

Instruction on how to fill out the metadata sheet

For all the LTER data (is your project founded by LTER?), I will need the following items from you:

1. data table in csv or txt format (tabular tables). It can be one data table or several data tables.
2. a Metadataentry_LTER workbook (attached), with all yellow highlighted columns filled.
3. Abstract and method in separated WORD files.
4. If you have a protocol, a supplemental material for the method (e.g. the method section in the manuscript), either WORD or PDF format should work.

Once you get all these ready, please send them to Li Kui: lkui@ucsb.edu

Some details when you prepare your data:

Take a look at your data tables (in csv or txt format), and consider:

1. Avoid using special characters in column names. For example, space, %, !, ?, |, are not acceptable.
2. Make sure your categorical values are consistent. Check the unique value of each of your columns.
3. Use common missing values: "-99999", ".", "NA", "missing". Please don't leave a blank cell in your data.
4. Transform to the long format if your data is the wide format. You will have fewer columns needed to describe in detail (See the workbook DataSetAttributes sheet).

In the metadata collection template folder, I use the kelp blade loss data as an example (<https://portal.edirepository.org/nis/mapbrowse?scope=knb-lter-sbc&identifier=108>). The metadata content (title, abstract, data table names.....) on this page have been transferred in the Metadataentry_LTER workbook to show you what should fill in each of the cell. Please fill in the yellow highlighted columns in all tabs. I will fill in the rest of the contents to speed up the process. To clarify the terminology here: The content in the DataSet tab is about your data package; DataSetEntities is about each of your data tables; DataSetAttributes is the column information for each of your data tables.

There are three green highlighted cells (abstract, method, and protocol), please send them to me in word document, using the example provided. The protocol is not necessary unless your data collection procedure follows a common use and well-documented protocol. The protocol can be in PDF format or word document.

If your data are in a format other than csv or txt, e.g. NetCDF file or remote sensing images, you can skip the DataSetAttribute tab, but still, fill out the rest of tabs. If your data are too big to send in the email, please send me a link to the FTP or external server, or some other ways that you want me to access your data.

Regarding the timing, if all the items you send me are sufficient, it normally takes me a day to put all the metadata into my system and then I will send you a draft to review. If all contents look good, it takes another half day for all the validations to go through, especially if you have many csv files. Typically, the whole process takes about 1 week if we work closely. Please plan your timeline accordingly.