

# Achievements over the Last Year

Rufus Pollock



Open Knowledge  
Foundation

In my fellowship proposal last year I set out 4 key milestones:

1. 10 active working groups promoting open knowledge in a different key area
2. 10 actively used instances of CKAN for open data in different countries
3. A major international workshop on open government data
4. Reaching version 1.0 with two major open data projects: Where Does My Money Go? and Open Biblio

For each of these milestones I have achieved the stated goal -- and in several cases surpassed it. And my work has gone well beyond these specific targets. I have given more than 30 presentations and workshops over the last 9 months everywhere from Brasilia to Sofia. As one of the four members of the UK Government's Transparency Board I have been advising the UK government on open data and transparency and helping the UK continue its pioneering role in this area. I have overseen, since last September, a rapid expansion in the Open Knowledge Foundation's activities including the hiring of new core staff and the acquisition of funding to sustain the Foundation's ongoing activities.

The most striking thing perhaps is just how far things have moved in the last year. Government open data initiatives are now announced so frequently it is hard to keep count. From a handful a year ago there are now dozens if not hundreds of projects from Thailand to Vancouver. And it is not just government, interest in open data and content has grown dramatically across the spectrum, in libraries, in the academy and in business. While these changes are obviously the result of actions and processes that go far beyond myself and the Open Knowledge Foundation I think we can fairly take credit for having made a substantial contribution in this area.

## Working groups

The Open Knowledge Foundation now has more than dozen working groups working in areas from science to literature, and archaeology to government data. In the last year we have seen significant growth both in the number and activity of working groups.

To give a couple of specific examples:

- Our Open Government Data working group now has over 500 members on its mailing list and 100 official (invited) members. It has representatives from dozens of countries and its membership includes most of the key people working in this area both inside and outside of government. The working group's website <http://opengovernmentdata.org/> is the top hit on google for “open government data”. As an example of the strength of the working group we were able to subtitle our #opendata film into more than twenty languages in just a few days after a call for help on the mailing list.
- Our economics working group only entered incubation last Autumn but in January members of the working group conducted a hectic 2-day sprint to create an app for submission to the World Bank apps for development competition. <http://yourtopia.net/> was the result and it went on to win third place and a \$5000 prize that is going to help support the expansion of the working group's activities.

## CKAN - Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network

There are now more than 30 CKAN instances world-wide -- see the (still incomplete) list at <http://wiki.ckan.net/Instances>. In the last 9 months specifically we've helped set up several new 'official' government or institutional data catalogs using CKAN, for example the IATI (International Aid Transparency Initiative) Registry <http://iatiregistry.org/>, for the Helsinki Region <http://data.hri.fi/> and for Greater Manchester in the UK <http://datagm.org.uk/>.

In addition there is a large number of community instances that have been set up, often with our help with many of these now containing hundreds of datasets. There has also been growth in existing instances with <http://ckan.net/>, our main community instance, now having nearly 2000 data packages. The community has also grown in significant ways with CKAN now adopted as official registry for Linked Open Data by the maintainers of the LOD cloud.

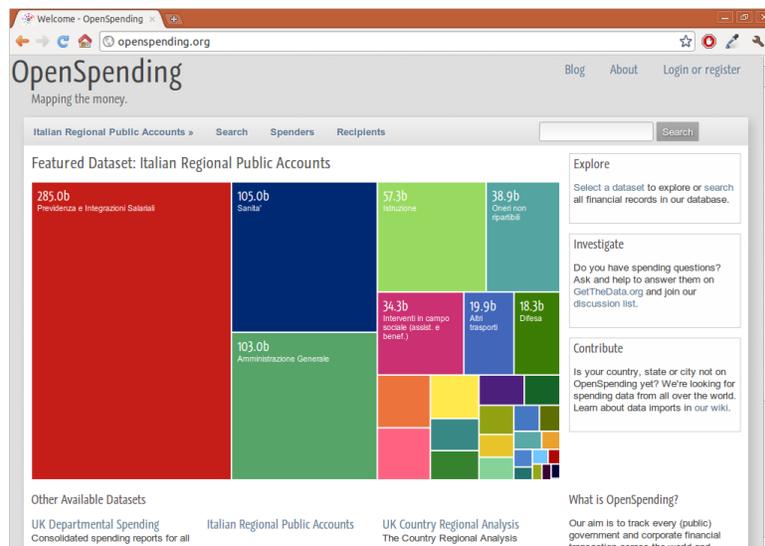
The image shows two screenshots of web portals. The left screenshot is the IATI Registry homepage, featuring a search bar, navigation tabs (Home, Donor data, Community data, Recipient data, Publishers, Help, About), and a list of 'Latest Data' including 'World Bank activity file for ZIMBABWE'. The right screenshot is the 'offene daten' website, which has a header with 'offene daten' and navigation links (Start, Über, Datenpakete, Gruppen, Wiki). The main content area is titled 'Register für offene Daten in Deutschland' and includes a search bar with buttons for 'suchen', 'stören', and 'eintragen'. There are also sections for 'Weitere Informationen' and 'Recent Comments'.



Does My Money Go? as one of its two exemplars for aspiring contributors b) Rohan Silva, a member of the UK Prime Minister's No. 10 team, cited Where Does My Money Go? as an exemplar in his talk at the 2011 Personal Democracy Forum conference in New York this June.



The most significant update though is our work to transform Where Does My Money Go? into a global project under the name OpenSpending - see <http://openspending.org/>. Already we have project participants from more than 15 countries and we have already had substantial success getting open finance data from other countries. For example in May, we were able to obtain a set of Italian budget data which, in a hectic 2-day sprint, we were able to load in OpenSpending and visualize, with the result receiving coverage in several major newspapers including La Stampa and the Guardian.



We have also been able to scale up the platform to deal with the increasing amount of open data becoming available (thanks often to our efforts). For example in the UK, every government

department is now releasing monthly data detailing every financial transaction over £25,000. In the eight months since the announcement of this policy at the Open Government Data last Autumn, more than 1.8 million transactions have been made available.

## Open Bibliographic Data

Excellent progress has been made on Open Bibliographic Data over the last year. Some highlights:

- Open Bibliography working group is now very active with several hundred members of the mailing list. The working group drafted a set of open bibliography principles launched earlier this year which has received significant sign-on.
- Last Autumn, working in collaboration with the JISC OpenBib project I obtained the release of 3m open bibliographic records by the British Library the largest release of its kind to date and a major milestone for open bibliographic data.
- All of this data is available on our <http://bibliographica.org/> site, and the data has already been used to build apps for Wikipedia and to power our own Public Domain Works project <http://publicdomainworks.net/>

## BIBLIOGRAPHICA

*Taking Open Bibliography Mainstream*

Home Search SPARQL ISBN search

### Welcome to Bibliographica

Bibliographica is an [open catalogue of cultural works](#). There are currently **2,986,382 works** in the database.

Search by name, (e.g. *Dickens*), title, (e.g. *War and Peace*), etc.