**Open Data Governance Board Meeting**

**Monday, 30 November 2016**

**Minutes**

**Attendance:**Emer Coleman (Chair), Dennis Jennings**,** Denis Parfenov, Sandra Collins, Cronan McNamara, Daithí Mac Síthigh,

**Apologies**: Dietrich Rebholz, Sue Duke, Barry Lowry, Andrew O’Sullivan, Ashling Cunningham

**Secretariat:** Evelyn O'Connor, Fiona Morley Clarke, Marian Beakey

**Library/Information Professionals**: John Howard, UCD, Aoife Lawton, HSE, Kate Kelly, RCSI, Philip Cohen, DIT (Library Association of Ireland President), Brian Galvin, Health Research Board, Mairead Treanor, Met Eireann (for Government Libraries Group of LAI)

A number of documents had issued to the Board in advance of the meeting as follows:

* Note of meeting on 25th October;
* Progress report and update from public bodies on Open Data within their organisations;
* Submission on the draft Open Data Strategy 2017-2020 from Health Research Board;
* Briefing note from Sandra Collins, NLI on the Digital Legal Deposit

The items on the agenda were discussed as set out below:

1. **Minutes of 25th October meeting.**

The Minutes were taken as approved and it was noted that these have been published on the portal.

1. **Matters arising**

* The Progress Report and update from public bodies on Open Data within their organisations circulated was taken as read;
* **Health Research Board.** The submission received from the Health Research Board circulated was discussed and the contents noted.
* **Engagement Fund**. The closing date for receipt of applications was Wednesday 16th November and a total of 29 applications were received. A selection committee comprising Ashling Cunningham, Daithí Mac Síthigh, Dennis Jennings of the ODGB and Fiona Morley Clarke (Open Data Unit) had been established and had assessed the applications. It was agreed that the results would be announced in the coming days. Dennis Jennings gave an update on the applications received and an overview of the applications the Selection Committee were proposing to fund/or part fund and the reasons for not providing funding to the unsuccessful applicants. Dennis advised that overall, the Selection Committee were very impressed with the quality of the applications received and the level of innovation shown. Dennis proposed a pay out of just under €30,000 in respect of 14 applications.
* It was noted that some of the successful applications were from staff in organisations from which Board members come from and the Selection Committee considered whether there could be a perceived conflict of interest in agreeing to fund these applications. The Chair noted that D/PER had decided not to restrict anyone from applying to the pilot of the Fund as to do so might lose a lot of applications from experienced data users i.e. given the limited community working on Open Data, to exclude anyone known to a Board member from applying might result in the loss of a number of good applications. It was noted that there were no applications from staff in organisations from which the Selection Committee itself came from and the Board Members had no involvement in the development of the applications. It was also noted that each application was assessed on its merits. Following discussion, the Board was satisfied that no advantage was given to any applicants and a total pay-out of just under €30,000 regarding 14 successful applications was approved. It was agreed that a blog giving details of the successful applications would be put on the portal.
* **Anonymisation.** The issue of anonymisation of data was discussed and it was noted that personalisation of data is an impediment to releasing data. The Board discussed whether they had any role in this aspect of Open Data or whether they should broaden their scope to include anonymisation and include it in the forthcoming Open Data Strategy. D Parfenov noted that private data is outside the scope of open data and that data which is collected by government agencies and private corporations about citizens is often already machine-readable, almost real time and linkable. Data collected on the citizen’s behalf at present can be hard to find, may not be machine-readable or up to date. What is needed for enabling data re-use and for making it useful by citizens, private and public organisations?  Open data is not a series of projects but a digital public infrastructure. In order to facilitate and encourage reuse of open data, digital public infrastructure needs to be linked, trustworthy and permanent. Open data must be authentic and FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable).

It was noted that the CSO are doing a lot of work on anonymisation of data – using linked data etc. but that a lot of other public bodies would not be in this space. It was decided that more information should be sought to enable the Board to consider their role in anonymisation, if any. The Board can then make an informed view as to whether it has a role in this regard or not. The Board suggested inviting the CSO to attend a meeting of the Board to discuss anonymisation to begin with to assist their understanding of anonymisation of data. The Data Protection Commissioner/Rob Kitchen of NUIM might also be consulted, if required.

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| **Action 1 (Secretariat)** InviteCSO to a future meeting to discuss anonymisation to enable the Board decide their role if any on this aspect of data. Also seek the views of Data Protection Commissioner/Rob Kitchen, NUIM, if required.  **Action 2 (Secretariat**) Prepare a blog giving details of the successful applications from the Engagement Fund for the portal. |

1. **Meeting with representatives of Libraries/Information Professionals**

Six representatives of the “Libraries/Information Professionals” Stakeholder Group joined the meeting to discuss how the Open Data Initiative can deliver benefits for librarians and for their views on the forthcoming Open Data Strategy. The librarians were advised in advance that by way of preparation it would be useful to look at the [Foundation Document for the Development of a National Open Data Strategy](https://data.gov.ie/strategy), and the [Technical Framework](https://data.gov.ie/technical-framework). They were also circulated with a general briefing note on the Open Data Initiative and the note prepared by Sandra Collins on the Digital Legal Deposit.

