

Innovation Nippon the 3rd Symposium 2013

Open Data and Innovation (2)

Date and Time: December 20, 2013 17:00-19:00

Venue: GLOCOM

(Harks Roppongi Bldg. 2nd floor, 6-15-21 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo)

Panelists: Taro Suzuki, Member of Yokohama City Council/the Liberal Democrats

Yuriko Inoue, Professor of Graduate School of International Corporate Strategy of Hitotsubashi University

Yasukatsu Ikeda, Senior staff, Department of Commerce, Industry and Labor New Industries Development Division, Aomori Prefectural Government

Moderator: Tomoaki Watanabe, Executive Research Fellow of GLOCOM
Co-founder of Open Knowledge Foundation Japan
Executive Director of Commonsphere

As the launch of trial version of the government's open data catalogue is approaching, the importance of sharing practical know-how on open data has been increasing. Discussions were made on how should we set copyright, licensing, or terms of use to successfully maximize the offering and use of data, taking some examples of advanced initiatives that have already been implemented by municipal governments and ministries in Japan.

Taro Suzuki, a member of Yokohama City Council, introduced the city's initiative on open data. The characteristic of Yokohama City is that the private sector is taking the initiative regarding open data. Previously, some departments of the governmental administration randomly supported the activities of the private sector, however, from this fiscal year, since Mr. Suzuki has been appointed as a chairman of the council that administers those departments, a clarification of the promotion system has been proposed. Mr. Suzuki said it was important to hammer out an announcement of the effect from the position of the council to play a role of as a local council in promoting the utilization of open data.

At the end, Mr. Suzuki emphasized that the significance of open data promotion in municipal government lies in the way to activate the economy and to transform the way of doing business in administration as well as the contents, as already mentioned in the “Electronic Administration Open Data Strategy” issued by the Japanese government.

Yasuyoshi Ikeda, an official of the Aomori Prefectural Government introduced the “Aomori Video Contents Promotion” and the “Sightseeing Cloud” as its initiatives for open data. The former is an approach to promote Aomori Prefecture effectively through management, storing, and opening the footage taken by staff of Aomori Prefectural Government, copyright retained by the prefecture, and making them extensively available to citizens. The latter is a database for referencing open data. It was created when renewing the sightseeing website by summarizing municipal governments’ sightseeing information. These two approaches were not the results of officers trying to promote open data so much as a consequence of what they did being the utilization of open data. At the end, Mr. Ikeda introduced the approach that is ongoing in the prefectural government.

Yuriko Inoue, a Professor of Hitotsubashi University, explained various problems in the secondary use of public data. Those include copyright problems with public data, dealing with third party information, and national or municipal governments’ responsibilities regarding dealing with the problems of secondary use. Based on this, she introduced her opinion on approaches to the opening up of public data in Japan. As for public data already opened on websites, etc., she said the license which permits extensive secondary use such as Creative Commons’ CC-BY should be the default approach. Public data include some information that are not open now but have high utility. As for sensitive information within that data, they should be opened, but with more restricted terms of use or license. However, to avoid excessive restrictions by the administrative side, such terms of use with strong restrictions should be limited to information that has concrete and clear reasons necessitating such restrictions, professor Inoue added.

In the panel discussion, discussions on the challenges involved in promoting the utilization of open data were also made among participants in the symposium and they were summarized.

