

Max-Planck-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften e.V.
[Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science]

ARCHIVES OF THE MAX
PLANCK SOCIETY

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Enclosure regarding contents and transfers of archival holdings of personal papers

1. In general, the following types of documents and/or thematic fields are of archival value:

- a) Lighthouse projects, here particularly in their early stage, relating to their initiation and original scientific concept,
- b) Key documents from which especially the following becomes apparent: applications for scientific projects; political and scientific-political backgrounds; methodology of scientific work; those involved; cooperation partners (especially at international level); decisive legal issues,
- c) Correspondence (fully of archival value),
- d) Manuscripts of unpublished works, including early versions or development stages of individual significant works,
- e) Documents emanating from a Managing Director,
- f) Important offices, functions, memberships,
- g) Photographic material.

2. More detailed explanations on papers and digital data of scientists

2.1 Biography

- Curricula vitae, publication lists, list of lectures / conference contributions, list of honours / awards, documents relating to the career path (appointments, nominations etc.), certificates, deeds (also possible at a later date)

2.2 Correspondence

- Letter to and from the donor of personal papers

The Archives are currently working on a concept for the transfer of e-mail accounts. If you are basically prepared to make your mails available, please let us know.

2.3 Image

- Photographs (portraits, group photos, anniversaries, festivities, e.g. also within the MPI, labelled and dated, if possible).

We will also be pleased to receive photographs in digital form from you.

2.4 Science

- Manuscripts of presentations, lectures, records, photos, trial protocols, laboratory books, measurement and research data, if applicable

If you would like to hand in manuscripts, measurement data, digital laboratory books etc. to the Archives, please let us know their format (analogue or digital, please provide accurate information on volume and format).

- MPG: Institute, MPG with Sections (except for reproduced documents such as minutes of meetings or circulars), committees, commissions
- Professional activity also outside the MPG, for example at universities, scientific societies and organisations (in selection)
- Expert opinions

Unfortunately, we are unable to accept any offprint collections or publications of third parties.

3. How are documents being transferred?

As a rule, the documents are viewed and evaluated by the Archives on site. In doing so, the documents are subdivided into two categories: “archivwürdig (A)” [*“of archival value”*] and “kassabel (k)” [*“of no archival value, can be destroyed”*]. Documents of no archival value are not transferred to the Archives.

As a matter of principle, the Archives do not accept unevaluated documents. Exceptions may be a limited total volume of documents or a considerable geographic distance or any other difficulty to view the documents on site.

4. What happens to your documents at the Archives?

Initially, the documents are only accessible to the person who hands them in and/or to other individuals only if they are given permission to do so. In accordance with the provisions of the Statute for the Archives of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (as amended on 7 September 2016), the documents are subject to a retention period of 30 years after their origination and ten years after the death of the person concerned.

For quite some time, the Archives of the MPG have concluded donation contracts with donors of personal papers regarding holdings kept at the Archives. By concluding a donation contract, the Archives undertake to treat the documents according to archive-specific criteria, i.e. to make the documents accessible (to inventory the documents) with the support of a database, to package them professionally and to keep them safe in storerooms secured by an alarm system. Making documents accessible may also imply the subsequent destruction of documents which are not required (e.g. duplicates).

A further significant effect of such a contract consists in the fact that the Archives can largely independently decide on the use of the respective holdings of personal papers under professional and legal aspects (Statute for the Archives, Terms of Use, and copyright law). Ultimately, this means a transparent and research-friendly solution which is meanwhile being practised in many state and scientific archives.