

COMPILING RESEARCH REPORTS

Aggregating the research process, methods, research data, data visualizations, and insights. Reports are often a required deliverable.

Duration	1–14 days (depending on complexity and amount of data)
Physical requirements	Research data, personas, journey maps, system maps, computer
Energy level	Low
Researchers/Facilitators	Minimum 1 (a better approach is to have teams of 2–3 researchers)
Participants	n/a
Expected output	Research report

Research reports can have many forms, from written reports to more visual collections of photos and videos. Depending on the project and the client or management, a research report can serve various purposes, such as providing actionable guidelines to improve a physical/digital product or service, a “shock” report to get internal buy-in for a service design project, proof of work that justifies the budget spent on research, a compendium of research data that can be reused in other projects, and more.

No matter how your report might look, here are a few points that a research report should include:

- **Research process:** Present your research process in an accessible way. Highlight what you’ve done to ensure decent data quality, such as triple triangulation (method, data, researcher), theoretical saturation, or peer review.
- **Key insights/main findings:** Start with your key insights as a kind of executive report. What are the most crucial points you want to bring across? Build your key insights on all types of data and support your insights by cross-referencing the different types of datasets you have. Does your

qualitative data match the quantitative data? If so, what does it mean? What type of information, from the prep research and secondary research, can you incorporate here? Was it confirmed by the fieldwork or not?

- **Raw data:** Including raw data (first-level constructs) increases the credibility of your research. Add quotes, photos, audio and video recordings, artifacts, as well as statistics and metrics to your report to support your insights. If possible, include information on method, data, and researcher triangulation, and cross-reference between different datasets and highlight theoretical saturation or how representative your findings are.⁰¹
- **Visualizations:** If possible, include visualizations like personas, journey maps, or system maps to visually summarize your research findings in a way that is appealing and easy to understand.

Step-by-step guide

1 Prepare

Have your research process, your research data, as well as different visualizations (personas, journey maps, system maps) and insights (key insights, JTBD, user stories) at hand. Think who you could invite to peer-review your report.

2 Write research report

A research report should start with your research process. Who was involved? Which methods did you use to collect data, when, and where? When did you start to synthesize and analyze the data? How many iterations did you do? Add a summary of your key findings and key visualizations, add raw data as evidence, and use indices to show that there's much more data that these are based on.

3 Peer-review and iterate

Invite other researchers to peer-review your report. Use their feedback to iteratively improve your report from various perspectives. Think about the target audience of your report and invite people from that audience or like-minded people to review it.

Method notes

- Keep your indices so that you are able to show which raw data is behind your key insights and other research outcomes, like personas, journey maps, system maps, etc.
- Share your research outcomes with participants of your research and incorporate their feedback in your deliverables. In addition to gaining further insights, if you can show that participants feel well represented by your research outcomes you'll increase the credibility of your work. ◀

⁰¹ See also #TISDD 5.1, *The process of service design research*, for more information on the importance of triangulation in research and the concept of theoretical saturation.