



The Intermediate Bodies of the Roman Cities: Sociability and Agency of the Middling Groups in Roman Italy (Late Republic - 3rd c. AD)

# InBoRC. Data Management Plan. Version 1.0

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## Document History

Version	Date (DD/MM/YYYY)	Created/Amended by	Changes
v.01	31/07/2025	Simone Ciambelli	

## Scheduled Data Management Plan (DMP) Updates

The DMP is a document that evolves during the lifespan of the project and registers all relevant changes in the life-cycle of all the research datasets. Updated versions of the DMP have already been planned. Moreover, this document will be updated whenever important changes in the data or the data management policy occur.



## Content

The Data Management Plan (DMP) .....	1
1. Data Summary .....	1
2. FAIR Data .....	2
2.1 Making data findable, including provisions for metadata .....	2
2.2 Making data accessible .....	4
2.3 Making data interoperable .....	5
2.4 Increasing data re-use .....	5
3. Allocation of resources .....	6
4. Data security .....	6
5. Ethical or legal aspects .....	7
6. Other issues .....	7



## The Data Management Plan (DMP)

This DMP provides details on all the research data collected and generated within the InBoRC project. In particular, it explains the way research data are handled, organized, licensed and made available to the public, and how they will be preserved after the project is completed.

This DMP reflects the current state of the art of the InBoRC project. However, the details and the final number of datasets may vary during the research project. The variations will be recorded in updated versions of this DMP.

### 1. Data Summary

This project proposes to design a more plural and complex image of the Roman city so as to integrate and go beyond the classical vision based on the élite and characterised by a top-down approach, following a perspective recently revived by C. Courier and J. C. Magalhães de Oliveira. InBoRC thus focuses on middling groups' social, economic and political impact in the city from the Late Republic to the 3rd c. AD. To do so, the research is focused on studying the intermediate bodies, are our best indicator of the civic activities of this stratum of the population.

To reconstruct the complexity of these bodies, the analysis will pivot around the sociological concepts of sociability and agency. Sociability, which can be defined as these groups' general ability to live their public relations intensely, provides the means to better understand the organization, plurality, and hierarchy of the urban masses. On the other hand, by exploring their agency, it is possible to shed new light on their social, economic, and political impact in the city. Their agency was both collective and individual; therefore, the project's focus on intermediate bodies also shows individual members' paths of upward mobility into the local community or imperial aristocracy. Here, however, it is key to consider the heterogeneity of these intermediate bodies. Indeed, by applying the analytical framework of intersectionality, we can understand how different aspects of the social identity of individuals combine to define and influence their role in society. Finally, studying the sociability and agency of intermediate bodies allow us to rethink urban spaces. These can be studied from a social perspective so that topographical and archaeological data are reconsidered in a perspective that reconstructs the lived environments of the time and the relationship between physical and social networks of meaning.

The complexity and behaviour of intermediate bodies can be analysed especially through epigraphic sources. InBoRC is thus essentially based on a study of inscriptions concerning these groups. Nevertheless, the project is not aimed at collecting all the applicable inscriptions to build a catalogue; rather, adopting a qualitative approach, it will insert into the historical narrative the most revealing aspects of these groups to describe their sociability and agency in the city system.

This objective will be translated into a monograph (draft) supported by an enriched version of encoded, searchable texts and datasets integrated with the main digital infrastructures and databases of ancient texts. The chosen area of investigation is Roman Italy (Rome included) due to its specificity, widespread epigraphic culture, and lively urban activity. However, using the methodology already employed by O. Van Nijf for eastern Mediterranean *collegia*, the project will also consider punctual parallels with epigraphic evidence from provincial contexts. The chronological period is Late Republic – III c. AD, directly aligned with the availability of the epigraphic sources.



The main datasets of Dr Ciambelli's project will consist of textual research and a EpiDoc XML database.

