

Defining the 'Erasmus for Open Data' Programme

Submitted on 24 Sep 2014 by Martin Alvarez-Espinar

Last week (13-16 September), ten representatives from various communities around Europe got together in the city of Nantes (France) to work on the definition of a potential 'Erasmus programme' for Open Data, in the first [Erasmus Open Data meetup](#). The event was organized by [Libertic](#), ePSI Platform and [Atlantic 2.0](#), framed within the [Nantes Digital Week](#).

These experts worked together to define requirements, opportunities and a potential solution for **improving efficiency in knowledge sharing among all the European Open Data and PSI reuse communities**. This programme would be a new mechanism for meeting and working across borders and languages in Europe, aiming to develop skills in the field of open data and PSI reuse, enabling the creation of impactful open data projects in Europe. In order to avoid misunderstandings, considering our proposal has a broader scope than the traditional Erasmus programme, we have temporarily changed the name to **OpenDataXchange**.

According to the first approach, OpenDataXchange is a **framework to facilitate a practice-based exchange of knowledge, skills, and ideas** among all open data stakeholders in the EU. It aims to create opportunities to build and share capacities, to exchange experiences for individuals and organisations, contributing to more effective open data resource distribution within the EU, while facilitating the development of European projects.

OpenDataXchange

This framework has different aspects to help stakeholders at different levels:

- **Promotion of projects**, Organisations, activists, and reusers will be able to expose their ongoing, and future works on an online showcase gallery, enabling communication among authors and other stakeholders.
- **Directory of people**, allowing individuals to promote their specific skills, and organisations to showcase their work and request help.
- **Brokerage** process to enable sharing and exchange of skills and opportunities. The expert system will match profiles and projects.

This exchange of skills and learned lessons will be done in three different phases, depending on the complexity of the projects and the goals of the stakeholders:

- **Online collaborative exchange** using remote meetings, social networks and/or specific forums.
- **Transnational exchange**. Placements in open data programmes in fellow European countries to promote the bi-directional exchange of skills, creating potential adaptation and transfer of projects, and enhanced open data networks development. Individuals will be invited to apply for internships and organisations to host applicants.
- **Periodic events** that allow the community to network and showcase projects. Apart from the exposition part, some working sessions will be organised. These sessions will be specific workshops that gather together authors of projects, to assist those interested in the deployment of these projects in other communities.

A previous process will help to decide who should be invited to attend the 'physical' exchanges (working sessions in the periodic events and the transnational exchange).

We have outlined [the initial work](#) into a [collaborative document](#) you can review and comment freely. Feedback will be greatly appreciated.



Next steps

Since [the European Commission is interested](#) in this programme, we will submit and present this proposal to representatives of the [DG CONNECT](#), and study the feasibility of this programme — we believe it should be led and managed (as well as funded) mainly by a neutral institution.

The OpenDataXchange initiative is completely aligned with the objectives of the [ePSI Platform](#) and all the existing resources should be reused (e.g., the [directory of experts](#) and the [showcase gallery](#)). As [Makx Dekkers](#) commented before the event: "We should try to find existing communities rather than setting up new ones.. We just should link them. Another key aspect is the lack of resources. Time and travel resources are limited and should be used with caution., so the programme needs an effective and robust methodology to make the most of our capacities".