Safe Haven Services: enhanced security for sensitive data

EPCC operates a Trusted Research Environment to host Safe Haven Services owned and controlled by other organisations.

EPCC Trusted Research Environment

A Trusted Research Environment is a highly secure data and compute infrastructure where de-identified sensitive data is made available for analysis.
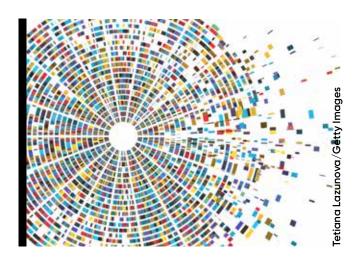
EPCC operates one such Trusted Research Environment under the guidance of the Five Safes model. In this environment, organisations can create and control their own Safe Haven Services to provide access to sensitive data. Each Safe Haven is isolated from all other Safe Havens. A Safe Haven owner can run independent projects where they control who has access to which projects.

Information Governance

Each Safe Haven Controller must design and implement an Information Governance function. This function manages:

• The Controller-Processor relationship with EPCC as the *Safe Setting*, and the relationship with the Data Providers

• The lifecycle of *Safe Projects*

• The conduct of *Safe People*

• The provision of *Safe Data* to researchers

• The elicitation of *Safe Outputs*.

EPCC provides a documented set of information governance processes that define the day-to-day relationship between the Controller and the Safe Setting. EPCC does not perform Information Governance functions for the Safe Havens.

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Accreditation

The EPCC Trusted Research Environment is covered by EPCC's ISO27001 accreditation for information security practices. It is self-certified under Cyber Essentials and NHS Digital's Data Security and Protection Toolkit.

In addition, the Scottish National Safe Haven Service is accredited under the Digital Economy Act 2017 by the UK Statistics Authority and we operate all our Safe Havens to the same standard.

EPCC provisions this service for Public Health Scotland as one of twelve Safe Havens in the UK to support approved research on linked public sector data from health and Government sources.

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Standard Safe Haven Services

The Standard Safe Haven Services offer a secure data sharing and analysis environment that allows researchers access to sensitive data under the terms and conditions prescribed by the data providers. Researchers access the services through a virtual desktop environment (VDI).

The prevalent computational resource is virtual machines, dedicated to each Safe Haven. Safe Havens also have shared access to a large shared-memory high performance compute cluster and a compute cluster with GPU accelerators to enable large-scale analyses such as image processing tasks. All EPCC Safe Haven Services are operated at EPCC's Advanced Computing Facility, which is located in Edinburgh, UK.

EPCC's responsibilities for a standard Safe Haven:

• Operate and maintain the hosting infrastructure, IT equipment and system software

• Maintain the virtual desktops and a standard suite of analytical software on these desktops

• Resolve queries from Safe Haven operators on behalf of data owners and researchers

• Provide 14-day rolling backups.

Image: Paul Dodds

Additional Safe Haven Services

The following services can be requested separately and will be priced based on the staff effort required.

• Facilitate access to bespoke analytical software

• Perform data ingests

• Create data catalogues and perform quality checks

• Perform data deidentification

• Perform data analysis

• Generate synthetic data

• Develop new analyses and analysis pipelines to perform studies at large scale

• Develop an analysis dashboard to perform recurring analyses on data.

Safe Haven users at EPCC

Safe Havens hosted in the EPCC Trusted Research Environment include the Scottish National Safe Haven, a governed trusted research environment for accredited researchers to work on approved projects of public benefit using sensitive data.

Our other clients include: Smart Data Foundry (financial data); DataLoch (health and social care data) and Childlight (data related to child protection).

Contact

To discuss access to our Safe Haven Services, please contact us at: eidf@epcc.ed.ac.uk

https://edinburgh-international-data-facility.ed.ac.uk/services/safe-haven-services