The project will reuse data from the following sources: scientific publications; archival documentation; archaeological site documentation (e.g. plans, field drawing, photographs, reports); epigraphical databases such as Epigraphic Database Rome (EDR), Epigraphic Database Clauss-Slaby (EDCS) and Epigraphic database Heidelberg (EDH); the latter is very valuable because it is written in Epidoc XML. Within the project existing data in .docx, .txt, .xml, .JPEG or .tiff. formats will be used.

The project will also produce different types of data by using different methodologies:

1. Textual data (.docx) will be generated with the interpretation of epigraphical data, other existing documentary sources, archaeological data and the analysis of modern theories. The project aims to design a more complex interpretation of roman society based on the analysis of qualitative data, such as epigraphical survey, literary and archaeological evidence.
2. Graphic image files (.jpeg .tiff), such as photographs, will be generated also from surveys.
3. Database in Epidoc (.xml) will be generated from some of the most important inscriptions collected as primary sources for the monograph.
4. Measurement and observational data will be also taken during the epigraphical and archaeological survey.

The research team have agreed to convert research data from proprietary formats to well-known and documented open formats in order to facilitate accessibility and reusability (Tab.1).

*Table 1 - Summary of data formats*

<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Software and formats used during data processing</b>	<b>Formats for sharing, reuse and preservation</b>
Textual data	MS word (.doc/.docx)	.docx, .pdf
Epidoc data	Oxygen (.xml)	.xml
Digital image data	JPEG (.jpeg), TIFF (.tiff)	.jpeg, .tiff

The expected size of the data is 10 GB, more or less. Considering the early stage of the project, the effective size may vary with respect to what is declared here. Potential variations will be addressed in further versions of this document.

The data produced may be of interest to various potential users. These users may include researchers studying the social structure of the Roman Empire or the epigraphic evidence of associations or similar groups within Roman society. The data may also be of interest to all scholars interested in the sociability and agency of non-elite groups in general.

## **2. FAIR Data**

### **2.1 Making data findable, including provisions for metadata**

InBoRC will make available sources (including the xml database), analytical methods and results, fulfilling Open Science as supported by the European Commission. These include papers, presentations, and digital data.



To improve the findability of research data produced during the project, datasets will be deposited in the AMS Acta, the Institutional Research Repository of the University of Bologna. The AMS Acta is the official research data repository of the researchers of the University of Bologna maintained by the AlmaDL University of Bologna Digital Library. AMS Acta allows to publish sets of research data in a FAIR way. Whenever project results are published, in order to guarantee data discoverability, access and preservation beyond the project end.

Publications related to the project (articles and monographs) will be deposited in IRIS (*Archivio istituzionale della ricerca*). It is the implementation of the CRIS system of the University of Bologna, which facilitates the collection and management of data relating to research activities and products. It provides researchers, administrators, and evaluators with the tools to document and monitor research results and increase their visibility. IRIS allows to deposit publications in FAIR way and following the OpenAIRE guidelines<sup>1</sup>.

The chosen repositories (see section 2.2, Table 2) attribute a unique persistent identifier (PID) to the deposited items (DOI; Handle). The unique identifiers are then used to cite the datasets within all research publications.

They also support standard descriptive metadata (Dublin Core and Data Cite Metadata Schema) to ensure datasets indexing and discoverability.

It is planned to provide search keywords to make the data findable and to follow best practices for naming conventions.

Provisional keywords:

- Roman society
- Roman economy
- Latin epigraphy
- Greek epigraphy
- Roman Italy
- Associations
- Intermediate bodies
- Political agency
- Sociability

Research data are organized in datasets, which are named collections of data units with the same focus and scope. In this DMP we set out common rules for dataset naming, in order to improve data visibility, discoverability, citation and permanent online tracking.

