Guidance for Release of Data Fund and Breakthrough Fund

Purpose of the Funds

Release of Data Fund

The purpose of the Release of Data Fund is to support the release of data, not currently available in an open reusable format. The Fund was announced in the Autumn Statement 2011, to remove barriers to releasing public data.

The Fund is informed by the business cases developed by the Open Data User Group (ODUG), understanding and representing the wider open data community's demands for open data from Public Sector data holders. It also supports projects that build capacity among data owners, as well as those that span several public sector data owners with a regional or national impact.

Breakthrough Fund

The purpose of the Open Data Breakthrough Fund is to provide funding to remove short-term barriers and enable open data release, and enhancing the ability to access and make use of the open data.

There are two separate funding streams available: £1.5m for central government departments and partner organisations (Central Government Breakthrough Fund); and £1m for local authorities (Local Government Breakthrough Fund). This year's funding will build on programme deliverables from 2013-14, encouraging the reuse of best practice and components developed during the first year of the programme.

How do I know which Fund to apply for?

Please see the criteria on pages 3 and 4 to see which Fund is most relevant to your project. If you are still unclear, please email one of the sponsors at the addresses on page 5

How to Apply

The application form can be found at
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/breakthrough-fund-and-release-of-data-fund

The application form consists of 11 questions related to open data activity and its costs and benefits. All questions should be completed as fully as possible within the word limit for each question.

We recommend that you contact the relevant sponsors early with an expression of interest, so that they can receive advice and support with applications to avoid invalid or duplicate proposals.

Help and Advice

For help in completing the application form please see the guidance overleaf. If you have any additional questions when developing your application, please contact the relevant organisation at the email address on page 5.

Record Keeping and Freedom of Information

To meet the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Cabinet Office (for Release of Data Fund bids) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (for the Breakthrough Fund) will record the reasons for decisions on applications and claims at all stages. These records will ensure there is a clear audit trail for all applications. Records will be maintained for all applications irrespective of whether they are successful.

Further Information about the Funds

What is the difference between the Release of Data Fund and the Open Data Breakthrough Fund and how do I know which Fund I should apply for?

The Release of Data Fund is informed by the business cases developed by the Open Data User Group (ODUG), understanding and representing the wider open data community's demands from Public Sector bodies for the release of open data that has a regional or national impact. It also supports projects that build capacity among data owners to facilitate open data release, as well as those that span several public sector data owners with a regional or national impact.

The Release of Data Fund will cover a number of sub-themes of activity including funding to:

- o Release data sets submitted through the data request process on Data.gov.uk, for which the Open Data User Group develop business cases on behalf of the wider user community
- o Build capacity and capability of data owners to facilitate data release through training and increased resource.
- o Support data release projects that span several public sector data owners

The Breakthrough Fund is focussed on individual projects at organisational or local authority level, where a small amount of funding can unlock barriers to the publication of open data e.g. building a new piece of IT infrastructure or assisting in the release of locally or organisationally held data.

The Breakthrough Fund will cover a number of sub-themes of activity which includes funding for:

- o Infrastructure and software that enables the release of data;
- o Standardising data and making it linkable so that it can be easier combined and compared
- o Enabling data to be better understood, accessed, shared and reused as open data bringing together open data for onward use and supporting local communities to understand and use the data through applications

For both Funds, proposals outside of these criteria will be considered if a credible case can be made on how it will more broadly support the release of open data and if the activity is not being taken forward elsewhere.

The Funds will pay for projects which will facilitate/ensure the ongoing provision of open data from eligible organisations, but they will not cover the costs of ongoing data collection or cover loss of income where data was previously charged for. Exemplars of accepted bids are on page 6 for information. If you have any further questions regarding which fund is the most appropriate, please contact one of the organisations on page 5.

Who is eligible to apply for funding?

Anyone can apply to the Release of Data Fund. Government departments, government agencies and local authorities are eligible to apply independently, or in collaboration with non government organisations.

In the case of local authorities, collaborative bids are encouraged which bring together data from local or regional partnerships groupings for onward use and supporting local communities to understand and use the data through applications.

For the Breakthrough Fund, central government departments and agencies should apply to the Central Government Breakthrough Fund. Local authorities should apply to the Local Government Breakthrough Fund.

Are there any specific requirements to consider?

