

Role of the Open Data Liaison Officer

The national Open data Strategy 2017-2022 was published in July 2017 following Government decision. The Strategy builds on the substantial achievements made in implementing the Open Data Initiative to date. It provides a framework for data to be used to ensure that public services are delivered in a more effective and efficient manner and in a transparent and accountable way. Two core objectives of the Strategy are the publication of high value government data in open format, making it publicly available and freely reusable; and engaging with a broad community of stakeholders to promote use of the data for the benefit of all sectors of the economy.

Theme 7 of the Open Data Strategy 2017-2022 is to ensure that effective governance structures are in place to implement the Strategy. Action 7.4 under this theme requests that all public bodies will designate a senior person/team within their organisation who will act as a Liaison person in relation to Open Data. These will act as a point of contact with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to Open Data and help support the initiative generally. The proposed role is described in more detail below and it is not envisaged to be onerous. However, as the Strategy is agreed national Government policy, the role of the Open Data Liaison officer within their own organisation is of particular importance given that buy-in at all levels of the organisation is required. Open Data Champions need to be located across an organisation including at senior level.

Specifics of the Role:

- act as Contact Point for the Open Data Unit in terms of them organising meetings with your organisation
- provide short progress updates to the Open Data Unit in relation to open data activities within your organisation on a quarterly basis
- act as Contact Point for any queries that the Open Data Unit receive in respect of data from your organisation and work with policy areas that manage data to encourage its release
- circulate notifications etc. in relation to open data that may issue from the Open Data Unit
- Promote and encourage the publication and use of open data within your organisation as well as encouraging all such data to be linked to the national open data portal data.gov.ie – act as an Open Data champion or encourage others to do so
- Raise awareness in your organisation of the need to carry out a data audit and prepare a publication plan for open data. The Liaison Officer may not necessarily carry out either of these tasks but should assist in ensuring that they are carried out.

Note that Organisations will be carrying out data audits in the context of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance and an Open Data audit could form part of this- open data audits would assess non-personal data that could potentially be made available in machine readable formats.

- Promote the availability of the framework for open data training and the framework for open data technical support within your organisations
- Work with the Open Data Unit in ensuring that datasets on the national portal relevant to your organisation are compliant with the Open Data technical framework
- Communicate and liaise with Open Data Liaison Officers in other public bodies as appropriate.