

5 Year



Strategy

2023–2028 Summary

Introduction

Since the Open Data Institute (ODI) was founded in 2012, the amount of data created globally has grown exponentially. The volume of data created, captured, copied and consumed worldwide was [estimated to reach 97 zettabytes in 2022](#) – up from 6.5 zettabytes in 2012. Data is now ubiquitous in every sector, industry and area of our lives. Yet, the tools, knowledge and processes needed to leverage it responsibly and meaningfully are often absent, or lag behind advances in technology. For example, the recent developments in generative AI or large language models – in fact all modern machine learning – are enabled by data. The ODI has a critical role to play in building an open, trustworthy data ecosystem upon which AI systems depend.

At the ODI, our founding vision remains unchanged: to build a world where data works for everyone – for businesses, governments, communities and individuals.

We believe that the need for an open, trustworthy data ecosystem **at scale** is stronger than ever, that the greatest value from all types of data comes when the benefits are shared equitably, and that we can only achieve our vision if we convene and work together across all sectors.

In the next five years, the ODI will work on original research and innovation activities, and continue to be the centre of global expertise on novel models for sharing and stewarding data in safe environments.

We will work with others to build systems and processes to significantly advance trust in data and to professionalise the data space. We will continue to diversify our funding model, collaborating with more mission-aligned organisations to generate social, economic and environmental value.

If you would like to get in touch, please contact strategy@theodi.org.

