PRIMER #1:

CREATING AND EMPOWERING (CHIEF) DATA STEWARDS

Developing and nurturing responsible data leaders to support impactful data re-use

WHY

The Third Wave brings with it a focus on the institutional arrangements that need to be reimagined to achieve a more data-driven manner of working. This reimagination focuses particular attention on the role of the data steward, responsible data leaders that seek new ways to create value through cross-sector data collaboration. Data stewards may be either individuals or groups of individuals within an organization who are dedicated employees that initiate and contribute to sustainable data collaboration.

HOW

Designate a Common Authority: Often, data efforts are dispersed across an organization, making it difficult to ensure that all its components are working towards the same ends. A data steward, by contrast, serves to coordinate these disparate efforts and ensure that staff are not working cross purposes. By designating a singular team or individual to manage data collaboration, organizations can promote effective data practices.

Systemize Sharing: Data stewards are not only focused on technical aspects of data management but are empowered to engage in data sharing and data collaboration. They achieve this goal by filling three responsibilities. First, they collaborate with stakeholders and promote partnerships. Second, they facilitate the responsible management of data. Third, they ensure that relevant parties act upon the generated insights. Organizations

can ensure the success of stewards by granting them the institutional mandate and authority to complete these tasks.

Codify Data Stewardship in Policies and Procedures: Open data and data re-use pilot projects often fail to reach sustainability or scale due to several factors. These factors can be related to shifting institutional leadership, priorities, or funding. If data stewardship structures and practices remain ad hoc and are not codified in institutional policies and procedures, they risk being abandoned or scaled back if circumstances change.

MORE

The Data Stewards Network: A community of practice connecting responsible data leaders across sectors to facilitate cross-sector collaboration and generate new ways of creating public value, and a weekly newsletter sharing new insights, tools, and developments to support data stewards' work.

Wanted: Data Stewards: A position paper released by The GovLab which tackles questions regarding the profile and potential of Data Stewards.

Towards a European strategy on business-to-government data sharing for the public interest: The final report from the European Commission High-Level Expert Group on Business-to-Government Data Sharing, which highlights the need for data stewards across sectors to enable societally beneficial public-private data collaboration.