

Summary of Data Management Principles

The LSST Dark Energy Science Collaboration (DESC)

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Publicly-accessible link to latest tagged version:

https://lsstdesc.org/assets/pdf/docs/DESC_DMP_latest.pdf

Experiment Description

The Legacy Survey of Space and Time (LSST) Dark Energy Science Collaboration (DESC) was established in June 2012 with the goal of developing and executing a high-level plan for the study of dark energy and associated fundamental physics of the Universe with LSST data. DESC is one of several science collaborations that is preparing for scientific analysis of LSST data. The Rubin Observatory Project has its own [Summary of Data Management Principles](#); this document covers only LSST DESC-produced data products, though LSST will be described briefly in order to motivate the DESC data management principles.

LSST: LSST will be carried out at the Vera C. Rubin Observatory with the Simonyi Survey Telescope, which has an effective 6.7-m diameter primary mirror, and the Rubin Observatory LSST Camera, which has a 9.6 square-degree, 3.2 Gigapixel camera and is equipped with 6 optical filters covering the wavelength range 320 – 1050 nm. Over 10 years of operation, LSST will perform a minimum of 825 visits to every part of the southern sky. Rubin Observatory is presently under construction on Cerro Pachon in central Chile, with the official start of survey operations in June 2025. A data management system is under construction to retrieve, process, analyze, and archive the massive data volume, approaching several hundred Petabytes. Users will access the data through Data Access Centers (DACs), which will enable database queries, a compute-limited amount of scientific analysis, and bulk downloads of the data. The US Data Facility for the Rubin Observatory (USDF) is the DAC that DESC will employ to transfer data to its primary data access and compute resource, NERSC, as described below.

DESC: DESC is preparing for cosmological analysis of the LSST data; science requirements are driven by the goal of understanding the accelerated expansion rate of the Universe, which is attributed to the poorly understood dark energy. Work within DESC is centered on five primary probes of dark energy: weak and strong gravitational lensing, large-scale structure, galaxy

clusters, and supernovae. DESC is not directly involved in the operation of Rubin Observatory hardware or basic data management system; these will be run by Rubin Observatory Operations. DESC's efforts are instead focused on developing analysis methodology and software infrastructure to support the aforementioned dark energy analyses, and providing feedback to Rubin Observatory about the impact of survey strategy, image processing, etc. on dark energy science. DESC is an international collaboration and is thus distributed geographically. DOE's National Energy Research Scientific Computing Center (NERSC), operated by LBNL, is the primary DESC resource for data reprocessing, analysis, and general data access for DESC members. DESC is using the NERSC Community File System to enable data serving and archiving at NERSC. In addition, currently three major secondary computing resources exist at international partner institutions (CC-IN2P3 in France and STFC IRIS in the UK) and a DOE computing facility - the Argonne Leadership Computing Facility (ALCF). These resources are being used for simulations, data processing, and analysis. DESC is partnering with LSST alert brokers to facilitate aspects of its time domain science cases.

The DESC has a [Science Overview Document](#) (SOD) that outlines the work the collaboration is undertaking to prepare for a robust and timely cosmological analysis of LSST data, including the development of simulation, reprocessing, and analysis software that works at the necessary scale and precision for LSST. Of relevance to this document is the fact that DESC will generate its own data products, specifically (a) *simulated datasets* of varying complexity to enable the development and validation of analysis software, (b) the outputs of *reprocessing (subsets of) the LSST data* to understand systematic uncertainties, and (c) *value-added data products* based on the LSST data, such as catalogs of galaxy clusters.

DOE's roles in the experiment

The Department of Energy Office of High Energy Physics considers LSST to be a Stage IV Dark Energy Experiment. It is supporting LSST DESC Operations, in addition to the development and fabrication of the LSST Camera, and ~50% of the cost of operating Rubin Observatory during the survey. The DESC computing model is currently built around support from DOE computing facilities augmented by contributions from international partners.

Partnerships

The US DOE funds DESC Operations, which also benefits from in-kind contributions from institutes and DOE labs within the US, and from international partners CC-IN2P3 (France) and STFC (UK), which play key roles in DESC computing as mentioned above. Communication between the DOE and international funding agencies is organized through an International Resources Committee. Additional international partnerships have developed as a result of the change in the model for LSST data rights, which has generated increased interest in making in-kind contributions to DESC Operations.

