**Blog examples to promote your #ODFA event**

When you see text written in **bold and in red**, please edit this so it is relative to your area.

**Blog 1:**

**Should the third sector in YOUR CITY care about open data?**



Open data seems to be the big buzzword within the community sector at the moment, especially among those with an interest in social innovation.

But should community organizations and the voluntary sector get on board the open data train?

The answer is a resounding “yes,” of course. As a not-for-profit organization, you should constantly be looking to better what we do to aid social change.

More importantly, considering how delving into data can help your organization better access funding, evidence impact and hold decision makers accountable, why are we not doing it?

These are the questions we are looking to answer, but before discussing barriers, here’s a quick jargon-free look at open data:

**What is open data?**

“Open data” in layman’s terms is basically the idea that information should be free for anybody and everybody to use, replicate or build upon.

**What does it actually look like?**

Open data can come in any form: a report, a spreadsheet, an interactive graph or even HTML files. It’s mostly the former three, usually Word documents, Excel spreadsheets and PDFs.

These files contain information about everything you can think of relating to the public sector, such as child obesity numbers to how many public restrooms we have in our community.

**Where can I find it in YOUR CITY?**

**If you have an open data portal, please say something about it here, if not please delete this section.**

**Who uses it?**

Anybody can access it but, to give you a rough idea, businesses and digital developers are the ones who usually use the data to create applications, while journalists use it for news articles.

The questions we want to ask you are: Who should be using it? And how can we help the community to better understand the difference it can make?

This is why we are holding our own Open Data For All (#ODFA) event. This is a workshop created by the Bertelsmann Stiftung that makes the language around open data more understandable and the process accessible to absolutely everybody – because that’s the whole point, right?



***Images from participants taking part in activities at another #ODFA workshop in another city***

But this isn’t always the case, unfortunately. The word itself can be quite scary and if even if you type the words into a search imagine, you’ll get lots of articles from academic authors using unnecessary jargon, which is confusing.

Even some professionals feel they are playing catch up with the open data movement, and don’t feel confident asking what it is, as they think it’s something they should already know. The point I’m trying to get at is: It’s okay to ask questions and give yourself opportunities to learn.

It’s good to go back to the basics, which is why we are holding a free Open Data For All workshop in **YOUR CITY** on **DATE** at **LOCATION.**

During the workshop, you will learn about the definition of open data, examples of good practice, and how you can use open data in real terms for your project. Participants will also take part in a series of mapping activities. This will help ensure that the third sector, at all skill levels, can contribute to the local agenda.

In other words, whether you are a total beginner or you have a decent grasp of what open data is, you are welcome to participate and take advantage of this opportunity to contribute.

Attendance is free of charge and places are limited. You can sign up here: **enter the link for your workshop**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email **enter email address** and I’ll do my best to answer them.

**Blog 2:**

**Don’t let the jargon put you off, open data is a powerful tool for social change!**

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Open data isn’t just a digital buzzword, it’s something that can genuinely help you with your work.

At the same time, it’s easy to understand why some people do get turned off and don’t seek it out. After all, it can come across as being pretty academic and it’s often talked about by ultra-professional types in suits on stages.

But what if I told you that that open data can act as a powerful tool to enhance the excellent work that you as community and voluntary-sector workers already do?

It can!

Are you interested to learn more? Good, then let’s look at why you should care about open data. We’ll add a few scenarios to help you visualize it, too.

**Funding:** You can use open data as evidence in funding applications. I bet you didn’t expect that, did you?

*Let’s say you are working for a health-related NGO that is based in the Gorbitz area of Dresden, and a national health-funding body has put out a call out for organizations to apply on the subject of health and housing. You could use the city’s* [*citizen well-being data*](http://daten.dresden.de/ASW/ASW.exe/report) *as evidence for your funding application.*

**Measuring impact and mapping social trends:** Have you changed the way you work or taken another direction with a project? If so, how do you measure that? Most people use surveys, but you could also use open data to see changes in social trends. Let’s take local data on crime in your neighborhood. If you have been working on reducing bicycle theft, you could monitor that data to see if your work is actually making a difference.

**Launching social action projects:** You can use open data to launch projects that do good in your community. Using it this way probably won’t make you any money, but after all, you are doing it for social good. (It’s also worth mentioning: it makes a good impression on funders).

*Imagine you are a green activist in Münster and you want to promote the use of electric vehicles in the city. You could use* [*open data*](https://opendata.stadt-muenster.de/dataset/elektrotankstellen-m%C3%BCnster) *from the city government to create a map, or you could write an article on the subject and publish it as a blog post.*

**Creating digital platforms:** This one is more for the techies, but it is worth mentioning for everyone else as well. Coders, digital activists and tech-minded NGOs can use open data sets to create their own digital platforms and have a positive impact on society. Check out [Mundraub](https://mundraub.org/), which uses open data from local government and people accessing the site to show where fruit can be freely picked around a city or town.

What does this all mean for you? Come to this free workshop and discover what open data is and how you can use it in your own work. Everything is explained in terms that are easy to understand.

The above are just a few examples of what you can do with open data, but there’s lots more you can learn, so do take advantage of this free training opportunity.



***Image from another #ODFA workshop in another city***

Here in **YOUR CITY,** we are holding an Open Data For All (#ODFA) workshop, which is brought to you by the Bertelsmann Stiftung. It will take place at **VENUE**, at **TIME** on **DATE**.