

# A commitment to high-quality, accurate, and flexible data to sustain and grow your research activities

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Academic Analytics is committed to the highest standards of quality control. We constantly test our data matching and disambiguation processes to meet these high standards. This document highlights the areas of our company that are involved in quality assurance and describes the work we do to ensure that the data we provide our clients are reliable, accurate, and valuable in helping them sustain and grow their research activities, and sharpen their brand.

## Bringing it all together: content and matching

As new content is brought into our data warehouse, Academic Analytics technology and content experts constantly evaluate our data sources for accuracy and completeness. This process ensures that any issues are discovered and resolved before they are brought into our production environment. Examples of this data-checking include comparing year-over-year, or month-over-month numbers of grant dollars distributed, or articles published by a particular journal. Any inconsistencies are investigated, and action taken as necessary. We also: examine each file for consistency in meta-data tags; check time-stamps; and ensure any duplicate content is adjusted so that only one record exists for each scholarly work in our warehouse.

Our technologists use a combination of smart data matching algorithms and tested human data-matching skills to ensure the right content is matched to the right individual. While some records are easier to match than others (e.g., uncommon last names within a discipline), many records must be verified by hand. Our data-matching experts examine names, fields of study, previous co-authorship and co-principle investigator relationships among other factors before positively identifying that a record is the work of a particular person.

## A dedicated, vigilant quality control operation

We have invested heavily in data validation. Academic Analytics is proud to have a dedicated team whose sole function is to audit our data and investigate issues as they arise. The Quality Control team proactively reviews matched data at several levels: data matched to people, departments, institutions, and the entire data warehouse. The findings of this team of experts underwrite the work of the technology, content, and product development teams, creating a constant feedback cycle that ensures data quality as an ongoing, regular process.

Our Product Quality team is also responsible for investigation of any issues about data matching that our clients and other end-users bring to our attention. In the rare instances when amendment to our matched data is requested, the Product Quality team investigates the issue and, when appropriate, makes those changes and communicates the rationale to our other teams so all processes company-wide are consistent.

## Communication and transparency are the key to high quality data

Our Associates, Liaisons, and Communications specialists constantly monitor the American research enterprise and work with major research institutions every day.

Based on this nuanced understanding of the end-user experience, these teams have created dozens of documents, webinars, videos, and organized conferences which serve to make our data warehouse and digital products easy to use and understand.

*“Across the board, in every domain area, Academic Analytics has higher coverage [compared to another leading bibliometric database]... for me as a bibliometrician this is an important count - how much of the CV is represented in these data sources.”*

~ Cassidy Rose Sugimoto,  
Associate Professor,  
School of Informatics  
and Computing,  
Indiana University  
Bloomington



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This high level of transparency was initially demanded by our advisory committee member institutions (Duke University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and The Ohio State University) so they could better understand the data and how the database was assembled. This imperative has grown to be fundamental to our entire company.

Many of our subscribing institutions have conducted their own rigorous validation studies, either alone or in collaboration with Academic Analytics staff. These studies invariably demonstrate that our data are of the high standards demanded in university strategic planning. This two-way communication about data collection, data matching, and data quality has also led to several enhancements to our products. Based on feedback from our subscribers, new data elements are added to our warehouse, new analytic reports and data customizations are created, and the current best practices and use-cases are regularly shared.

Research universities have found in our data trustworthy and useful ways to enrich their understanding of the complexity of their research environments. Some merge our data with their local warehouses to create a broader and more accurate database that can be used to power university-wide strategic decisions. In some cases, Academic Analytics data have been supplemented by universities' own warehouses and universities have made these data publicly searchable. Academic Analytics welcomes the development of such sites, confident that the reliability and utility of its data will be apparent.

## Helping scholars create knowledge and solve pressing issues

In addition to our mission to support for strategic research planning, Academic Analytics also empowers scholarly research by putting our data into the hands of researchers at the vanguard of their disciplines. All scholars are obligated to vet their data sources critically, and that includes Academic Analytics data. Scholars have found our data to be worthy of inclusion in their research on gender biases in scholarship, how state legislation impacts professorial salaries, and several other topics. According to information scientist Cassidy Sugimoto, "Across the board, in every domain area, Academic Analytics has higher coverage [compared to another leading bibliometric database] .... For me as a bibliometrician this is an important count - how much of the CV is represented in these data sources." We also support the grant applications of researchers, writing letters of support and offering our data for their projects. These experiences continue to provide a fundamental, non-commercial, scholarly basis for us to understand the quality and accuracy of our database.

We encourage you to learn more about those projects by contacting us at [info@academicanalytics.com](mailto:info@academicanalytics.com).



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