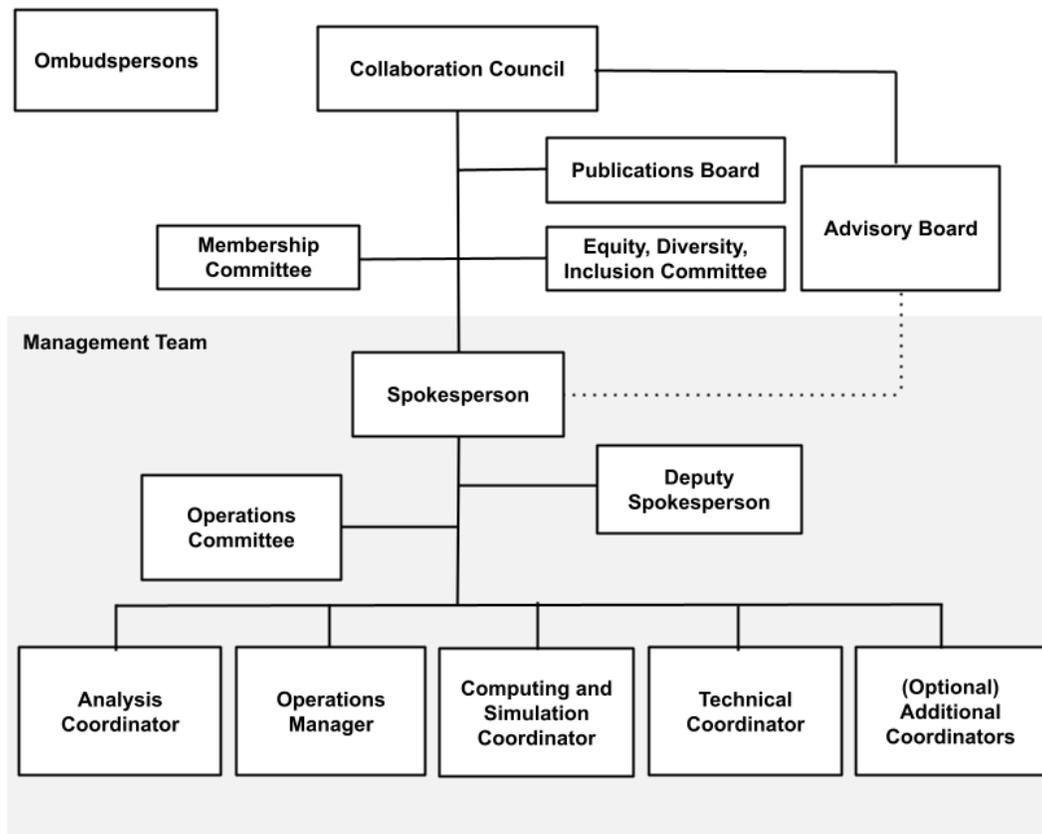
Since DESC is an international collaboration, the scientific activities of its members are funded by a variety of agencies, including both the US DOE and NSF. DESC has also benefited from support from the former Enabling Science program of the LSST Corporation (now LSST Discovery Alliance)

Organization - Agency/Lab Level

SLAC is the DOE host laboratory for the LSST Dark Energy Science Collaboration.

Organization - Experiment Level

The chart below shows the internal organization of the LSST DESC. Connections to the host lab are facilitated by direct engagement of the DESC Spokesperson with a specified point of contact at SLAC, and through the Operations Manager, who is based at SLAC.



Collaboration

The DESC was established in June 2012. As of October 2023, it has ~245 full members (with a high level of commitment to the collaboration and a role in its governance) and ~1250 members

total, of whom ~40% are based in the US and the rest are distributed across ~20 other countries, with large numbers in the UK and France. DESC has an elected Spokesperson who serves for a two-year term. The Spokesperson appoints the other management and leadership positions (those that report to the management team) within the collaboration, with the Operations Manager being appointed in consultation with SLAC; management roles require confirmation by the Collaboration Council. The Collaboration Council is elected by the Full Members of DESC, and establishes the membership of the three committees shown directly below it on the organization chart. DESC membership is restricted to those with LSST data rights; those seeking data rights may obtain provisional membership while that process is ongoing.

Data Policy Management

Key aspects of how we will manage and serve data are already known and are described below. Additional aspects will be developed before the start of survey operations. Oversight will be provided by the DESC Management Team while resource allocation according to DESC priorities falls under the purview of the DESC Operations Committee.

