

Policy on Formats for PDS4 Data and Documentation

Required Formats:

1. All data must be provided in one or more of the following formats:
 - i. Fixed-width binary or ASCII tables that are composed of identically structured records;
 - ii. N-dimensional homogeneous arrays of binary elements ($N \leq 16$);
 - iii. Variable-width ASCII tables composed of identically defined records, where the individual, variable-width fields in the record are delimited and the variable length records are also delimited;
 - iv. NAIF/SPICE kernel files.
2. All documentation needed to understand the data must be formatted as flat* UTF-8 text, PDF/A-1a (which is preferred), or PDF/A-1b. Figures may be embedded in PDF files. However any figures other than those embedded in a PDF file must be formatted as JPEG, GIF, PNG or TIFF images.

* "Flat UTF-8" means the file may not contain mark-up language (*e.g.*, formats such as HTML, XML, RTF, and LaTeX do not comply).

Supplemental Formats:

1. Additional copies of data and/or documentation may be provided in formats other than the required formats if the following conditions are met.
 - i. Data or documentation in a supplemental format do not contain any scientifically useful information that is not found in the required-format data or documentation;
 - ii. The supplemental format conforms to a well-documented standard that is in current use;
 - iii. The supplemental format can be described using the PDS4 information model;
 - iv. The supplemental format has been approved by the PDS Management Council.
2. PDS has no obligation to migrate data and/or documentation in supplemental formats to comply with changes in any standards external to PDS.
3. PDS will maintain a public list of acceptable supplemental formats for data and documentation, which is revised at the discretion of the PDS Management Council.