

# Application

## Participant: Canada Team

### PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS:

As you consider which initiative to put forward for the Open Government Awards, please consider the following questions:

(1) Does the initiative seek to improve a public policy or service?  
 Yes  No

(2) If yes, does the initiative seek to improve the ability of citizens to provide feedback and/or to make decisions in the design or implementation of a policy or service? For examples of initiatives, see: <http://www.opengovguide.com/topics/citizen-engagement>  
 Yes  No

If you have answered "Yes" to BOTH of these questions, please proceed with your application.

### A. THE TEAM

The following information is required to capture a basic understanding of those responsible for your initiative and any partnerships that have helped you to meet your goals.

#### INITIATIVE NAME (required)

Provide the name of the initiative that your team is submitting for consideration by the judges of the 2014 Open Government Awards (under the inaugural theme, Citizen Engagement). If the initiative is operating under one or more alternate name(s), provide the name that is most commonly recognized.

Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE) Challenge

#### THE NOMINATION (required)

Begin by describing how this initiative was selected. For example, mention any nomination or consultation process held with civil society partners or others when selecting the initiative. Please offer your explanation of this process in 200 words or less.

Canada's selection of the **Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE)** considered several factors:

**Depth of Citizen Engagement:** Public engagement of the open data user and developer community, both new and experienced, was at the core of each phase of CODE:

- **Lead up to CODE:** helped the federal government prepare for CODE by recommending improvements to federal open data resources and tools.

- **CODE Hackathon:** demonstrated innovative uses of federal open data through development of over 100 applications by 300 teams on university campuses, in homes, etc. across the country.

- **Grand Finale:** showcased the community, social, and commercial potential of open data to an audience of Canadian industry leaders, developers, media, and the general public.

**Impact of Results:** Canadians gained a better understanding of the value of open data, and informed critical enhancements to data.gc.ca, including expansion of high value datasets, and the establishment of new tools/resources to facilitate future open data users.

**Delivery through Partnerships:** Innovative partnerships made CODE possible, including with CODE's host XMG Studio, an award-winning mobile game developer with specialized expertise and resources, without which CODE could not have been so successful. CODE sponsors (incl. Gold Sponsor OpenText, and others) helped broaden awareness of CODE and provided incentives to participants.

#### GOVERNMENT POINT OF CONTACT (required)

Provide the name and title of a single point of contact for the purposes of communicating with your team. The person should be the most senior individual responsible for overseeing the application submission. Provide the phone number(s), email address(es), and physical address of your single point of contact. You may provide alternate contact information, if it is a direct means for reaching the designated point of contact.

**Name:** Stephen Walker  
**Title:** Senior Director, Information Management and Open Government  
**Organization:** Chief Information Officer Branch, Treasury Board Secretariat, Government of Canada  
**Address:** 270 Albert Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0R5  
**Email:** stephen.walker@tbs-sct.gc.ca  
**Phone:** (613) 946-3052

#### CIVIL SOCIETY POINT OF CONTACT (strongly recommended)

We strongly encourage applicants to submit a joint application from a government agency and a civil society partner. If submitting a joint application, please provide the name and title of a single point of contact at the partner organization. If not, please be sure to focus on the "validation of claims" in Section B (see pg. A-3).

#### OTHER PARTNERSHIPS (optional)

If you are partnering with one or more other government agencies, private sector entities, media, or other organizations, please list each partner. In 250 words or less, provide a brief narrative of the partnership, including the roles that each partner assumes in the initiative.