The attendees were:

* John Howard, UCD
* Aoife Lawton, HSE
* Kate Kelly, RCSI
* Philip Cohen, DIT (Library Association of Ireland President)
* Brian Galvin, Health Research Board
* Mairead Treanor, Met Eireann (for Government Libraries Group of LAI)

Some of the main points that arose were as follows:

* The Library Association of Ireland is very happy to engage in discussion with the ODGB on Open Data.
* Curation and preservation of data has been the focus of libraries for a long time. Funding of this activity is very important.
* Releasing data is only the start, there is a need for quality metadata, finding tools, training and awareness raising as well as policy changes and initiatives.
* There is a need for joined up thinking (researchers/academics and links between the Board and funders of research). Currently there is a lack of a funding stream and a change in policy around this is needed.
* Access to publicly funded research data is needed- the data used to complete the actual research. Research takes place across a lifecycle. To provide coherence we need a much more joined up support and communications framework- including academics, researchers, libraries and funders.
* It is necessary to build systems that can interoperate. Researchers like to publish data where similar data exists. Researchers need to be aware of data environments.
* A national position statement (National Principles for Open Access Policy Statement) exists regarding open access publication and it would be good if this could be extended to open data.
* Many funders e.g. H2020 are including mandates that require research data be open and accessible to other researchers and the general public. It can be troublesome for a researcher to prepare data at the end of a project. Funders could look at allocations around data preparation.
* Accountability and transparency is important. Libraries view information as a public good.

The Board queried whether its remit should extend beyond Open Data to Open Science.

The Board also queried if there is a way that dissatisfaction with portal datasets can be fed back to it from the library community. It was suggested use cases may assist and the public library service could be used to canvas feedback.

The Board asked the library group if they felt that they could influence the agenda in their own organisations. The librarians agreed that this was possible in the academic libraries in particular. However, in other areas such as the HSE and Health Research Board, library professionals have had the opportunity to influence via groups such as the National Steering Committee on Open Access Policy. The Board agreed that greater collaboration is needed between it and library professionals. It was suggested that librarians as a group could be utilised to advocate with line managers and senior researchers. Participation in conferences related to open access/open data may also be an option.

Kate Kelly, Philip Cohen and Brian Galvin provided papers for the Board at the meeting. The Board advised that it would be useful if soft copies of their position papers presented could be emailed to the Secretariat for circulation to the Board. The Board also advised that any requests for datasets could be made through the national open data portal- data.gov.ie

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| **Action 3 (Librarians)** Keep lines of communication open with the Board and promote Open Data in their own institutions and with their own stakeholders    **Action 4 (Secretariat)** Circulate librarians position papers to the Board |

**4. Discussion on Open Data Strategy.**

A draft Open Data Strategy, prepared by the Secretariat had been circulated in advance for discussion. This comprised a short high level document outlining the vision for Open Data, the principles underpinning the Open Data Initiative, and the aims of the Strategy linked to a table of time bound actions for the three year period 2017-2020. After some initial discussion on the draft, it was agreed that the Chair would put the draft up on a Google Docs or similar type web collaboration forum for the Board to input into, discuss and amend as necessary. A next version of the draft Strategy will then be finalised for discussion at the next meeting – end January.

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| **Action 5 (Chair)**  Set up a web collaboration forum to enable the Board to do further work on the draft Open Data Strategy  **Action 6 (Board)** Work collaboratively on re-shaping the draft Strategy with a view to having a close to final version available by end January |

**5. AOB**

1. Paris Declaration. The Board was informed that the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Global Summit is taking place in early December. A central part of the summit will be the Paris Declaration where all OGP States will be asked to choose from a list of 21 collective actions and make a substantive contribution towards their implementation. Each government will be asked to consider joining 3-5 collective actions. A number of the actions relate in full or part to Open Data. Action 20 (Guiding principles for open data policies) was drawn to the attention of the Open Data Unit in particular and a statement and short briefing was prepared by the Open Data Unit. Part of Action 20 recommends signing up to the International Data Charter and including this commitment in any open data strategy and/or OGP National Action Plan. The Secretariat will circulate further details to the Board on the matter.
2. It was suggested that the Board should have a discussion at the next meeting on health data and its availability and issues around same.

**(c) Next meeting**

It was agreed to hold quarterly meetings in 2017 and the secretariat will circulate some suggested dates. The possibility of holding some of the meetings in a venue other that the offices of the D/PER should be explored. It was suggested that there should be a ‘slot’ in each meeting for engagement with an outside group/external representative on Open Data – some suggestions included the media/press, organisations involved in funding, geospatial experts, SFI etc.

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| **Action 6 (Secretariat)** Circulate information regarding Paris Declaration  **Action 7 (Secretariat)** Circulate suggested dates for meetings in 2017  **Action 8 (Secretariat)** Include health data and its availability on the Agenda for the next meeting |

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Open Data Unit

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

November 2016