKIS and the broader innovation ecosystem.

3. **Living Labs (WP3)**
   Living Labs were implemented across all nine case study countries, with a total of 81 Living Lab meetings conducted over the project lifecycle. These participatory action research (PAR) activities generated qualitative data including discussion outputs, researcher observations, and reflective logs. The data illustrate and support women's current and future roles in sustainable farming, rural economies, communities, and innovation processes.

   With participants' consent, and following anonymisation and privacy safeguards, data generated through Living Labs were shared:

   - among Consortium partners to support the co-creation of knowledge
   - through annual showcase events highlighting women's socio-ecological innovations (D3.3)
   - through training toolkits and the Innovation Training Academy and MOOC (D6.3)
   - through human stories disseminated via blog posts, VLOGs, photo reportage, and media partnerships (D3.7, D6.1, D6.2)

   Audiovisual materials, including VLOGs, were managed, stored, monitored, and archived by the WP6 Leader, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute Zaragoza (IAMZ-CIHEAM), in compliance with GDPR and institutional data governance policies.

Secondary data collection

Secondary data was collected, analysed, and integrated into project outputs from the following six sources:

1. European Union-wide databases (Eurostat, FADN, EC) and national statistical databases which informed the foresight analysis undertaken in WP1.
2. Existing foresight studies at EU and global levels, analysed to explore mega-trends and plausible futures for women's roles in agriculture, rural economies, and communities up to 2040.

3. European Union and national agriculture and rural policies, including the Gender Equality Strategy and the European Pillar of Social Rights, benchmarked using templates developed in WP4.
4. National legal frameworks for land transfer, analysed using a benchmarking template to assess gender implications across partner countries (WP4).
5. Policy developments at national level relating to the CAP Strategic Plan, the Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy, and the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas, drawing on outputs from WP4 (D4.2) and WP6 (D6.4), supported by interviews, questionnaires, and existing policy monitoring indicators (WP5).
6. Data generated through the European Policy Forum for women-led innovation in agriculture and rural areas (Task 6.4), including stakeholder lists, consultation papers, surveys, participation records, and workshop materials.

   All secondary datasets were properly documented, acknowledged, and referenced in line with FAIR principles and relevant usage conditions.

Overview of non-academic datasets

Administrative datasets

Datasets generated and reused within GRASS CEILING include a range of formats across the seven Work Packages, including text (.doc, .docx, .pdf), tabular data (.xls, .xlsx, .csv), audiovisual materials (M4A), and images (.jpg). In total, the project generated nine qualitative datasets and nine quantitative secondary datasets, alongside audiovisual materials and photographs primarily associated with WP3 and WP6. The overall data volume amounted to approximately 7GB. The increase in data volume compared to earlier estimates reflects the inclusion of audiovisual materials associated with VLOGs and the online Demonstrator platform. No significant deviation from the anticipated data volume occurred during the project.

Administrative datasets also included financial records, contractual materials, and project management records. These datasets are securely stored by the appropriate administrative departments within each partner institution, with copies of select files retained by the Project Management team, where required, for evidence purposes in the event of an audit.

Data on Consortium members

Data relating to Consortium members include names, institutional affiliations, roles within GRASS CEILING, and professional contact details. This data was used to support internal communication and coordination and was managed in compliance with GDPR requirements.

Data on actors and stakeholders

Data was collected on external actors and stakeholders involved in GRASS CEILING activities, including women innovators, members of the European Policy Forum for women-led innovation in agriculture and rural areas, AKIS providers, policymakers, financial institutions, cooperatives, innovation training providers, and digital experts.
Collected data included:

- names of individuals and organisations
- professional contact details
- format and record of participation (e.g. focus groups, interviews, Living Labs, forums)
- attendance records

- audio recordings or transcripts where applicable

All stakeholder data was collected with informed consent, stored securely, anonymised where required, and processed in accordance with GDPR and institutional ethical guidelines.

5. FAIR data

GRASS CEILING applied the FAIR principles throughout the full lifecycle of the project to ensure that data generated was findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable, while fully respecting ethical and legal obligations.

Findable data: Within the GRASS CEILING Consortium

All documents and datasets generated during the project followed agreed formats and naming conventions to ensure internal traceability and version control. Documents were produced in standard formats including text files (.doc, .docx, .pdf), tabular data (.xls, .xlsx, .csv), audiovisual files (M4A), and images (.jpg).

During the project, working documents and non-sensitive materials were shared via email when appropriate, while finalised documents and all key project materials were stored on a secure, password-protected SharePoint platform. The SharePoint environment was structured by Work Package and curated by the Project Manager and Project Coordinator to ensure consistency, access control, and GDPR compliance.

