

Milken Institute School of Public Health StrongBox

A Shared Research Platform for Data Collection, Data Analysis and Data Storage

Purpose

StrongBox is The Milken Institute School of Public Health (SPH) at the George Washington University's central application and storage platform for research information. It provides a safe and secure environment for analyzing and storing computational data. By using StrongBox, faculty, research faculty, post-doctoral researchers, and designated staff are able to:

- ❖ Store computational research data
- ❖ Share research data in a collaborative environment
- ❖ Use standard research analytic applications on powerful servers that are optimized for computing data

Types of Data Allowed

StrongBox storage and the software applications can be utilized for de-identified data; data may qualify as exempt, and may have full or expedited IRB approval. If your data is covered by HIPAA and includes Protected Health Information (PHI), please contact Regina Scriven at rscriven@gwu.edu about your data storage options. PHI is defined as any individually identifiable health information collected or created as a consequence of the provision of health care by a covered entity, in any form, including verbal communications. Strongbox does not support Big Data (i.e., large and complex data that cannot be handled by standard database management applications). If you have Big Data needs, please contact Dean Horn, khorn1@gwu.edu.

What StrongBox Replaces

The Milken Institute SPH IT Department highly recommends StrongBox as a replacement for any standalone computer or server hosting data, as well as, directly attached hard drives such as USB and Firewire hard drives. If you need assistance with moving data to StrongBox, the SPH IT department can work with you to evaluate the best means to do so. If you have suggestions for additional software packages to be added to the suite of applications in StrongBox, please contact your departmental representative to the Milken Institute SPH Research Committee.

Performance Expectations

Performance will vary by the number of connected users and their activities. Any issues with performance can be reported to the SPH helpdesk system at: help.sphhs.gwu.edu. StrongBox is built with the following underlying technology and has been calibrated for ease of use, power and performance.

- Vendor: Dell
- Computer Hardware: PowerEdge servers – 128GB RAM, dual Intel Xeon E5-2650 2.00GHz, 20M Cache, 8.0GT/s QPI, Turbo, 8C processors
- Data Storage Hardware: Dell Equallogic SAN
- Backup of the system is done on regular basis with backups stored for 6 months

StrongBox Accounts and Eligibility

Full time faculty, research faculty, post-doctoral researchers, and their designated staff can apply for an account on StrongBox. Accounts are active for 2 years from creation and can be renewed. Each account comes with the following:

1. Applications in StrongBox

Software and Locations (i.e., Network, Desktop, Web)			
Software	Location	Software	Location
Stata/MP 13 (16-core)	Network	Atlas.Ti 7	Network
SAS 9.4	Network or Desktop	Endnote X7	Desktop
IBM SPSS Statistics Standard Edition v22	Network or Desktop	Adobe Creative Suite 6	Desktop
Nvivo 10	Network	MPlus (coming soon)	Network
Qualtrics Research Suite (includes – Mobile Surveys, Sampling and Feedback)	Web	ArcGIS (includes - Desktop, 3D Analyst, Geostatistical Analyst, Network Analyst, Spatial Analyst)	Network

Note: All software packages are the latest available versions and will be upgraded within 60 days of when the new releases are publicly available; packages can be used on and off campus.

2. Data Storage Options

Included in the account is the ability to upload and store large research related documents or datasets. Each account will receive 25 GB of storage space at no charge. Arrangements can be made for larger storage options on an individual basis.

3. Archiving Options

In order to provide storage space for everyone, the Milken Institute SPH IT department can work with you to evaluate the best options to store data when research projects have ended, such as, a DVD or external hard drive archival copy. Please contact IT if you need these resources.

4. Support

All components of the system are supported by the Milken Institute SPH IT department. If you need help accessing StrongBox or the applications contained in it, please create a help desk ticket at: help.sphhs.gwu.edu. IT staff is able to answer questions regarding the operation of and access to StrongBox. New account requests and storage quota increase requests will be reviewed and processed on a timely basis. IT will not be able to address questions regarding the use of the specific software applications.

How to Request an Account on StrongBox

To set up a StrongBox account or if you have any questions about setting up an account, please submit a help desk ticket at: help.gwsph.gwu.edu After you submit a help desk request, the Milken Institute SPH IT will contact you to schedule a face to face appointment to train you on how to access StrongBox and to install any desktop software that you need as part of your account.