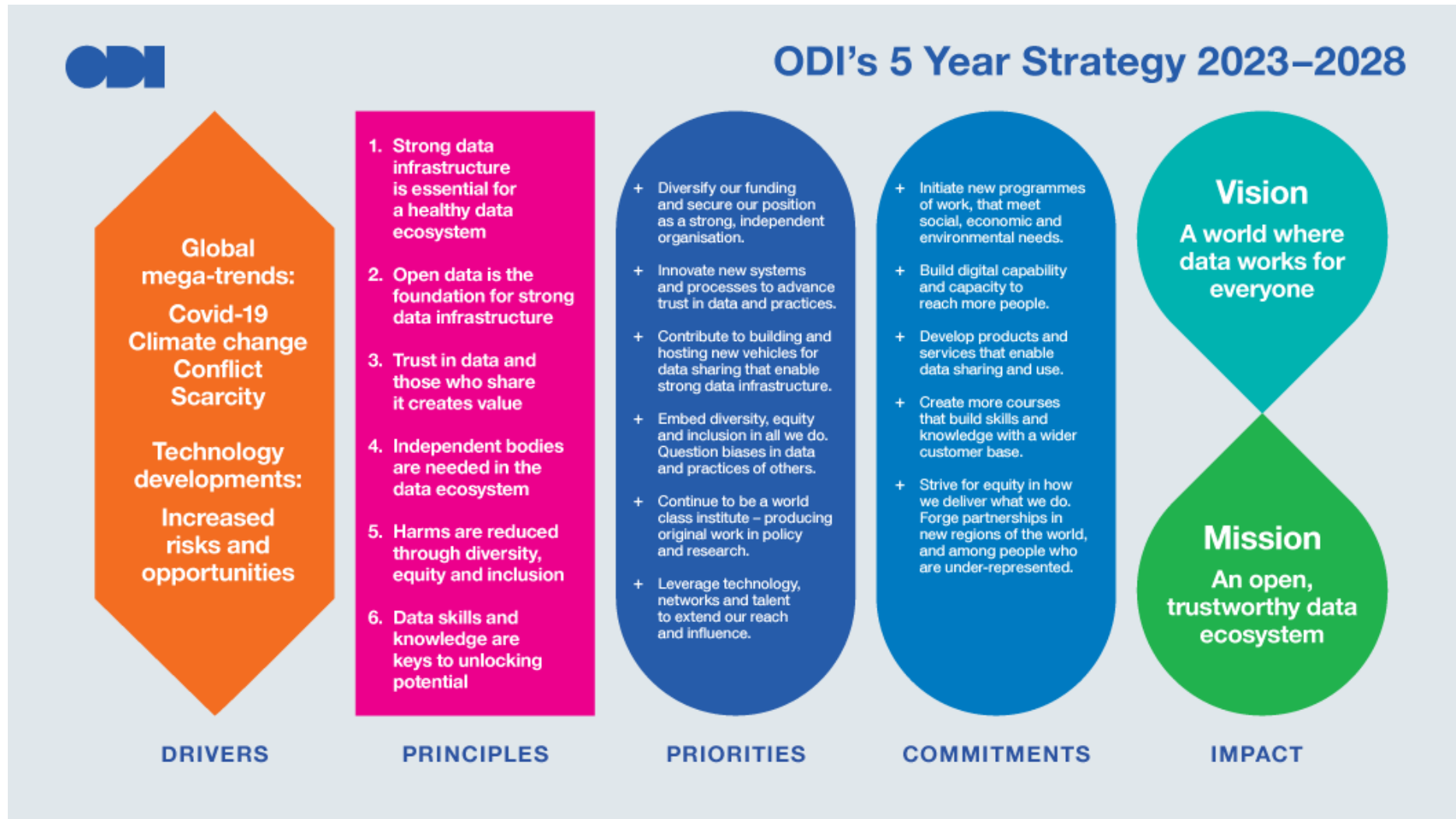


There is an emerging data economy globally that will have an impact on all sectors, but not all sectors understand this or the complexity of the topic. Data infrastructure in health has traditionally been seen as a capital cost and as such is evaluated predominantly against price point instead of being viewed as an ‘enabler’ of business strategy and in turn considered an investment in ensuring connectivity to the broader data ecosystem. Interoperability, non-traditional data sources and emerging technologies will transform our world – and how services are delivered.

– Jennifer Pougnet
Global Data Policy Strategy Lead, Roche

Summary of our approach

Our approach allows us to adjust our implementation and engagement as the world around us, and the organisations we work with, change. Our activities will be set out on an annual basis, mapped to the six principles that guide everything we do.



Overview

The ODI is consciously evolving in order to meet the needs of an increasingly complex and data-enabled world.

In the next five years, we expect to see, among other things, the adoption of a broader range of data sharing models; the further evolution of data-enabled AI systems requiring high-quality, trusted data; the creation and utilisation of many more trusted research environments; and the expansion of data assurance practices – demonstrating that data and the organisations collecting, using and sharing it are trustworthy.

We will engage and collaborate across the world; improve data literacy in response to the needs of organisations; work with others to build trust in data and the trustworthiness of organisations collecting and using it; and extend our reach by leveraging digital technology to work with others.

We believe that the best foundation for data infrastructure is open data. While this remains one of our guiding principles, we also think that data from across [the Data Spectrum](#)¹ – from closed to shared to open – can work to the benefit of everyone: businesses, governments, civil society and individuals.

External drivers

No organisation – and no strategy – exists in isolation from the world in which it operates. As a mission-led not-for-profit company that strives to build a world where data works for everyone, we aim to bring the greatest possible value across society, the economy and the environment. We are conscious that our value comes from our ability to respond to (and act within) the context of the events, developments and trends that shape our world, not least:

- **Global mega-trends** are impacting our society and creating instability, including climate change, conflict, an ageing population, repression, inequity and inequality.
- **Mistrust and distrust have become common features** across borders and societies in the 21st century.
- **Lack of trust in data** and data practices can be a major barrier to data sharing.
- **Deep fakes and data biases are just causes for mistrust** – if biases and misinformation are not addressed, existing societal inequalities will continue to grow in influence and momentum.
- **The emergence of generative AI or Large Language Models** is driven by data. We must acknowledge that there is still much concern about the trustworthiness of this data, the products and services that are being created with it.
- **Creating a strong data infrastructure can enable data to be shared safely and equitably.** Open and shared trustworthy data can allow for rapid innovation, often enabling businesses to grow and thrive, and frequently benefiting the lives of citizens. We have seen many examples of this in the past 10 years, from global Open Banking to the innovative use of secondary health data.



We are ready for a more nuanced conversation about data. There is an appetite to know how it is being collected, used and shared. People should know what is being done with data about them, be comfortable with it and retain agency and control. Building trust in data and data practices will be essential in the next five years to ensure everyone shares equally in the value it can create. People are ready for the conversation.

– **Sushant Kumar,**
Director, Responsible Tech Investments, Omidyar Network

In response to these external drivers, we have defined six guiding **principles** for the next five years that are rooted in our core identity (our vision and mission), our position in the world and our unique body of knowledge and expertise.

