

INFO FOR SETTING UP AN OPEN DATA STEERING GROUP

The point of an open data steering group is to bring people together to help you with questions and developments around open data in your city or town. Think of it as a community of “changemakers” who will ensure that your open data strategy is relevant and meets the current demand.

By setting up an open data steering group, you give your community NGOs the opportunity to participate in your open data activities and help develop them. Such a setting helps to ensure that your open data strategy focuses on the needs of the audience targeted by your open data outreach. The data you publish will resonate better because you will be well informed about your audience's needs and wants.

Joining the open data steering group is also beneficial for participating nonprofits because it allows them to build skills around “data.” Moreover, they can network and pool expertise. The steering group can be a place to share ideas for data-based projects led by community officers.

The steering group should be chaired by someone representing an NGO – i.e., not a representative from local government. Initially, an independent chair should be elected, perhaps rotating every six months in the future. At least one person from local government who plays a key role in its open data activities should be a member of the steering group. They should also host the steering group and provide a space for the meetings.

Why should people from non-profit organizations participate in your open data steering group?

- They can contribute to and influence your open data activities.
- It offers professional development for participants (content for their CV or LinkedIn profiles, which seems to be a good driver for some people).
- A connection is made in the steering group to other citizen development projects and partnerships could be facilitated.
- Collaboration on the topic of open data can also be a starting point for participation in other digitization projects in the municipality, perhaps even joint tendering activities.

Why should you as a municipality set up an open data steering group?

- It gives you constant access to a pool of community experts who have their finger on the pulse of what is happening at the local level.
- You can tailor your open data strategy more closely to your target audience and receive feedback from potential users of open data.
- It allows you to demonstrate your determination to develop an ambitious open data strategy that has a strong basis in citizen engagement.