**CODE Host:**  
 XMG Studio, Inc.  
**Key Contact:** Mr. Ray Sharma, Founder and CEO of XMG Studio  
 67 Yonge Street, Suite 1600, Toronto, ON, M5E 1J8  
 ray@xmgestudio.com / (416) 619-0700

**CODE Sponsors:**  
 - OpenText Corporation ([www.opentext.com](http://www.opentext.com)) - Gold Sponsor  
 - OneEleven ([twitter.com/oneeleven\\_111](https://twitter.com/oneeleven_111)) - Silver Sponsor and VIP HUB host  
 - IBM ([www.ibm.com](http://www.ibm.com)) - Silver Sponsor  
 - Google ([www.google.ca](http://www.google.ca)) - Bronze Sponsor  
 - McKinsey & Company ([www.mckinsey.com](http://www.mckinsey.com)) - Bronze Sponsor  
 - Triniibus ([www.triniibus.com](http://www.triniibus.com)) - Bronze Sponsor

### B. THE INITIATIVE

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is prepared to celebrate a range of successful applicants to the Open Government Awards. This year's theme is "citizen engagement." To qualify for recognition, we need to understand the various elements of success for your initiative and its sustainability over time.

#### PROBLEM DEFINITION (required)

In 200 words or less, please identify the specific problem your initiative intended to solve. Why was this problem important to solve at a particular time and for the particular context in which you are working?

The federal government's next generation open data portal, data.gc.ca, was launched in June 2013 under Canada's first Open Government Action Plan. Before CODE, public awareness of federal open data services was limited, and it was almost impossible to assess the usefulness of data or how effectively users could leverage it to drive innovation. In the absence of effective feedback and public engagement, there was a continuing risk that open data and data.gc.ca would stagnate, go unused, and ultimately fail to reach their potential.

The **Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE)** - Canada's first national hackathon - was established to engage citizens in demonstrating and driving value from open data and services with the goal of improving Canadians' lives, and obtaining critical feedback to support the ongoing development of data.gc.ca and open data in Canada.

Timing for CODE was important, as data.gc.ca is a touchstone from which future pan-Canadian open data services will evolve, including efforts to federate data search across jurisdictions. In order to ensure that open data services continue to mature and provide maximum value for Canadians, an effective engagement mechanism was needed to boost user awareness of open data availability, encourage its use in innovative ways, and improve its quality for users.

#### TARGET POPULATION (required)

In 100 words or less, please identify the target population who may benefit from this initiative. Highlight your understanding of the needs or demands of the target population that were addressed by your initiative.

Through CODE, a diverse group of post-secondary students, entrepreneurs, and innovators were engaged from Canada's open data community and beyond. Consultation efforts helped to identify and target a number of key success elements needed by CODE and future users of open data, to drive the development of citizen-centric applications with community or commercial benefits, including:

- **High-value datasets** that could be used to make rich, useful applications;  
 - **Advanced tools and resources** to facilitate and automate access to this data; and  
 - **Access to federal open data owners** to seek answers to questions about federal data.

#### INITIATIVE DESIGN (required)

In 350 words or less, describe your initiative's goals and objectives. Focus specifically on how the initiative was designed to meet those objectives. For example, identify stage(s) of the policy/service design or implementation when you solicited citizen participation. What kind of participation did you seek from citizens (e.g., feedback, consultation, joint decision-making, monitoring of activities, etc.)? Explain why this particular approach was best suited to achieve the initiative's goals. How did you encourage citizens to participate? Describe any innovations in the design of the initiative.

CODE was a 48-hour hackathon (Feb. 28 to Mar. 2, 2014) that challenged participants to develop applications using federal open datasets on data.gc.ca. Through engagement with the open data community, CODE was designed to achieve three main objectives:

- **Raise Canadians' awareness** of the value and availability of federal open datasets, tools, and services accessible via data.gc.ca;  
 - **Inspire and empower developers** to use open data to create new and innovative applications for their fellow Canadians; and  
 - **Strengthen the open data movement and the quality** of Government of Canada open datasets and services in the lead up to CODE as a direct result of public feedback.

To realize these objectives, key elements of the design of the CODE initiative included:

- **Partnering with XMG Studio**, a Toronto-based developer of mobile games, allowing the Government of Canada to take advantage of XMG's gaming and community experience running similar events, and their broad access to members of the open data community.