To qualify for funding, any bids for either Fund must:
- o Demonstrate a well costed bid that offers value for money
- o Show that it is unable to identify appropriate funding through existing budgets
- o Be committed to making the data available for free under the Open Government License on data.gov.uk, to high quality as outlined by ODI certification (https://certificates.theodi.org/) with appropriate ongoing frequent updates
- o Show there is a clear demand for the data to be released / standardised / linked and demonstrate that there is a longer term economic, social or environmental benefit from enhancing the ability to access and make use of the open data.
- o Identify, and involve at an early stage, at least one consumer and demonstrate that the project design meets their needs.
- o Commit to tracking the use of the data and the benefit that has been realised from its release through clear monitoring and evaluation plans.
- o Ensure that other organisations in similar situations will be able to reuse the patterns, standards, platforms and tools easily and these will be made available under open source licence
- o Demonstrate that data released has relevance at national level, or, if produced at regional level, can be potentially scaled to national level
- o Work in a strong partnership with other organisations or Local Authorities to ensure effective delivery where appropriate.
- o Funded activity must be completed by March 2015

Are organisations limited to one application?

Only one application per organisation is advised, although where other applications are received these will be discussed on a case by case basis. However, the aims of the Funds are to ensure that Government can support as broad an audience as possible, so it depends on the merits of the individual project and the outcomes it will deliver.

Is there a lower limit and upper limit for applications?

There is no upper or lower limit for applications and each bid will be considered on an individual basis against the application criteria.   We expect funding bids to be proportional to the size of the project, the size and/or number of organisations involved, and the potential outcome of the project to public organisations, communities and business.

Who will administer the Funds?

The Cabinet Office manages the administration of the Release of Data Fund in collaboration with the Open Data User Group Chair.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) manages the overall Breakthrough Fund while the Local Government Association administers the Local Government element of the Breakthrough Fund.

What is the deadline for applications?

In 2014/15, the first two rounds of the Funds will be:

	Deadline for application
Round 1	Wednesday 14th May 3pm
Round 2	Wednesday 16th July 3pm

The funding panel for applications will meet at regular intervals to review incoming bids. If there are any future rounds, the deadlines for these will be advertised on gov.uk. The number of panel reviews will depend on remaining funding, so we encourage early bids.

When will I find out whether I have been successful?

Funding panels will meet to discuss all applications, so we expect to be able to inform applicants within a month whether they have been successful.

Who can I contact if I still have further questions on the Funds?

If you require any additional information on the Release of Data Fund you can email Cabinet Office at transparencystrategy@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

If you require any additional information on the Breakthrough Fund you can email Department for Business, Innovation and Skills at breakthroughfund@bis.gsi.gov.uk (for Central Government bids) or Local Government Association at transparency@local.gov.uk (for Local Government bids)

Exemplar Bid Examples

Release of Data Fund

The Local Voucher Scheme incentivises Local Authorities to release three datasets, including planning data, chosen by ODUG in a standard format across England. The proposal outlined a significant effort in building capacity at a local level through customised training, sharing of best practice, and satisfying the criteria of collaboration and partnership building. By co-ordinating with all local authorities, the project will facilitate best practice and a sustained improvement in data literacy. Opening up these datasets across England will enable national products to be built using local authority data, which has significant potential for longer term economic, social and environmental benefits.

Breakthrough Fund (Central Government)

The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) is running a project to develop and release accounting taxonomies as open data. Central Government Breakthrough Funding was awarded to fund the purchase of a new IT platform for the development and testing of XBRL taxonomies. Once the taxonomies have been finalised, the FRC will make available all new financial taxonomies, as open data, on this new technology platform.

The FRC are working closely with XBRL UK, the previous owners of the taxonomies, Companies House and businesses to deliver this project. 3 million XBRL reports were made to HMRC and Companies House in the year to March 2014 and these are all available in bulk, free of charge, as open data. The new XBRL taxonomies will allow companies to tag information in their accounts.

Breakthrough Fund (Local Government)

The Lambeth London Borough - Cooperative Council Community Data Project is a freely shared open source platform that can be installed on any suitable website. It will embed data and tools "where the conversations are taking place" on more citizen facing sites giving the local community and third-party organisations better access to information and enable them to work with the council on designing and delivering improved services across the borough.