All final deliverables were stored in their approved versions and uploaded to the European Commission portal and the project website as required.

The chief documents created and shared across the Consortium are clustered/filed on the project SharePoint platform as follows:

SharePoint Project Folder Structure:

1: Project Legal Documentation
   a. Consortium Agreement
   b. Grant Agreement & Annexes (most up to date version downloaded from Portal)

2: Work Packages Folders
   WP1
   WP2
   WP3
   WP4
   WP5
   WP6
   WP7

3: Consortium Contact List

4. Meetings
    a. Consortium/Annual Project Meetings
        I. Title of Meeting-Online/City-Date
            i. Agenda & Logistics
            ii. Presentations & Supporting Documents
            iii. Meeting Minutes
            iv. Attendance List

    b. Work Package Leader Meetings
        I. Title of Meeting-Online-Date
            i. Agenda
            ii. Presentations & Supporting Documents (if relevant)
            iii. Meeting Minutes

    c. Other Project Meetings
        I. Title of Meeting-Online/City-Date
            i. Agenda & Logistics
            ii. Presentations & Supporting Documents (if relevant)
            iii. Meeting Minutes
            iv. Attendance List

5. Project Reports & Documents
    a. Synthesis Reports
    b. Mid-term and final reports
    c. Practice abstracts
    d. Policy briefs
    e. Drafts of scientific articles
    f. Draft Deliverables
    g. Approved Deliverables Uploaded onto Portal

6. Project Templates
    a. Templates for interviews and focus groups
    b. Presentation Template
    c. Press Release Template
    d. Deliverables Template
    e. Timesheet Template
    f. Other Templates as deemed necessary.

The naming conventions for saving project documents is as follows:

Project Acronym–What the document is–Version-DateMonthShortYear

Example: GC-MeetingMinutesOfficialKick-Off-Final-200123
Example: GC-MeetingMinutesFirstConsortiumMeeting-V1-210323
Example: GC-Deliverable9.1-Final-240523

The naming convention when creating meeting* folders is as follows:

Name of Meeting-Online/City-DateMonthShortYear

Example: Kick-OffMeeting-Online-200123
Example: 2ndConsortiumMeeting-Brussels-210323

*If the meeting lasts longer than one day, the date of the first day of the meeting only is used.

Security of documents

All documents associated with the project are assessed following the security levels below and access is enabled accordingly:

Dissemination Level	
PU	Public
CO	Confidential, only for members of the Consortium (including the Commission Services)

All documents were classified according to dissemination level. Public documents were made openly available. Access rights were managed centrally to ensure data protection compliance.

Documents for Presentation and Public Dissemination

All dissemination materials followed the GRASS CEILING visual identity guidelines developed under WP6. These included presentation templates, publication templates, and branding materials. Dissemination assets were stored centrally on SharePoint and used consistently across conferences, workshops, and public events.

Findable data: Sharing research outputs from GRASS CEILING

Research outputs generated by GRASS CEILING were made findable through recognised dissemination channels. These include the Open Research Europe platform, institutional repositories of academic partners, and the GRASS CEILING project website. Where applicable, outputs were indexed by search engines and academic discovery tools.

Research outputs from GRASS CEILING are findable through the following conventions:

Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)

Digital Object Identifiers were assigned to publicly available research outputs, including journal articles, reports, and datasets where applicable. This ensured persistent referencing and long-term discoverability.

ORCID

Members of the GRASS CEILING Consortium are advised to sign up for a researcher identifier, ORCID number. ORCID numbers were shared on all publications from the project, increasing their visibility.

Metadata

Three kinds of metadata were incorporated into the project to increase traceability: descriptive, administrative, and structural.

- *Descriptive Metadata*

This encompasses features to identify intellectual content, including title, author/s, author/s details, publisher and abstract and keywords. Persistent identifiers were included. Details of funding were also featured, including the funding programme, grant project name, acronym, and number, as well as licensing terms. This facilitates the visibility of the content of outputs and their discovery online. Responsibility for the selection of relevant keywords and metadata lay with the appropriate lead researcher, Task Leaders, and Work Package Leaders.

- *Structural metadata*

This provides details on data structure, type, organisation, and relationships. These include page numbers, version numbers, date of revision, and the organisation of data, including table of contents, chapters, headings, and subheadings.

- *Administrative metadata*

This provides further details on documents about their management. This includes technical information such as why, when, and how (e.g., what platforms or software were used) they were generated. Issues of rights and permissions are also involved here, such as who can access the document and how this can be done.