- **Holding speaking engagements, roundtable discussions, and workshops with the open data community** at post-secondary institutions across Canada to raise awareness and encourage participation prior to CODE. Often hosted by Treasury Board Minister Tony Clement, these consultations focused on the almost unlimited value of open data in spurring economic growth through innovation, and sought feedback on potential high value data resources (datasets, interactive tools, etc.) that could be useful for CODE participants.

- Engaging participants to **develop citizen-focused applications** that "solve problems and increase productivity through the use of federal open data";

- **Providing multiple options** for how participants could take part, including via a centralized VIP hub in Toronto, through local hubs in other Canadian cities, or remotely from their homes, schools, etc.

- **Encouraging participation** by offering prizes from CODE sponsors, including monetary awards and the opportunity to pitch ideas to their industry developers at a panel of renowned technology and fellow leaders at the CODE Grand Finale on March 28, 2014.

- Providing participants with a **virtual network of federal data experts** to answer questions and gather hands-on feedback from users to be used to improve the quality of open data and services.

#### INITIATIVE OUTCOMES (required)

In 250 words or less, describe the intended outcomes and the actual outcomes that the initiative achieved. Who were the ultimate beneficiaries, and what benefits did they experience? For example, list any concrete improvements in policy, services, behaviors, or power relations between the government and citizens. Try to present your case from the perspective of the various stakeholders involved (e.g., your agency, citizens, Civil Society Organizations, media, et al.). If there are any baseline indicators or standards to measure the outcomes of the initiative, such as the breadth of depth of engagement, please describe them in detail.

Due to efforts undertaken to consult and engage the open data community, intended outcomes for CODE were significantly exceeded:

- **Participation far exceeded expectations**, with almost 300 participating teams from all across Canada, making CODE the largest appathon in Canadian history.

- A total of 111 new mobile and web applications were developed providing a key **showcase for the potential of open government data** in Canada.

- Data.gc.ca resources and tools were expanded and enhanced, including:

**i) 225+ new, high-quality datasets** that were identified through public feedback in the lead up to CODE, and were then added to data.gc.ca by over 35 departments.

**ii) New developer tools** to facilitate the design of useful applications were created (e.g., 16 new Application Programming Interfaces (APIs)); and

**iii) New "App Ideas" and "Apps Gallery"** features were added to inspire developers.

In addition, key benefits were realized by all participants in the CODE initiative:

- **Participating teams** demonstrated their amazing skill and creativity in the development of effective mobile apps, and actively contributed to a Canadian open data agenda through their recommendations for enhancements to data and open data services to benefit future users of open data;

- **Federal departments** gained specific insights on the use of their data by developers, which is now driving the continuous improvement of their data and informing future open data releases; and

- Ultimately, **the general public** will benefit from CODE by being able to access new client-centric services provided through innovative applications that have been developed within their own communities.

#### INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY (required)

In 200 words or less, please describe any plans for scaling up and/or sustaining the initiative in the future. Base your description of the strategy on information provided in the previous sections, such as how you intend to leverage your current success and increase your reach or capacity. Address any threats or operational challenges to your initiative and describe how you intend to manage those risks on a regular basis.

Given the success of CODE 2014, the federal government intends to make it a regular event aimed at engaging Canada's growing open data community in the showcasing of what can be done with open data in Canada. We also hope to leverage future CODE events to involve Canadians in the design and piloting of new open data services and activities envisioned as part of our next Action Plan on Open Government.

For example, Canada plans to continue efforts to break down barriers to Canadians' innovative reuse of data made available by all levels of government in Canada. To this end, we will be driving the expansion of future open data events to involve our provincial and municipal government partners at the sub-national level, and encourage developers to focus on applications that bridge the data made available by multiple jurisdictions.

Efforts to drive data standardization and wider adoption of Canada's Open Government Licence will create unprecedented opportunities for mashing up data from different governments.