Data Processing and Releases

Simulated data

DESC produces simulated LSST datasets of varying complexity to enable the development and validation of analysis software. The simulated data is processed with the LSST Science Pipelines, and made available to DESC members at NERSC. Image simulation and processing are carried out across the primary and secondary DESC computing resources.

We have made specific simulated datasets available publicly; however, DESC is unlikely to have the resources to serve the full simulated imaging datasets for our data challenges. Releases of coadded images and object catalogs from the second data challenge (DC2) are available through the [LSST DESC Data Portal](#) at NERSC and have been documented in the [DESC DC2 Data Release Note](#).

LSST data

Rubin Observatory Operations is responsible for running the LSST Science Pipelines and serving the imaging and catalog data and tools for interacting with them to the LSST data rights community, including DESC members, through Rubin Data Releases. DESC will interact with Rubin Data Releases through the Rubin Science Platform (RSP) at the US Data Facility (USDF) for initial validation tests, but for full validation and resource-intensive analysis tasks, the intention is to bulk-download the catalog data and selected subsets (<~10%) of the imaging data to NERSC; this will be arranged through an agreement with Rubin Observatory Operations as per the Rubin Data Policy, <http://ls.st/RDO-13> (DPOL-511).

We anticipate that DESC Key Papers will be based on Rubin Observatory's Data Releases. With those Key Papers, DESC will release data products that build on the LSST data products and feed into DESC cosmology analyses, potentially including additional, non-LSST data (e.g., from spectroscopic follow-up) or value-added quantities built from DESC-developed software. These value-added quantities will be those with most direct use by the community beyond DESC. Examples include photometric redshifts, static source and supernovae classification, weak lensing shear maps, cluster counts, light-curves and host-galaxy properties and any spectroscopy obtained either from public sources, DESC-member follow-up or through agreements with other collaborations. These data will be primarily catalog data, supplemented by pixel data for the transient and variable events, masks used for the correlation functions, etc.

Secondary data products from DESC will be re-processed subsets of the full LSST imaging dataset to validate analyses and to explore systematic effects. These datasets will be large (~2 PB persisted, with 10-20 PB needed during reprocessing) with multiple re-processings of individual images and coadded stacked images. These will be used to generate systematic error budgets and checks on the quality of the delivered data. Most internal (DESC) and external users will be interested in the summarized results of this processing, but not the intermediate results. Processing is planned to be undertaken at NERSC, with key additional capabilities provided by US and international partners.

The DESC data products that are provided will be clearly linked to the Rubin Data Release on which they are based and will be released in support of the relevant DESC Key Papers. The releases of DESC data products based on LSST data will respect the Rubin Data Policy constraints on when data products can be released, which depend on whether they are categorized as Derived Data Products (c.f., section 6 of the Rubin Data Policy, <http://ls.st/RDO-13>).

Plan for Serving Data and Software to the Collaboration and Community

Both simulated and real LSST data products produced by DESC will be served to DESC members through NERSC. We may provide the data to DESC members through additional international and US DOE resources to enable expanded analysis capabilities and flexibility.

Data products and software sufficient for reproducing the top-level results in DESC Key Papers will be made available publicly, with the timing still to be established. The level of reproducibility from lower level data products will depend on available resources. At the time of publication, reproducing the full analysis chain may require being an LSST Data Rights holder, but once the LSST data used for that DESC analysis are non-proprietary, reproduction should be possible by

anyone with sufficient computing resources. In addition, the DESC Software Policy strongly encourages releasing as open source the code used for published analyses on non-Key papers.

As an example of how DESC data could eventually be served, images and catalogs from the DC2 simulations are available (to DESC members and the public) through a portal at NERSC. These data products support the first DESC Key Paper (*The LSST DESC DC2 Simulated Sky Survey*, [LSST DESC 2021, ApJS, 253, 31](#)).

Software will be made public on GitHub and documentation will also be made available through some means described in the GitHub repository README (e.g., readthedocs.). Within DESC, the environments used to produce the analyses for Key Paper published results will be archived on tape as container images.

Plan for Archiving Data

DESC-produced simulated and derived LSST data products used for publications are planned to be archived at the NERSC High Performance Storage System (HPSS) during the LSST and for at least 10 years after its completion, subject to DOE funding availability. Archiving of simulated data products on HPSS at NERSC has already started. International resources could also play a supporting role in the archiving of legacy products.

Responsiveness to the DOE Office of Science Statement on Digital Data Management

This data management plan is aligned with the Office of Science Statement on Digital Data management:

<https://science.osti.gov/Funding-Opportunities/Digital-Data-Management>