We have also set **priorities** that are the areas where we believe we can have the greatest positive impact and make the most significant contribution in the next five years. Our **commitments** are the firm actions that we will take to deliver on these priorities.

As we collaborate and innovate with our partners (and partners-to-be), these principles, priorities and commitments will provide us with the sustainability required to maintain, protect and grow the ODI's institutional core.

“ *The ODI team has a wealth of expertise, particularly on the technical aspects to collaboratively create and maintain open data standards and tooling. The team has worked hard to help improve the sector's understanding of what open data is, through developing e-learning and courses, as well as helping partners to explore how this open data could benefit the sector.*

— **Allison Savich**

Strategic Lead for Innovation and Digital, Sport England

Our principles, priorities and commitments

Principle 1

We believe that a **strong data infrastructure** is the foundation for building an open, trustworthy data ecosystem on a global scale and that this can help address our most pressing challenges.

Our five-year priorities:

- Contribute positively to building, hosting and stewarding key data infrastructure.
- Enable organisations across the world to steward and share data responsibly.

Our five-year commitments:

- Work with others to build data institutions and create standards to unlock value and enable innovation.
- Maintain and develop our role working with policymakers to help shape data policy.
- Run work programmes that enable us to remain at the cutting edge of innovation and foresight about emerging trends and technologies in the global data space.
- Invest in creating tools and practical support for building data infrastructure.
- Build our own digital capabilities and reach to work with many more people around the world.

Principle 2

Strong data infrastructure includes data across the spectrum, from open to shared to closed.² **But the best possible foundation is open data**, supported and sustained as data infrastructure. Only with this foundation will people, businesses and governments be able to realise the potential of data infrastructure across society and the economy.

Our five-year priorities:

- Underline our commitment to open data.
- Work across the data spectrum.
- Maintain and share our research and thought leadership.
- Enable the development of sensible public policy around data in government.

Our five-year commitments:

- Seek funding partners and invest in original research, innovation and thought leadership, public policy and advocacy.
- Develop new ideas and perspectives that will positively influence international policy, business and science.
- Work with those developing AI systems to ensure that the data they are using and trained on are fit for function, and demonstrate how high quality, trusted open data is a foundation for this.
- Continue to evolve our understanding of the people and organisations who are impacted by our work.

Principle 3

For data to work for everyone, it needs to work across borders – geographic, organisational, economic, cultural and political. **For this to happen ethically and sustainably, there needs to be trust** – trust in data and trust in those who share it.

Our five-year priorities:

- Advance trust in data and professionalise the data space.
- Work towards the development of standards for data and data practices.
- Work with governments to inform policies on trusted data sharing.
- Enable organisations across sectors to adopt practices for trusted flow of data amongst and between them.

Our five-year commitments:

- Develop world-class products and services that are easy for organisations to access and adopt.
- Build consultancy and advisory services to help organisations demonstrate and deliver trusted data and trustworthy data practices.
- Be part of the drive to develop standards that help assure people and organisations that data and data practices can be trusted.

Principle 4

There is greater need than ever for **trusted, independent organisations** to help people across all sectors, economies and societies to benefit from better data infrastructure.

Our five-year priorities:

- Further diversify our network and funding mechanisms while remaining committed to our original mission.
- Maintain independence from any political, economic or financial control.
- Work across society – in the private, public and third sectors.
- Ensure sustainability through a model that maintains, protects and grows the ODI's institutional core.

Our five-year commitments:

- Build a business model that is sufficiently varied for us to remain independent while exploring potentially diversified revenue streams.
- Maintain our core institute, our neutrality, our respected research, public policy work and thought leadership.

Principle 5

For data to work for everyone, those collecting and using it need to be highly alert to inequalities, biases and power asymmetries. All organisations working in data must take proactive steps to ensure that they contribute fully and consciously to creating **a diverse, equitable and inclusive data ecosystem**.

Our five-year priorities

- Commit to diversity, equity and inclusion in everything we do – from our internal operations to the delivery of projects and services. We will do this by:
 - scrutinising and questioning biases and inequalities in data and data practices, providing expertise and tools to help practitioners address them.
 - ensuring that our own practices are diverse, equitable and inclusive.

Our five-year commitments:

- Ensure our workforce and leadership reflect the diversity of the communities we work in.
- Continue to champion diverse, inclusive and equitable approaches to the use of data.
- Work to upskill and positively influence our clients, suppliers and delivery partners towards diverse, inclusive and equitable data practices.

