



Governance Structures and Operating Procedures

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1 Background

The Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) established the Community Data Program (CDP) in the mid-1990s as a gateway for municipalities and community sector organizations to access customized tables from Statistics Canada and other providers to monitor and report on social and economic development trends within their communities. Relying on a Community Data Consortium model, the CDP reduces the cost of acquiring community data, builds community data analysis capacity and connects a national network of community data users.

This document describes the system of decision making governing the Community Data Program. The decision making system includes a governance model comprising the CDP's principal stakeholders, roles and responsibilities of each of the principal stakeholders, and the operating procedures guiding these relationships. The document also details the decision making process related to the Program's annual budget.

The governance structure and operating procedures described in this document build on the evolving practices pursued by the Program stakeholders since the Program's inception, capture the basic elements of the Governance Structure agreed in the form of a **Draft Governance Model** at Community Data Program Leads Annual Meeting of March 8, 2011, and has benefitted from a formal review by members of the Program Steering Committee.

2 Overview of the Governance Structure

The CDP's two principal stakeholders are the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD), comprised of its Board of Directors, President and CEO and the CDP Team, and the Community Data Consortium Leads (Leads), representing the organizational members of each Community Data Consortium.

These two stakeholders interact formally by means of Leads meetings and Program Steering Committee meetings.

Other program stakeholders include:

- **Individual registered users** of the Community Data Program, employed or contracted by Consortium members;
- **Government and private sector data product and service providers** entering into agreements with CCSD;
- **Financial sponsors** of the Community Data Program, entering into agreements with CCSD; and,
- **Representatives of national and provincial government, community sector and private sector organizations** not eligible for membership in a community data consortium, but sharing a commitment to increasing access to community data.

The basic relationships governing these stakeholders are illustrated in Chart 1.

