



SURVEY PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Open Data Community Survey 2025

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INTRODUCTION

From the Open Data Handbook (<https://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/open-data/>), open data “can be freely accessed, used, modified and shared by anyone for any purpose - subject only, at most, to requirements to provide attribution and/or share-alike.”

You are invited to take part in this study if you are, have been, or may become:

- a user or provider of open data
- a user or provider of non-open FAIR (Findable Accessible Interoperable Reusable) data
- interested in semantic metadata

Your participation is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete the survey. If you do decide to take part in this study, you will be given an opportunity to withdraw from the study, without giving any reasons for your decision, at the end of the survey before your responses are submitted.

You have the option to finish the survey across more than one session but this functionality relies on browser cookies to remember your progress, so you must use the same browser and device to continue where you left off.

Please take time to read the following information carefully.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

This study seeks to create a snapshot of the open data community in 2025. It is hoped that the study will be repeated on a regular basis in future years. Funding for this survey has been provided by the DDI (Data Documentation Initiative) Alliance, an international collaboration dedicated to developing metadata standards and semantic products for describing social science data, data covering human activity, and other data based on observational methods.



Response data from this survey, without any identifying information, will be published on the web as open data at the following 2 locations:

- <https://www2.cs.uregina.ca/~hepting/projects/open-data/community-survey-2025/>
- <https://borealisdata.ca/dataverse/heptingd>

In addition, the analysis of the survey responses will be included in publications and presentations, and potentially in graduate student theses.

WHAT DOES THE STUDY INVOLVE?

You are invited to complete a 15-20 minute survey about open data, with both rating and textual response questions. The link to the survey is:

https://uregina.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2ryvDaooieWaAjY

Please help to improve the power of the survey by sharing this invitation to participate widely within your networks. However, there is no obligation for you to pass along this invitation, and there will be no penalty to you if you do not share it.

BROAD CONSENT

Because the survey response data will be available as open data on the web, it means that the responses (rating and textual) that you provide may be used to answer future research questions not yet defined, by the present researchers or any others. Therefore the consent that you grant is more broad because it includes not only the present study but also the possibility of future uses of the data by unknown researchers. You are free to withdraw your consent up until the moment that you submit your responses because of the survey's anonymity. The survey is global in scope and therefore researchers who wish to make use of the data being collected with this survey may come from anywhere around the world. There are benefits of making the response data available as open data for all to use, including you. The risks for future uses of the data are not greater than the initial collection of the data. You will not be contacted for additional future research because you are not identifiable from the data.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. If your employer may not be supportive of your use of work resources to complete the survey, please consider completing the survey outside of work hours and from a personal device in order to protect your anonymity and autonomy. While there are no guaranteed direct benefits to you, our findings could potentially provide information to improve the use of open data and semantic metadata.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your confidentiality will be respected. The survey responses collected will be published on the web as open data. The results of this study, including analyses of the survey response data may



be presented in a scientific meeting or published in a conference proceedings, journal article, or thesis, but your identity will not be disclosed.

The data collected in this study are strictly confidential. No identifying information will be collected at any time. We will treat your personal information as confidential although absolute privacy cannot be guaranteed, due in part to the transmission of data via the internet. We collect data through the software Qualtrics, which uses servers with multiple layers of security to protect the privacy of the data (e.g., encrypted websites and password protected storage). Your data will be stored and protected by Qualtrics on servers based in Canada but may be disclosed via a court order or data breach.

Please do not put your name or other identifying information in the questionnaire.

Survey response data will be maintained on the secure Qualtrics servers until the survey response period is over. At that time, the responses will be moved to the secure servers at the University of Regina. The downloaded responses will be reviewed for any responses that may inadvertently help to reveal the individual identity of the respondent. This potentially-redacted data will be published as open data on the web, available indefinitely. The original survey response data will be kept for 5 years from the date that the survey closes, 31 May 2025.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Your participation is voluntary. If you do decide to take part in this study, you are still free to withdraw by not submitting your survey responses. You will be asked explicitly if you would like to withdraw at the end of the survey before responses are submitted. Once your responses are submitted, it will not be possible to remove them because of the survey's anonymity. If you choose not to participate, this will have no effect whatsoever on your involvement with the researchers.

HOW CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS STUDY?

A summary of the findings once the study has ended will be available at <https://www2.cs.uregina.ca/~hepting/projects/open-data/community-survey-2025/>. Should you choose to contact the researchers to ask questions, you will no longer be anonymous to the research team; however, we will not be able to link your study responses to you because the survey is anonymous. Study information you provide to us will be anonymous.

WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY?

- Contact the researcher(s) using the information at the top of this page.
- This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Regina Research Ethics Board on March 25, 2025. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the committee at 306-585-4775 or research.ethics@uregina.ca. Out of town participants may call collect.



Please note that there are inherent security issues when using email as a communication tool. By default, emails are not encrypted and are vulnerable to interception by outside sources or someone may see that you are involved in this research if you leave your browser open. We will use the phrase “Meeting Reminder” in the subject-line of all email correspondence so you will know the email is from us and recommend you submit any email queries using the same term.

By completing and submitting the questionnaire, **YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED** and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study.