Making data accessible

Co-creation of knowledge is central to the aims of GRASS CEILING. All research outputs from the project followed the Open Access publication route to maximize engagement and accessibility. However, it is essential to note that there are limitations on the data that can be shared. Data from the project were made accessible to external parties where alignment with ethical principles was upheld by the Consortium and agreed by Project Partners.

Personal, or any, information that could serve to identify participants in the qualitative strands of this project established in Section 1 - cannot be shared. Furthermore, participants signed consent forms before their involvement in Living Labs, focus groups and interviews. Participants were also asked if they would be willing for their anonymized data to be made publicly accessible. They had to sign further consent forms before participating in audiovisual or training material related to this project. No additional restrictions on data sharing were identified during the project.

Open Research Europe

Research outputs from GRASS CEILING were shared through the European Union's Open Research Europe repository and assigned Digital Object Identifiers prior to publication. Outputs were published under a CC BY licence.

Primary Data

Primary data was anonymised before being shared. Interview recordings were pseudonymised, and

both oral and written consent were kept in files separate from the data itself. Data was stored in compliance with GDPR and was encrypted. This anonymised data was quoted in academic presentations, research articles and policy briefs.

Participants preparing VLOGs completed additional consent forms prior to sharing content on the GRASS CEILING website (D6.10)

Secondary Data

Data from Eurostat, FADN, and the EC used in the foresight analysis **do not contain** any elements identifying people individually. Instead, gender-based data is used for analysis (e.g., men and women farm owners, men and women involved in socio-ecological innovations, etc.).

Metadata availability

The outputs of this project for public dissemination (including journal articles, benchmarking templates, and training materials) were shared in such a way that they are identified by search engines (e.g., Google, Bing) and research tools (e.g., ResearchGate, Web of Knowledge). This involved carefully designed metadata and assigned keywords and the registration of such materials in relevant websites/repositories.

The appropriate lead researcher, Task and Work Package Leaders, were responsible for selecting relevant keywords and metadata.

Metadata was made openly available and licensed under a public domain dedication CC0, as per the Grant Agreement, following the FAIR principles. This encompassed the following information: datasets (description, date of deposit, author(s), etc.); grant project name -acronym, and number; licensing terms; persistent identifiers for the dataset, the authors involved in the action, and information on organisations involved and the funding body.

Making data interoperable

Interoperability of data enables datasets to be accessible to all project members of GRASS CEILING and with external stakeholders as appropriate.

- *Within the Consortium*

Protocols of knowledge exchange among GRASS CEILING partners were established in Deliverable 6.1. Data was shared using formats that are accessible and agreed upon by all members, where possible, open-source platforms were used for this purpose.

All summaries and descriptions of datasets, deliverables and other outputs are in English. Local languages used by Consortium members may appear in keywords and terms in relation to Living Lab case studies, focus groups and interviews, in which case, English translations were also provided.

- *External stakeholders*

For dissemination with external audiences, conventions were followed for each output and target audience. Scientific outputs were shared in machine-readable formats, in their published versions as appropriate.

For reports, policy briefs, and practice abstracts, language and format were tailored to target audiences and materials were stored on SharePoint and the GRASS CEILING website

Transnational knowledge exchange is also a key aim of GRASS CEILING. The project's findings and policy recommendations were shared directly with representatives of other sister EU projects, policymakers and AKIS actors. This took place through the development of specific dissemination platforms, e.g., regular meetings, sittings of the European Policy Forum for women-led innovation in agriculture and rural areas (D6.5) and three annual GRASS CEILING showcase events (D3.3) – Task 6.4.

GRASS CEILING also disseminated project findings to the public and policymakers through a brochure (D6.4).

Increasing data reuse

Existing datasets reused within the project were properly acknowledged and documented. The provenance of all data sources was recorded, and any restrictions on reuse were respected.

Datasets and supporting documentation generated by GRASS CEILING remain available beyond the end of the project. Requests for access to restricted datasets are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Project Coordinator and relevant data-holding institutions, in line with FAIR principles.

Where artificial intelligence tools were used for transcription purposes, only GDPR-compliant platforms with appropriate security features were employed.

Documentation supporting data analysis and reuse, including interview guides, focus group protocols, and analytical frameworks, is included in published outputs and archived project materials.