The recommended **dataset title** structure consists of:

*PROJECT ACRONYM. Task title or description. Version number*

Example:

- *InBoRC. Intermediate bodies of cites of Roman Italy*

These are the recommended rules for **file naming** (avoiding spaces and special characters to ensure machine-readability):

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<sup>1</sup> OpenAIRE, <https://guidelines.openaire.eu/en/latest/>



- for dataset file(s)

*[PROJECT ACRONYM]\_TaskNumber\_Coverage or other content specifications\_Date(YYYYMMDD)\_VersionNumber.fileExtention*

- for README file(s)

*[PROJECT ACRONYM]\_TaskNumber\_Coverage or other content specifications\_Date(YYYYMMDD)\_VersionNumber\_README.fileExtention*

Example:

- *InBoRC.01\_DATABASE\_INTERMEDIATE\_BODIES\_12\_06\_25\_ver01.xml*
- *InBoRC.01\_DATABASE\_INTERMEDIATE\_BODIES\_12\_06\_25\_ver01.README.txt*

## 2.2 Making data accessible

As a guiding principle, InBoRC seeks to make all research data openly available as soon as possible and ensure open access — via the repository — in order to allow dissemination, validation and re-use of research results.

To this purpose, all possible and legitimate actions and strategies are adopted to allow data sharing including:

- converting the files to standard open formats;
- providing all relevant documentation and explanation for the data and the datasets;
- obtaining copyright permissions from third party data owners to be allowed to re-use, reproduce and distribute the collected data;
- in case of copyright on raw data derived, collected or elaborated from pre-existing databases or from other original sources (i.e. papers, journal articles, book chapters, reports, video and audio sources), collected data will be made available if the reproduction and sharing are allowed by expressed permission of the right holders or by applicable copyright exceptions and exemptions. Otherwise, only aggregate data resulting from the analysis will be openly published. When the sources are freely available on-line in their original repositories, but direct reproduction is not allowed, a detailed account on how the dataset was created from the original data will be provided, together with the specification of open repositories from where the original datasets are available. Raw data consisting in full texts will not be made available without the copyright holders' permission.

Restrictions to access are applied only in the following cases:

- collected data belong to third party which have denied permission for sharing on account of confidentiality and proprietary issues;
- data availability would jeopardize the project's main aim.

Metadata will be made openly available and licenced under a “No Rights Reserved” CC0 license or equivalent, as per the Grant Agreement, and will contain information on how to access the data.



The data repositories chosen to guarantee long term preservation and attribute persistent unique identifiers to the archived datasets. They support open licenses and different access levels. Finally, they adopt descriptive metadata standards such as Dublin Core and DataCite Metadata Schema, as required by the OpenAIRE guidelines<sup>2</sup>, and allow cross-linking between publications and the relevant datasets. Please see the table below for more detail.

*Table 2 – Summary of repositories.  
The following table shows the repositories for datasets publication and preservation.*

Repository name	Type	URL	PID	OpenAIRE compatibility?
AMS Acta	Institutional	<a href="https://amsacta.unibo.it/">https://amsacta.unibo.it/</a>	DOI	Yes
IRIS Unibo	Institutional	<a href="https://cris.unibo.it/">https://cris.unibo.it/</a>	Handle	Yes

### 2.3 Making data interoperable

All datasets will be described using standard descriptive metadata, in order to ensure metadata interoperability for indexing and discoverability. For each deposited dataset, relevant documentation explaining data collection procedures and analysis is made available along with the data, in order to guarantee intelligibility, reproducibility and the validation of the project findings. As mentioned, the team will convert all shareable data from proprietary formats to well-known and documented open formats (see section 1, Table 1). This allows data exchange and re-use between different researchers, institutions, organisations and countries.

