

Open Data Engagement Fund 2017/2018

What is Open Data?

“A piece of data or content is open if anyone is free to use, reuse, and redistribute it- subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and/or share-alike” (Open Data Handbook¹)

Open Knowledge² defines Open as “anyone can freely access, use, modify, and share for any purpose (subject, at most, to requirements that preserve provenance and openness).”

The concept of Open Data is about making data held by public bodies available and easily accessible online for reuse and redistribution.

Open Data Governance Board

An [Open Data Governance Board](#) (ODGB) has been established to provide strategic leadership and governance in line with best international practice in the area of Open Data. It is tasked with considering how to improve the capacity and capability of public bodies in implementing Open Data, and considering opportunities to maximise the value of public sector data and information for long-term economic, social and democratic benefits.

The ODGB’s mandate allows it to consider how to ensure an Open Data Initiative that meets the needs of users and helps public bodies to plan their activities accordingly and encourage an ongoing collaborative process.

This is in line with the key objectives of the national [Open Data Strategy 2017-2022](#) published in July 2017. Stakeholder engagement and encouraging the use of Open Data is a key theme in the Strategy.

The Support Fund

One of the tools designed to support the Open Data Initiative is a competitive Open Data Engagement Fund (to the value of up to €30,000). The ODGB will consider applications for support towards improving the availability and usage of data on the national open data portal [data.gov.ie](#). This could include but not be limited to the following:

- a) Outreach, advocacy and engagement activities with and by public bodies to promote the release and/or usage of Open Data, e.g. seminars, workshops, discussion groups, conferences, etc.;
- b) Promoting the innovative use of data published through [data.gov.ie](#); this could include the building of apps or new products/services to demonstrate the use that can be made of open data; holding competitions or hackathons or the creation of use cases; or/and the development of interactive visualisations to demonstrate data usage from [data.gov.ie](#);
- c) Special Category Project: Support for a project or research piece using specific datasets with a view to arriving at outcomes that could:
 - support the creation of efficiencies within Public Bodies; or
 - assist in government decision making; or

¹ <http://opendatahandbook.org/guide/en/what-is-open-data/>

² <http://opendefinition.org/>

- demonstrate trends in social topics to help address current issues in the public interest or interesting and tangible insights into public policy issues (such as housing, environment, transport, etc.).

This could potentially include datasets from sources such as CSO, Housing, Heritage, Revenue, Social Protection, Education, spatial etc. available on the portal or Dáil Debates and PQ data which will be available from the Oireachtas Service shortly.

Applicants may apply under each category (a), (b) or (c) but a separate application form should be completed for each one.

Selection Criteria

Applications can be made by any organisation or individual (in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland). This includes *inter alia* a public body, business, research body, university, school, college, civil society group. An individual applicant must have a reference from an organisation e. g. school/college, business etc. to show that they are bona fide.

A sub-committee of the ODGB will consider each application and decide on whether funding will be provided and if successful the level of same. The level of the applicant's own investment (e.g. time, funds) will be taken into account. In the selection process the decision of the sub-committee is final and no discussion shall be entered into with applicants.

Funding for successful applications will be allocated as follows:

Category	Activity/Project	Maximum Funding Allowed
(a) Outreach and Engagement	Support for Presentations/seminars/workshops/discussion groups/advocacy of open data/knowledge sharing and engagement on open data issues	€200 - €1000 depending on scale
	Holding conferences/events	€1000 - €3000 depending on scale
(b) Innovative Use of Data/Projects	Building of apps or the development of use cases (to demonstrate the use that can be made of open data).	€1000 - €3000 depending on scale
	Holding hackathons (facilitation, refreshments, venue etc.) to develop products/services promoting data usage	€500 - €1500 depending on scale
	Development of interactive visualisations of data on the Portal for use as showcases	€400 - €1000
	Sponsorship of competitions (including prizes) – for example to come up with innovative ideas on how open data can be used to solve policy or real life issues of national importance i.e. housing, flooding	€3000 - €5000
(c) Special Category Project	Support for project/research to use open data from the portal (potentially in conjunction with other datasets) to arrive with outcomes that will increase public service efficiency or demonstrate trends in social topics to help address current issues and/or assist in decision making	Up to €5000

A minimum funding allocation of €200 and maximum of €5000 will apply.

Applications must demonstrate real benefits / impact and set out how these would be measured.

In respect of (a), the activity must

- represent value for money
- demonstrate clear audience benefits/impacts

In respect of (b)

- use at least two datasets from the national open data portal data.gov.ie
- represent value for money
- use open data in a fresh or innovative way
- represent the appropriate use of data and be user friendly
- demonstrate clear audience benefits/impacts for example, social impact, usage by business/industry leading to economic impact, transparency, accountability impact
- demonstrate scalability of use

In respect of (c)

- use at least one dataset from the national portal data.gov.ie
- demonstrate clear outcomes to assist in public service efficiency or public policy decision making.

Requirements for Successful Applicants

- Successful applicants will be required to sign a Form of Undertaking prior to drawdown of the funding confirming that the funds will be used for the open data activity as outlined in their application and that it will represent value for money.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit a short progress report to the Open Data Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform on their project/activity by the 31st March, 2018.
- The activity/project for which the funds have been provided will be required to be completed by 30 June, 2018 after which a final report on the activity/project will be submitted to the Open Data Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform.
- Progress reports and final reports may be published via, for example, a blog on the Open Data portal.
- Details of the successful applicants and the amounts of funding received will be published on the open data portal.
- Where applicable, successful applicants may be required to have their project developed into a use case for promotion of the open data initiative or other promotional activity as determined by the ODGB

Applications

Applications should be made on the Engagement Fund Application Form and should be submitted by email to opendata@per.gov.ie. The closing date for applications is Wednesday, 25 October at 5pm.