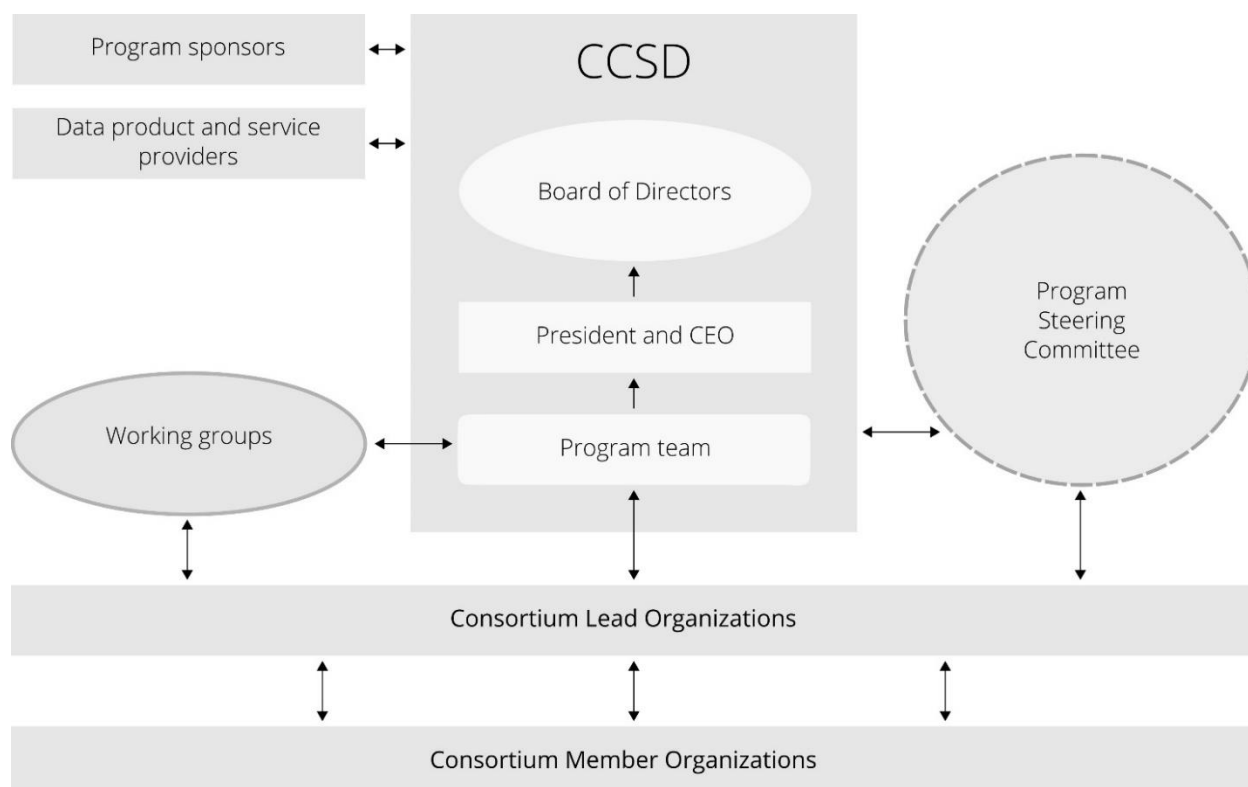


Figure 1 Community Data Program Governance Organization Chart

3 Roles and Responsibilities

As a collaborative initiative, the Community Data Program relies on an active partnership between CCSD and the Community Data Consortium Lead Organizations. The roles of these partners with respect to the governance of the Consortium Program are delineated as follows:

3.1 The Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD)

CCSD is the lead organization for the Community Data Program and is the Program’s principal accountable body. Ultimate decision making authority rests with CCSD, its board of Directors and President and CEO. CCSD’s President and CEO maintains accountability to the CCSD Board of Directors for decisions taken at the Program level.

CCSD will be the primary body and ultimate authority responsible for:

1. Making decisions regarding the operations and strategic direction of the Program;
2. Consulting with Lead Organizations by means of regular Leads Teleconferences and an annual Leads meeting to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern; and,
3. Relying on the Program Steering Committee to obtain advice and input on matters of mutual interest and concern.

CCSD is the primary body and ultimate authority responsible for undertaking Program services outlined in the CCSD CDP Memorandum of Agreement and Membership Agreement Backgrounder 2012-2017, falling under the headings of Program Leadership, Data Purchase and Access; Training and Capacity Building; Sharing Results Across the Network; and Partnerships and Outreach.

Working under the direction of CCSD's President and CEO, the CCSD Program Team includes staff and contractors engaged by CCSD to develop and implement the program work plan, deliver program services and support the Program Steering Committee and working groups.

3.2 Community Data Consortium Lead Organizations

A Community Data Consortium is a local network of organizations focused on the implementation of a public service goal and operating within the boundaries of a municipality or those of a community organization. Each Consortium adheres to a set of common principles, including, but not limited to:

- Collaboration
- Mutual accountability and respect
- Open communication
- Commitment to improving the use of social data
- Commitment to quality research standards
- Commitment to improving social conditions
- Commitment to ethical research standards
- Commitment to the appropriate use of research

Each Consortium is considered a principal beneficiary of the Program and a significant contributor to the costs of operating the Program.

Each Consortium is led by a Community Data Lead Organization (Lead). The Lead is a partner in the design and delivery of the Community Data Program and represents the members of the Community Data Consortium. The Lead provides leadership to the local consortium and is the primary contact between the CCSD and the members of local consortium. The specific roles and responsibilities of the Lead include:

With respect to the relationship with CCSD...

1. Entering into a legal agreement with CCSD in the form of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoA);
2. Abiding by the terms of the MoA signed by CCSD and the Community Data Consortium;
3. Representing the interests of local members in discussions with CCSD and the Steering Committee;
4. Representing Community Data Consortium members at Leads meetings;
5. Submitting to CCSD requests for consortium membership;
6. Sharing with CCSD an accurate list of approved consortium members with contact information; and,
7. Sharing with CCSD the types of uses made of the data received, and products produced from that data.

With respect to the relationship with members of the consortium...

8. Organizing a Community Data Consortium within the community;
9. Undertaking outreach within the community including recruitment of new members;
10. Maintaining a list of consortium members with contact information in a format provided by CCSD;
11. Ensuring that information received from CCSD is communicated to all consortium members;
12. Managing local financial administration related to CDP fees;
13. Ensuring that consortium members are aware of and abide by the terms of the MoA;
14. Ensuring that each member of the consortium is aware of the obligation to register with CCSD, and pay an annual program administration fee; and,
15. Ensuring that all consortium members are aware of and comply with the Data Products Sharing License and Consortium End-Use License Agreements associated with data products available from the Community Data Program.