The research data relating to the inscriptions will be written using Epidoc XML. EpiDoc is an international, collaborative effort that provides guidelines and tools for encoding scholarly and educational editions of ancient documents. It uses a subset of the Text Encoding Initiative's standard for the representation of texts in digital form and was developed initially for the publication of digital editions of ancient inscriptions (e.g. Inscriptions of Aphrodisias, Vindolanda Tablets). Its domain has expanded to include the publication of papyri and manuscripts (e.g. Papyri.info). It addresses not only the transcription and editorial treatment of texts themselves, but also the history and materiality of the objects on which the texts appear (i.e., manuscripts, monuments, tablets, papyri, and other text-bearing objects). The use of this particular subset of the Text Encoding Initiative's that maximizes the interoperability of the dataset due to the extreme FAIRness of the XML data.

### 2.4 Increasing data re-use

Whenever possible, data developed by InBoRC will be made open access under the CC-BY license to maximize distribution and economic impact while also protecting author attribution. As per Grant Agreement, metadata will be open available under a Creative Commons "No Rights Reserved" CC0 license or equivalent.

The quality of data will be carefully assured using different approaches, such as:

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<sup>2</sup> OpenAIRE, <https://guidelines.openaire.eu/en/latest/>



- the use of procedures for verification, such as network checks and automated simple route modelling
- Data conform to format specification
- Consistency verified with data models and standards.

### 3. Allocation of resources

No extra storage will be necessary during the research period as the capacity of UNIBO's infrastructure is sufficient. Therefore, there is no need for extra expenditure on storage.

Depositing into AMS Acta is free for the researchers of the University of Bologna and covers the cost of preservation for at least 10 years. There is no additional expense required for long-term preservation or archiving. As part of UNIBO's commitment to ensuring FAIR data, all researchers are responsible for preparing their own Data Management Plans (DPMs) in accordance with UNIBO's Research Data Management Policy. Therefore, there is no need for extra expenditure on data management apart from the researchers' own time.

Responsibility for data management sits with dataset creator (see Table 4).

Table 5 identifies all contributors participating in data management activities and specifies their roles.

*Table 4 – Summary and contacts of people responsible for data management*

Name	ORCID (if available)	E-mail address
Simone Ciambelli	0000-0002-6239-7475	simone.ciambelli2@unibo.it

*Table 5 – Summary of team members involved in the datasets collection and management.*

Name	ORCID (if available)	Role
Simone Ciambelli	0000-0002-6239-7475	Data Collector, Data Curator, Metadata Generator, Storage and Backup (during the Fellowship)
Alessandro Cristofori	0000-0002-9434-6285	Supervisor (Host Institution)
John Bodel	0000-0003-1820-6368	Supervisor (Brown University, Associated Partner)
Alma Mater Studiorum- Università di Bologna		Long-term preservation (after completion of the project)

### 4. Data security

During the development of the project, research data stored in the researcher's laptop and hard drives are accessible only after logging in with a username and password (periodically modified according to national law provisions for data security) and are protected by updated antivirus software. They are also regularly backed up to prevent accidental losses. None of the project data will ever be left inadvertently available. Data are also saved in the Microsoft OneDrive space provided by UNIBO. Long term preservation of public data is ensured by the AMS Acta data repository with specific preservation policies. If external devices are utilized to store data files (e.g., backup files), they will be securely stored.



## **5. Ethical or legal aspects**

All activities carried out under the InBoRC project adhere to ethical principles and relevant international, EU, and national laws. This includes compliance with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and all associated fundamental ethical principles, as well as those outlined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols. Additionally, the project follows rules for the protection of personal data both inside and outside the EU.

## **6. Other issues**

The InBoRC is a HORIZON-TMA-MSCA-PF-GF project funded by the European Union. It is carried out in the Dipartimento di Storia Culture Civiltà (DISCI) of the Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna (UNIBO) in the role of Coordinator, and in the Classics Department of the Brown University (UBR) in the role of Associated. According to Horizon Europe's requirements, all MSCA fellows must prepare a data management plan for their project. Data results must be disseminated according to FAIR and Open data protocols.

UNIBO has a Research Data Management Policy:

<https://www.unibo.it/en/attachments/university-policy-on-research-data-management/@@download/file/The-University-Policy-on-research-data-management.pdf>