Qualitati: summary for ethics committees and data protection officers

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Qualitati (qualitati.com) runs AI-moderated research interviews and surveys and supports qualitative analysis of the answers. This page summarises how participant data is handled, for an ethics application or a data protection review.

Roles

The researcher or institution is the **controller** of participant data. Qualitati is the **processor**, bound by a GDPR Article 28 data processing agreement with SCCs (qualitati.com/legal/Qualitati-DPA.pdf).

Where data is stored

Projects, transcripts and recordings are stored on DigitalOcean servers in Amsterdam (EU). Daily encrypted backups are kept for 7 days in the same region.

AI is not trained on research data

Qualitati does not train models on customer data, and AI providers are used under API terms that exclude training on submitted content.

Minimising what participants share

- Interviews can run from an anonymous link, with no name or email collected.
- Voice is optional, and researchers decide whether audio is recorded.
- The AI interviewer tells participants they may skip any question or stop at any time, and does not ask for identifying details unless the interview guide requires them.

Where AI processing happens (chosen per account, fixed until changed)

Option	Providers that process interview content	Transfers
Global AI (default)	Anthropic, OpenAI, Google, ElevenLabs (United States); DigitalOcean Gradient as a fallback (Canada). For Chinese-language interviews only, the interviewer's spoken text is voiced by Xiaomi MiMo (China); participant audio is never sent.	SCCs; EU adequacy decision for Canada; contractual safeguards for China
EU Assurance (every plan)	Amazon Web Services (EU regions), Mistral AI (France), Scaleway (France). Live voice runs in the EU where available; otherwise participants are offered a text interview.	None: all AI processing stays in the EU

Retention and deletion

- Researchers keep or delete data themselves. A deleted interview or project leaves the live database at once and the backups within 7 days.
- When an account is closed, its data is deleted within 30 days.
- Exports: CSV, Word, JSON and REFI-QDA.

Security

- TLS 1.2+ for all connections. AES-256 encryption at rest.
- Access checks on every request. Optional two-step sign-in.
- Weekly automated scanning of software dependencies.
- Customers are notified of a personal data breach within 48 hours.

What we do not have yet

- No ISO 27001 or SOC 2 certification. Our hosting provider's data centres hold both.
- No independent penetration test yet.
- No SAML single sign-on. Google and Microsoft sign-in are available.

Templates and documents

- Participant information sheet, consent form, data management plan and AI-use statement, for both AI options: qualitati.com/ethics-kit
- Pre-filled security questionnaire answers (HECVAT Lite / CAIQ-Lite) are available on request.

If a special category of data (for example health) may come up in your interviews, the controller needs an Article 9 basis and ethics approval. Questions, data subject requests and DPA signatures: contact@qualitati.com.