To effectively document a research outputs you need to address it at multiple levels. The associated documentation also needs to explain the data in sufficient detail for an independent researcher to understand, re-use or reproduce the data without contacting the original author. This detailed rich contextual documentation becomes the metadata as it is the ‘data about the data’. Where possible and present discipline specific metadata and standards should be used to document a dataset. By documenting a dataset in this way it becomes Interoperable.

**Data:** Data or dataset can refer to all the output of a research project or a subset but documentation should always include information such as......
What is this thing? Who made it? When? How?

**Administrative data:** (Provenance of the data)
Host institution? Applicants name? Funding body?

**Internal arrangement/aggregation:**
What files, folders, database tables, components make up this thing?
What are they? Who made them? How do I open them? How do they relate to each other? How does their naming and arrangement encode meaning?

**Variable/data-level:**
Where is the label for this variable? What does the label mean? What units were used? What are the acceptable values? How do these variables relate to each other?