Other research output - Demonstrator Outputs and Interactive Platforms

A key output of GRASS CEILING was the delivery of an online Training Academy and webinar in women-led innovation in farming and rural areas comprising a webinar and a series of core training modules (D6.2) and a MOOC (D6.3). Materials developed encapsulated insights from the Living Labs, sharing examples of best practices and successful models of women-led innovation activities. In keeping with FAIR principles, these resources contained clearly identifiable metadata to increase traceability online; they were made available through open access and exist beyond the lifecycle of the project. These materials are managed by CIHEAM Zaragoza for a fixed period after the three-year project term. Women innovators featured in these training materials signed a separate consent form.

Women innovators were also invited to share their experiences and challenges in the form of human stories featured in blogs and VLOGs (D3.7, D6.1 and D6.2). These stories will be shared on the GRASS CEILING website and on the project's social media channels. Participants preparing VLOGs completed an additional consent form, agreeing to record and video their input. The comment feature will be disabled on the website to prevent any negative responses to these human stories. These VLOGs will be managed, stored, shared, and monitored on the website by IAMZ -CIHEAM - leading WP6.

Further key outputs from GRASS CEILING include the resources generated by WP4 to benchmark national and European Union-level policies and land transfer practices. This toolkit comprises

templates for benchmarking and a webinar (D4.1). These materials are intended to exist beyond the lifecycle of the project and will be shared with policymakers in the European Policy Forum for women-led innovation in agriculture and rural areas (D6.5), in the GRASS CEILING showcase events (D3.3 – task 6.4) and on the GRASS CEILING website. This toolkit will also be explained and analysed in scientific articles emanating from this project. It can also be shared on the Open Research Europe repository.

As part of Work Packages 4 and 5, GRASS CEILING co-developed a set of policy tools designed to support gender-responsive policy development for women-led innovation in agriculture and rural areas. These tools include benchmarking frameworks, gender indicators, policy templates, and an innovation compass, developed through iterative engagement with policymakers, statisticians, researchers, and stakeholder networks.

Deliverable D5.2, classified as a Demonstrator (DEM) in the Grant Agreement, was implemented as an interactive online platform rather than solely as a written report. This approach reflects the demonstrator characterisation outlined in the Grant Agreement and aligns with examples referenced therein. The online platform enables users to explore, engage with, and apply the gender indicators developed through the project in an interactive format.

The online Demonstrator is underpinned by a technical note that documents the conceptual framework, methodology, indicator selection, and validation process. This technical note complements the online platform and has been uploaded to the EU Funding and Tenders Portal. The technical note includes a direct link to the online Demonstrator, ensuring that reviewers and users can access the interactive tool via the Portal.

Deliverable D4.1, also classified as a Demonstrator in the Grant Agreement, has been integrated into the same online platform to ensure coherence, usability, and long-term accessibility, despite its parallel publication as a report in the Funding and Tenders Portal.

The co-development process generated qualitative data including consultation records, expert feedback, workshop materials, draft and revised versions of indicators, and tool documentation. All stakeholder engagement activities were conducted in accordance with GDPR and ethical guidelines. Personal data was limited to professional contact details and participation records and was processed on the basis of informed consent.

The online Demonstrator and associated policy tools are publicly accessible and intended for reuse beyond the lifecycle of the project. Long-term hosting and maintenance of the platform will be ensured for a minimum of seven years after project closure, in accordance with Horizon Europe requirements. The GRASS CEILING project website provides a direct link to the platform to support visibility and access.

6. Data security

Each of the project's academic partners was responsible for storing data generated in their respective research domains in adherence to their institutional and national guidelines and obligations.

Best practice in data security following GDPR regulations, including data recovery as well as secure

storage/archiving and transfer of sensitive data, was followed by each Project Partner country following their institutional and national guidelines on ethics and research integrity.

In SETU, all data handling was considered and protected following the Data Protection Regulation (2018) and Freedom of Information Acts (1997, 2003) in accordance with the SETU Record Retention Policy. Data from Living Labs, focus groups and interviews were anonymised and encrypted before storage. Only select research teams had access to this data. The results of the various studies were reported in such a way that participants cannot be identified from the study. In line with SETU's Data Protection Policy (5.4), minimal personal data is collected from participants in the Living Labs, focus groups and interviews.

7. Data Recovery and secure storage/archiving

The GRASS CEILING SharePoint platform has the following safety features:

Secure file sharing:

The sharing features on Microsoft SharePoint enable Project Partners - outside of the hosting organisation to access select files and folders. Access rights by file on SharePoint are determined by permissions afforded by select administrators at the hosting organisation who define user permissions at site, library, folder, and document levels. Features like guest links, password-protected sharing, and expiration dates are used to ensure secure collaboration according to the data protection needs afforded to each document/file/folder and the access rights allocated to relevant persons. This is used to ensure that only authorised Project Partners/contributors can view, edit, or delete documents.

