



To

Shri. Mohammed Y Safirulla K, IAS

Officer on Special Duty (Finance Resources)

Department of Finance

Government of Kerala

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Dear Sir,

Sub: Request to publish budget documents in machine readable format(s)

Greetings from [CivicDataLab!](https://civickdatalab.in)

We are a research lab working at the intersection of data, tech, design and social science to strengthen the course of civic engagements in India. Together with our partner organizations, we have successfully launched open-data and social good platforms, including [Open Budgets India](https://openbudgetsindia.org) - the largest repository of budget documents in the country with more than 18,000 documents and counting.

We are writing today to formally request the Govt of Kerala to become the first south Indian state, and only the 3rd in the country to **publish budget data in machine readable format(s)**. By making them available on <https://finance.kerala.gov.in/>, Kerala will herald a new era of openness and transparency in governance. Furthermore, the availability of data will spur new and innovative public research that'll have a direct bearing on the state's endeavor to improve its budget every year.

We have prepared a short [guidebook \(attached\)](#) that provides an overview of the open publishing standards, including being in compliance with the [National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy](#). In addition, we are ready to support the Department in the preparation and publication of these datasets. The recommendations are briefly mentioned below.

1. Publish all budget documents in machine readable formats (CSV, RDF, XML, JSON) via open APIs.
2. Publish documents immediately after presentation of the budget in the State Legislative Assembly.
3. Publish budget documents in English and Malayalam (bi-lingual).
4. Publish budget documents for at least the last 10 years.
5. Use open fonts and unicode characters.
6. Provide description (metadata) for budget documents.

Kerala has always been at the forefront of innovative social and economic policies that have been replicated across the nation. With less than 3 months for the presentation of Kerala's Budget 2023, we at CivicDataLab wish you and the entire Finance Department all the best.

Yours Sincerely

Arun Sudarsan
Economist & Policy Researcher
(For CivicDataLab)

References

1. CivicDataLab's website - <https://civicedatalab.in/>
2. Open Budgets India - <https://openbudgetsindia.org/>
3. National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy
<https://www.meity.gov.in/data-sharing>
4. State Budget Guidebook - bit.ly/cdlguidebook

