Create a user-oriented open data handbook for California data publishers

Problem. Open data publishers need simple clear guidance on how to best publish data to ensure it's usable for the public. Lack of friendly guidance harms the experience for both data users and publishers. Users because data may be difficult to find, not documented well or updated infrequently and publishers because they put in a lot of work and don't see the fruits of their labor or even struggle to publish data well in the first place.

Why it matters. While California has had increasing adoption of open data by agencies, there's still much work to do. A shared, easy to use playbook can help the open data program manager onboard new departments and datasets and explain things in clear terms. The easier the handbook is for our publishers, the more they'll use it leading to more frequent and higher quality data publishing. We expect this to save us extensive time across agencies and generate more value from open data to our users including residents, businesses, researchers and state employees. Open data is foundational for not only government transparency but to help both democratize data access and increase use of data and evidence across all state programs, which ultimately leads to better decisions, services, and outcomes for Californians.

Lastly, California is looked to for leadership and we imagine the handbook being leveraged by other open data programs including those of states and countries.

What does success look like. We want to empower open data publishers with simple guidance and best practices that will allow them to make the most of their open data publishing. This can include everything from easy to understand standards, examples of plain language descriptions, templates for getting the word out about your data and more. But we'd like your landscape and user research to inform what needs to go into the handbook.

We would like a team that can:

1. Research and review other open data handbooks & do original user research with open data publishers to understand their pain points
2. Compare the research with our existing open data handbook and other information currently scattered across the California open data portal
3. Iteratively develop and test an open data handbook for data publishers

Mentor

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Data Available

- Current open data handbook
- CA Open Data Portal Documentation page (including publisher guide, FAQs, etc.)