Encryption:

Data stored within SharePoint is encrypted using Azure Storage Service Encryption. Communication between SharePoint and select Project Partners is encrypted using SSL/TLS protocols offered by Microsoft.

Auditing and Logging:

SharePoint provides audit logs and logging capabilities to track user activities, such as document access, modifications, and deletions. This helps identify security breaches and/or unauthorized activities.

Versioning and Backup:

SharePoint allows users to track and manage document versions. This helps prevent accidental data loss and/or unauthorized changes. SharePoint is backed-up on the Cloud every 12 hours. Each backup is retained for 14 days to facilitate data recovery in case of system failures or data corruption. Deleted files are retained for 93 days from the date of deletion.

Anti-Malware Protection:

SharePoint integrates with antivirus and anti-malware solutions to scan documents for potential threats, helping to safeguard against malicious files or malware infections.

8. Data storage

In line with the Grant Agreement, each academic partner remains responsible for the long-term storage and stewardship of data generated within their research activities, in accordance with institutional and national data governance policies.

Audiovisual materials, including VLOGs and human stories generated under Tasks 3.7 and 6.2, are stored and managed by Mediterranean Agronomic Institute Zaragoza (IAMZ-CIHEAM), the WP6 Leader. IAMZ-CIHEAM retains responsibility for monitoring dissemination of these materials via the GRASS CEILING website and social media channels, in compliance with GDPR and participant consent.

The online Demonstrator developed under Deliverables D4.1 and D5.2 is hosted and maintained by AEIDL for a minimum of seven years following project closure, in line with Horizon Europe requirements.

Project-wide documentation stored on the GRASS CEILING SharePoint platform will be retained for a total period of ten years. The Project Management team at NuaFund will manage and curate SharePoint content for five years following project completion. Responsibility will then transfer to South East Technological University (SETU) for a further five years, in line with SETU's Data Retention Policy.

9. Data transfer

During the project, data were transferred within the Consortium, including transfers involving partners in non-EU countries, specifically Norway and the United Kingdom.

All data transfers complied with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Article 15 of the Grant Agreement. Norway and the United Kingdom adhered to GDPR requirements and adequacy arrangements. Transfers were limited to anonymised data and English-language summaries where applicable.

No personal or identifiable data was transferred without appropriate safeguards. All identifying information was removed prior to transfer. No data transfer compliance issues were identified during the project.

10. Ethical guidelines

The GRASS CEILING project adhered to the highest ethical standards throughout its lifecycle, in accordance with the Grant Agreement and the approved Ethics Self-Assessment. Ethical compliance was monitored through Deliverables 7.1, 7.3, and this final update.

All nine case study countries complied with their institutional and national ethical approval processes. Ethics Compliance Statements were completed by Month 6 of the project and were adhered to throughout all research activities. These documents are archived on the project SharePoint platform.

All project partners received training and guidance on ethical standards and data protection requirements. Ethical training was delivered by the Project Coordinator, who is trained in European Commission ethics protocols. This included a dedicated ethics webinar held in Month 5 of the project.

Participants involved in qualitative research activities were informed, consenting adults capable of providing voluntary informed consent. Information sheets and consent forms were provided in accessible language. Participants were informed of their rights, including the right to withdraw, and were provided with contact details for the relevant Data Protection Officer in their country.

Dr James O'Sullivan, Technology Transfer Manager at South East Technological University, was available to ensure that research and innovation being carried out in the GRASS CEILING project adhered to the ethical principles of respect for human autonomy, prevention of harm, fairness, and explicability.

No ethical complaints, incidents, or breaches were reported during the project. All ethical obligations under the Grant Agreement have been fulfilled and no further ethics reporting is required beyond this final deliverable.

Bibliography

The EU'S General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):
https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-topic/data-protection/data-protection-eu_en

South East Technological University (SETU)'S Data Protection Landing Page:
https://www.setu.ie/about/policies-and-documents/data-protection

South East Technological University (SETU)'S Data Governance Policy:
https://www.setu.ie/Craft/assets/policies/Data-Governance-Policy-V1.1-Jan-2024-1.pdf

South East Technological University (SETU)'S Data Protection Policy:
https://www.setu.ie/Craft/assets/policies/Data-Protection-Policy-V1.1-Jan-2024.pdf
https://www.setu.ie/Craft/assets/policies/Data-Retention-Policy_2024-01-19-114851_magk.pdf

South East Technological University (SETU)'S Data Protection Procedures:
https://www.setu.ie/Craft/assets/general/Data-Protection-Procedures-V2-Oct23-PB.pdf