Principle 6

The world needs a new cohort of data leaders – individuals who **have data knowledge and skills and are equipped to understand the value, limitations and opportunities offered by data**, data practices and data sharing.

Our five-year priorities

- Build greater data literacy for organisations worldwide, for influential leaders, and for the emergence of data-as-a-profession.
- Ensure that organisational decision-makers and leaders have access to knowledge about opportunities and risks that exist in data.
- Enable organisations across the world to develop their data skills to gather, steward and share data responsibly.

Our five-year commitments:

- Evolve the ODI's online learning offerings.
- Introduce new types of services and ensure that content, tools and offerings currently available remain so for anyone to access.
- Measure and transparently report the impact of our work on improving data literacy and best practices.

The ODI in 2023

“Our independent, non-partisan status, our trusted convening power and our extensive body of work – over 10 years – make us unique in the world. We help organisations realise the potential of data, understand its properties and value through our research, and build skills and strategies for safe, ethical and trusted data sharing that benefit customers, citizens and stakeholders. We help leaders understand the value of data, and we show governments how creating standards for data and data practices can enrich public services. We break down barriers, help others forge alliances and create safe spaces for divergent views to be heard and for (sometimes conflicting) interests to align around a common cause.

ODI Five-Year Strategy

Our culture and team

Our team is open, inquisitive and experimental. Since 2020 we have established a new leadership team and begun experimenting with different ways of working to better serve our unique culture and perspective.

ODI values

As we developed this strategy, we worked closely with our team, stakeholders and network, including revisiting our values, and have agreed these as:

Curiosity – We ask questions, we are interested in our world and in those we work with and the opportunities and risks we encounter together; we challenge assumptions and the status quo so that we continuously learn, improve and grow, enabling all our partners to do the same.

Creativity – We strive to be creative in our approach, culture and outcomes so that everything we do delivers unique value and is inspiring.

Collaboration – We seek to bring together the best people, organisations and ideas to contribute positively to everything we do together and the world we aim to be a part of – a world where we bring the best of collective working to provide skills and insights to achieve positive, sustainable impact.

Building on strong foundations

In the coming five years, we aim to hone our skills, diversify our workforce and develop a more global outlook. We are building on strong foundations to create a high-performing multi-disciplinary team, which will involve:

- Nurturing and collaborating more closely with our network, including our funders, clients, partners, members and the wider world.
- Working with a broader range of associates and suppliers who enrich our teams with deep expertise as we extend our reach.
- Developing scalable systems and processes, using digital tools and integrations (and ensuring interoperability), to allow us to extend our reach without adding huge costs or compromising on quality.
- Building our capacity, utilising digital communications, tools and platforms to extend our reach.
- Offering a place – and space – for people to come together and collaborate, convening and hosting sometimes sensitive conversations.
- Making it much easier to interact with the ODI online, redesigning our online estate to make it simpler to find things and easier to navigate.

Growth for impact

In the next five years, the ODI is setting out to reach a wider global audience of companies, governments, grant-makers, non-governmental bodies and civic society organisations.

We expect our revenues to be drawn from a wide range of sources, including:

- Philanthropic funders and grant-making organisations
- Corporate sponsorship and project work
- The ODI's network, membership and subscription services
- Government funding – for projects and programmes
- R&D funding from a variety of sources.

A positive future

We believe that strong data infrastructure is the foundation for building an open, trustworthy data ecosystem at global scale. There is more need than ever for independent organisations like ours to ensure that people from across all sectors, economies and societies benefit equally from it.

In the past 10 years, the ODI has evolved to encompass many species of data and to collaborate on novel models for sharing and stewarding data in safe environments. We will continue to work at the intersection of all sectors and industries and seek to broaden and deepen our impact; to become an even more globally relevant institute for open, trustworthy data ecosystems.

We look forward to discussing our new strategy with our colleagues, funders and clients. For greater detail and our acknowledgements please see the full-length version of the ODI's five-year strategy at theodi.org/strategy. If you have questions about the strategy, or comments to share, please email us at strategy@theodi.org

References

¹ Open Data Institute (2016), [The Data Spectrum](#)

² Open Data Institute (2016), [The Data Spectrum](#)