

Request for Comments

December 7-8, 2007—This weekend, [30 open government advocates](#) gathered to develop a set of principles of open government data. The meeting, held in Sebastopol, California, was designed to develop a more robust understanding of why open government data is essential to democracy.

The Internet is the public space of the modern world, and through it governments now have the opportunity to better understand the needs of their citizens and citizens may participate more fully in their government. Information becomes more valuable as it is shared, less valuable as it is hoarded. Open data promotes increased civil discourse, improved public welfare, and a more efficient use of public resources.

The group is offering a set of fundamental principles for open government data. By embracing the eight principles, governments of the world can become more effective, transparent, and relevant to our lives.

[Your comments are welcome!](#)

Open Government Data Principles

Government data shall be considered open if it is made public in a way that complies with the principles below:

1. [Complete](#)
All public data is made available. Public data is data that is not subject to valid privacy, security or privilege limitations.
2. [Primary](#)
Data is as collected at the source, with the highest possible level of granularity, not in aggregate or modified forms.
3. [Timely](#)
Data is made available as quickly as necessary to preserve the value of the data.
4. [Accessible](#)
Data is available to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes.
5. [Machine processable](#)
Data is reasonably structured to allow automated processing.
6. [Non-discriminatory](#)
Data is available to anyone, with no requirement of registration.
7. [Non-proprietary](#)
Data is available in a format over which no entity has exclusive control.
8. [License-free](#)
Data is not subject to any copyright, patent, trademark or trade secret regulation. Reasonable privacy, security and privilege restrictions may be allowed.

Compliance must be [reviewable](#).

Definitions

1. “public” means:
The Open Government Data principles do not address what data should be public and open. Privacy, security, and other concerns may legally (and rightly) prevent data sets from being shared with the public. Rather, these principles specify the conditions public data should meet to be considered “open.”
2. “data” means:
Electronically stored information or recordings. Examples include documents, databases of contracts, transcripts of hearings, and audio/visual recordings of events.

While non-electronic information resources, such as physical artifacts, are not subject to the Open Government Data principles, it is always encouraged that such resources be made available electronically to the extent feasible.
3. “reviewable” means:
A contact person must be designated to respond to people trying to use the data.
A contact person must be designated to respond to complaints about violations of the principles.
An administrative or judicial court must have the jurisdiction to review whether the agency has applied these principles appropriately.

Source

This naked html version of these 8 principles was dewikified from the [original published version](#).

