

Role of the Open Data Liaison Officer (Open Data Strategy 2023-2027)

Context

Ireland's Open Data Strategy 2023–2027 sets out an ambitious vision for enhancing transparency, innovation, and public service delivery through the publication and reuse of high-quality Open Data. To achieve this, all Departments/Offices and relevant bodies under their aegis must assign responsibility to an Open Data Liaison Officer (ODLO) for matters arising under Open Data Regulations. This is a pivotal role in driving Open Data implementation across the public sector.

Purpose of the Role

The ODLO acts as the primary point of contact between their organisation and the Open Data Unit. They may coordinate Open Data activities internally, promote best practices, and ensure that datasets are published in line with national standards and strategic objectives.

The following is an example of Key Responsibilities an ODLO may hold:

1. Strategic Liaison

- Serve as the organisation's lead contact for Open Data matters.
- Provide short progress updates to the Open Data Unit in relation to open data activities within your organisation on a quarterly basis.
- Represent the organisation in Open Data forums and consultations.

2. Data Stewardship

- Identify, prepare, and oversee the publication of datasets.
- Ensure datasets meet required standards for format, metadata, and quality.
- Promote consistent and timely publication to data.gov.ie.

3. Internal Advocacy & Capacity Building

- Raise awareness of Open Data across departments and teams.
- Encourage integration of Open Data into business processes.
- Support staff training and promote a culture of data openness.
- Promote the availability of the framework for open data training and the framework for open data technical support within your organisations.

4. Monitoring & Reporting

- Provide regular updates to the Open Data Unit on progress and challenges.
- Contribute to performance indicators and impact assessments.
- Support audits and reviews of Open Data readiness.
- 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.

Strategic Alignment

ODLOs contribute directly to the three pillars of the 2023–2027 Strategy:

Publishers – Ensuring high-value datasets are released.

Platform – Supporting a trusted and responsive data infrastructure.

Users – Enhancing accessibility and usability for citizens, researchers, and businesses.

Ideal Profile

- Strong understanding of data governance, digital strategy, or public service delivery.
- Ability to coordinate across teams and communicate technical concepts clearly.
- Commitment to transparency, innovation, and public value.

Time Commitment

- The role may require regular engagement through Open Data requests.
- Attendance at regular ODLO briefings and Open Data events is expected.
- Participation in working groups or consultations may be requested.

Resources

ODLOs have access to toolkits, such as CEIST, templates, and metadata standards via data.gov.ie.

Next Steps for New ODLOs

1. Review the Open Data Strategy 2023–2027.
2. Conduct an internal audit of potential datasets.
3. Establish a publication plan and internal awareness campaign for your organisation if not done so already.
4. Connect with your ODLO peers via the collaboration platform CEIST.

Continued Importance

ODLOs are central to demonstrating the value of Open Data in transparent decision-making, innovation, and public trust. Their work supports Ireland's continued leadership in Open Data maturity across the EU and the OECD.