Technical Information on the TBI-Reporter Analysis Environment

The TBI-Reporter Hub through the Neurological Data Platform (NDP) Trusted Research Environment's infrastructure allows approved researchers access to multimodal datasets using a virtual desktop infrastructure. Users will download VMware Horizon Client to their local PC in order to connect to the DPUK Portal infrastructure, using two-factor authentication. This involves a mobile authenticator passcode as a first step, and username + password combination as a second step.

Desktop Specification

The infrastructures offers various desktops specifications to align with differing research demands. All desktops are pre-loaded with researcher software: R, RStudio, SPSS, SAS, Stata, Anaconda Navigator for Python, Jupyter Notebook, Eclipse, Matlab, SQL Server Management Studio, Microsoft Office and Gitlab.

Statistical software, such as R and Python, can connect to its official library/package/index directory to enable configuration of software on a per-user basis. As standard, DPUK Portal Infrastructure will endeavour to provide the most up-to-date version of software for use within the analysis environment.

If you require software that is not currently available on our infrastructure, please contact the NDP technical team at https://helpdesk.hiru.swan.ac.uk or helpdesk@chi.swan.ac.uk. We will review your request and assess whether we can provision the software for you.

You may also install your own software within the NDP environment. This includes software that requires a licence; however, please inform us using the contact details above if this applies.

If you need an older version of any software for your analysis, please get in touch using the same contact information

In some cases, it may be necessary to provide a dedicated user desktop with the required software, whereas in other cases NDP would seek to provide the software within the shared desktop suite.

Types of desktops:

Desktop Options	RAM (GB)	CPU
Standard Windows 10	8	4
Large Windows 10	32	8
XLarge Windows 10	128	16
Standard Linux (Ubuntu)	8	4
XL Linux (Ubuntu)	128	16

Approved users are defaulted to Standard desktops; should a higher compute be required this will be evaluated against the application and potential cost recovery fees may be applicable.

High Performance Computing (HPC) access

Access to High Performance Computing and GPU usage for analyses within various domains is possible, and we would request that this is specified in the hardware/software requirements of the technical specification form. Access to GPU/HPC can be provided on a cost recovery basis.
3000 core HPC cluster access is chargeable at 0.038 per core per hour
All prices are net and subject to VAT
For information regarding costings, please send your enquiry on your requirements to helpdesk@chi.swan.ac.uk

Technical Specification section of the Application Form

On the TBI-Reporter form, there is a technical specification section. We would like all applicants to highlight the type of study planned, select which desktop specification they feel will be required for their study, and if there are any bespoke requirements needed (such as the installation of software that we do not provide as standard listed above). Having this information at an early stage will allow the NDP technical team to discuss the build of extra requirements and tailor the system to the user(s).

macOS

macOS Users will be likely to need to change their settings at point of logon. After completing the two-factor authentication, you will be presented with your choice of desktop to access. Before selecting the desktop, you should explore which is most optimal for you. This is done by selecting the cog symbol in the top right of the window. Where 'Connect via' appears, please select one of three options (Microsoft RDP, PCoIP, VMware Blast) to confirm which allows connection. To provide a solution to the 'Ctrl+Alt+Delete' issue with macOS devices, the virtual desktop has a 'Send Ctrl+Alt+Delete' function in the floating menu bar at the top of the desktop. Please note as a general point: disconnecting (simply closing the virtual desktop) does not shut down the desktop, but selecting disconnect and log off will do so however).

Data Storage

General storage is scalable according to the study requirements, with basic access to data stored on our systems free to all users. Studies needing large amounts of storage outside of the standard shared network shares to bring in their own larger scale data will be subject to potential extra costs, which will be discussed with researchers as part of the set-up of the desktop. Research teams accessing the approved data will have a shared folder (study number and name on a shared drive) to be able to share collaborative work and individual researchers have their own personal directory to save their private files.

As part of each NDP project, file storage of up to two and a half times the size of the project source data will be provided as standard. This storage is provided to enable researchers to work with the datasets provided and where relevant, will be where project specific data is stored. It is the project team's responsibility to ensure any data stored is managed within these data storage allowances.

Additional data Storage

Additional data storage is chargeable at £250 per additional 100GB per month - file store
All prices are net and subject to VAT