

This Data and Public Services Business Case Canvas is for people designing data-enabled public services. It aims to help you make a business case for a project or service that uses data.

How are data and services related?

Data that is made open, or shared, presents huge opportunities for the public sector to enable innovative services. For example, the datasets that Transport for London has made open – openly licensed for anyone to access, use, and share – have been used by innovators to create journey-mapping apps to help people navigate the city.

Why use this tool?

Scope your project

The canvas helps to articulate why to use data in a service, and understand how using specific data helps meet organisational aims and user needs. It also promotes constructive debate around project objectives, intention and potential impact.

Create broader change

The canvas raises issues and considerations that help inform better products and services, and grow the positive impact of your work. It encourages using and publishing open data – which other services can reuse – contributing to the wider data ecosystem and infrastructure, innovation and cost savings. It also helps you to consider the impact data activities have on people and society, and steps to mitigate any harmful impacts.

Complement other business case guidelines

The canvas is a flexible tool, designed to tease out potential opportunities, and can sit alongside more formal business case guidelines.

How to use this tool?

You can use this tool as an individual or in a group exercise – such as in a team meeting or workshop – to prompt areas for discussion, gather ideas and help decide what to do next.

You can start anywhere on the canvas and complete the sections in any order.

For each section, take time to consider your answers. It helps to note these on sticky notes and stick them to the sections as you go. Where you can, share and discuss your responses with others.

Who to involve

Primary users will be service delivery managers responsible for designing, justifying and delivering new services.

We recommend that you ask for contributions and feedback from a range of people in your organisation.

Useful people to consult include: service design teams (to shape ideas); service users (to understand their needs); budget holders (to inform what is viable); data users (for a technical perspective); compliance or data protection officers (to understand risks); digital transformation leads (to bring departments together); and suppliers or third parties who contribute to service delivery.

What next?

Once your business case is approved, you can return to the canvas and keep refining it.

Visit theodi.org/tools to access:

- > An online template to use alongside or instead of this hard-copy canvas

Through our research we have defined three high-level 'patterns' for how open data is used in public services. They can be used singularly or in combination.

	1 Better access to public services	2 More efficient service delivery chains	3 More informed policy development
Direct beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens Businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioners Managers Frontline staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sector workers Elected representatives
Decisions / actions taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How and where to access public services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where to prioritise operational resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where to target policy interventions
Information produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted service information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insight and patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data visualisations and analyses
Types of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open real-time service data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open performance data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open data across government