

# Five open data challenges for discussion

## CHALLENGE 1: Releasing Data

Open data has been described as the ‘new raw material of the twenty first century’ and governments around the world are increasingly alert to the potential of releasing data. Governments have access to large stores of data that can unleash huge economic and social benefits if made freely available. But government data is only part of the picture: data will deliver the greatest impact if it can be linked and compared to data held by a range of different private and public sector organisations.

**The purpose of this discussion is to focus on how to convince people of the power of open data and encourage greater releases of data from governments and industry.**

### Starting points for discussion

- How should governments prioritise data for release?
- How do organisations ensure that they are publishing *data* that are high in quality as well as high in quantity?
- How can the benefits of open data be communicated to new audiences so that government data can be combined with important privately owned data?

### At the end of the discussion, the Chair will report back on:

- Ideas on a challenge/initiatives that participants and others can progress
- Any commitment and resources that discussion participants are able to offer
- Other input needed to progress this challenge (including other governments, industry, civil society representatives) and suggestions for engaging them.

## **CHALLENGE 2: *Fund or support competitions***

There are numerous examples of where different organisations combine their strengths to support innovation through competition. Businesses, government and civil society organisations can all contribute the idea, the prize, the promotion and the delivery, and in the world of open data there are various competitions running at any one time

Examples of topics and types of competitions include:

- Insightful uses/combinations/visualisations of data
- Crowd-sourcing the most individuals to clean-up/upload data
- Finding solutions to real-world problems
- Using open data on exploratory 'blue-skies' activity
- Discreet events (e.g. one off hack) vs part of a series (e.g. ODI impression programmes/hackapaloozas)
- Offering seed funding to prototype development

Such competitions have already resulted in applications that help people all over the world.

**The purpose of this session is to discuss how to maximise the impact and value derived from competitions.**

### ***Starting points for discussion:***

- What are some good examples of effective competitions that have made a difference? What did they achieve?
- What are the key components of an effective open data-related competitions?/What did they do well that we should replicate?
- What collective knowledge and resources can we pool to support competitions?
- How will each of us ensure that we maximise value from competitions?

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### **CHALLENGE 3: Funding training and products in developing countries:**

Access to technology and open data can provide radical solutions to long-standing problems around the world. However, open data can be a complex topic for the uninitiated. This is particularly so for people from countries where there may not be a strong history of transparency and access to data. This discussion will consider ways of training a new generation of open data innovators in developing countries and how to develop their innovative ideas and products. It will also consider how these open data products can be used to strengthen the movement towards open governance.

#### **Starting points for discussion**

- How do we ensure that technology innovators are aware of the potential of open data and receive the technological training and support needed to fully harness this?
- How do we develop innovative ideas and products that use data in developing countries?

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#### **CHALLENGE 4: Contributing knowledge and skills: by offering tools, technical support and advice**

Open data is only as good as the ways in which it is used. For entrepreneurs and innovators, it can require a huge leap to go from having a clever idea to having an innovative product that performs at scale. This discussion will examine the best ways to support data innovators by sharing experience, mentoring, or providing access to technology and incubation-space.

##### **Starting points for discussion**

- How to excite a young generation of data innovators?
- What support is required to transform a bright idea that uses data into something that performs at scale?
- How can different people and organisations collaborate to develop truly groundbreaking uses of data?

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**CHALLENGE 5 Forming a taskforce to tackle global problems:** by joining forces with other organizations and individuals to drive change

The world is diverse in nature, resulting in extremes in the natural environment and quality of life. Those who are fortunate enough to find themselves with the time, resources and knowledge to both understand and affect the global situation owe it to those at the other end of the scale to world to redress the imbalance. Data plays a fundamental role in both breaking down these global problems and finding a solution.

There are numerous examples of where the combination of different global organisations have been brought together to pool their resources in order to make the world a better place.

***Steering points for discussion:***

Drawing on the knowledge in the group of the strengths and weaknesses of our organisations and sectors; coupled with our awareness of pressing global issues and initiatives to tackle them, can we discuss:

- What are the key issues that open data can help unlock?
- What do we need to solve them?
- Who can play what role in doing so?

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