Moving forward, we plan to sustain engagement through ongoing outreach and consultation with the open data community, and by leveraging strategic partnerships with the private sector and civil society, to ensure the success of future CODE events.

#### VALIDATION OF CLAIMS (required)

While it is strongly encouraged that each initiative includes partners, such as Civil Society Organizations, private sector agencies, media entities, etc., it is not a requirement. However, you are required to secure and upload documents from one or more credible nongovernmental actors who can attest to the veracity of any claims made in your application.

You are only allowed to upload one file. If you have multiple documents, please zip them into a single file first. The file types that are allowed to be uploaded have an extension of .ZIP, .PDF, .DOC, .DOCX, .XLS or .XLSX.

Canada - 2014 OGP Awards - CODE.pdf

### C. THE PITCH

The following information allows each applicant to make their strongest (and final) case for consideration.

#### BEST CASE (required)

In 250 words or less, please present the most compelling facts for why your initiative should be recognized. This is an opportunity to distinguish your initiative, based on any factors that you have not had the opportunity to describe in the previous sections. What is your best argument for why your initiative has achieved a meaningful outcome? What elements of the initiative make it different and better than others, that have been tried and tested? Be creative and concise.

CODE was a huge step forward in the Government of Canada's efforts to bolster citizen engagement and leverage the talent and creativity of Canada's open data community. Its success helped showcase the value of federal open data, and demonstrated how active, hands-on engagement of Canadians can effectively improve federal open data services for all. The winning app, Digital Sheep's "newRoots", provides an excellent example of the innovative services that can be created for "Canadians by Canadians" using federal data.

Combining data from multiple departments, this dynamic app is now being used by new immigrants to Canada to match their skills and interests to potential locations for settlement that will give them the greatest opportunity to maximize their career and community potential.

More than just another hackathon, the real value of CODE was the opportunity to engage the open data community before, during, and after the event, which will ultimately lead to improved open data services for Canadians - the true measure of success.

Engagement through CODE was truly national in scope, involving over 900 participants from every province across Canada. CODE prizes provided incentive to participate, but at the core, a real passion was clearly evident for showing what is possible by "bringing the data to life" and "letting it tell a story" about the Canadian experience. The Government of Canada looks forward to tapping into this passion moving forward to create real value from open government data, and continue to improve open data services for the benefit of all Canadians.

#### VIDEO SUBMISSION (recommended)

OGP does not offer a venue for applicants to meet our judges during the application process. In order to provide the opportunity for making a personal connection, you are encouraged to upload a short video to complement your application. You may also depict an individual participant in your initiative and describe his or her experience. We do not need to know actual names or personal details. Take this opportunity to tell a story, to connect with our panel of experts, so that they might better understand your attention to specific needs.

Video submissions should follow these guidelines:

- Maximum length of 3-4 minutes.  
 - Please focus on personal presentations; it's not necessary to develop a sophisticated or polished video.

Here are some logistical and technical suggestions:

- Video cameras, digital cameras, and phones are easy ways to record a video.  
 - Laptop and desktop computers can typically record video through Skype or other software.

- If possible, set to a low resolution to reduce file size. This will enable an easier video uploading process.

- If you are having difficulty uploading the video file, try logging out of the application and logging back in using another internet browser.

Here are general suggestions for delivering a high-quality video pitch:

- Include the following:  
 - Introduce yourself and your initiative.  
 - Focus on describing your intended benefits and/or services and how they have been effective.

- What is unique about your initiative, partners, or technical approach?  
 - How you content:  
 - Keep your description and language simple.  
 - Demonstrate passion through your words and enthusiasm.

- If the burden of developing a video presentation is either prohibitive or might not reflect the best characterization of your initiative, then you are **not required** to submit one, and the judges are instructed not to discount your application because it may not include a video. We hope that this option offers a new and inventive way in which you can best express the results of your work.