3.3 Consortium Member Organizations

Each community data consortium comprises one or more member organizations (member). Each member shall be represented by a contact person. The Community Data Program team may make direct contact with that individual from time to time, as required.

Member organizations have the following roles and responsibilities:

1. Abide by terms and conditions of membership as established by the Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Lead Organization and CCSD;
2. Abide by the principles of the local consortium;
3. Participate in local consortium meetings and initiatives as defined by the local consortium;
4. Ensure registered users within the organization are informed of the activities of the local consortium and the broader Community Data Consortium network;
5. Review data products acquired by the Program and share with a member of the Program team information on any missing or inaccurate data;
6. Ensure the organization is registered with CCSD as a Community Data Program member organization and has paid the annual program administration fee; and,
7. Ensure all registered users within the member organization understand and comply with the Data Products Sharing Licence and Consortium End-Use License Agreements associated with the Community Data Program.

3.4 Program Steering Committee

The Community Data Program's Steering Committee was formally established in March 2011 in order to ensure consistency between CCSD Corporate and Community Data Program priorities; share information between the CCSD Board and Consortium Leads; and inform Program-level strategic planning and decision making.

The roles of the Steering Committee include:

1. Advise the CCSD on matters pertaining to the effective functioning of the Consortium Program including:
 - Operational issues and policies;
 - Technical matters; and,
 - Broader policy/advocacy issues; and,
2. Review and advise on decisions coming out of Leads meeting or recommendations made by the CCSD Program Team;
3. Provide oversight to the preparation of an Annual Program Report. The Annual Report will be prepared by the Program Team and will be used as a tool to track major progress and accomplishments, and review the annual budget and data product acquisition plan for the following year. The Annual Report will be presented to Leads at the annual meeting by the Chair of the Program Steering Committee, or by a delegate of the Chair; and,
4. Generally seek to balance the interests of CCSD and Community Data Consortia.

The Program Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from the CCSD and Consortium Lead Organizations. Membership includes two CCSD Board members, CCSD's President/CEO, and representatives of up to 6 Consortium Lead Organizations. The CCSD Community Data Program Lead is an ex-officio member of the Steering Committee. Representation from Leads will reflect a mix of municipal government and non-governmental organizations, and be sensitive to regional balance. Membership on the Steering Committee is reviewed after two years.

The Program Steering Committee meets on a quarterly basis, either by teleconference or in person, with additional meetings scheduled, as required.

All members of the Steering Committee, regardless of whether they are present at the meetings, are expected to support the Steering Committee's decisions and assist in their implementation.

3.5 Working Groups

The Steering Committee or Leads may, by consensus, create one or more Working Groups to deliver specific aspects of the overall workplan.

With the support of at least one member of the CCSD Program Team, Working Groups provide technical advice and recommendations on topics such as, but not limited to:

- Data Purchase and Access

- Capacity Building and Training
- Sharing Information
- Building and Fostering Partnerships

Each Working Group may include participation by members of the Consortium other than the Lead. However, these individuals should represent a minority of the Working Group membership.

Each Working Group establishes terms of reference, sets regular meeting schedules and prepares progress updates that are conveyed by CCSD Program Team to the Leads and Steering Committee as information.

4 Operating Procedures for Leads Meetings

4.1 Frequency, Purpose and Logistics

With the support of the CCSD, Consortium Leads meet formally on a quarterly basis. Leads meetings are generally designed to facilitate communication within the Consortium Program including:

1. Consulting with Lead Organizations on issues of interest or concern;
2. Serving as a liaison between the CCSD and the Lead Organizations; and,
3. Facilitating communication among all Lead organizations.

One of the Leads meetings shall be used as an annual meeting for review and approval of the annual program budget. The annual meeting is a forum for Leads to recommend program direction to CCSD, review and comment on annual budgets and data product acquisition plans, and provide input into identifying future priorities.

Leads meetings are organized and facilitated by the Community Data Program team. The Program team will prepared a meeting schedule in the spring of each year and post the schedule at communitydata.ca.

Unless otherwise agreed to, the Leads meetings will rely on teleconference or webinar facilities. The annual meeting may be convened as a face-to-face event, budget permitting.

Leads meetings are hosted by CCSD. CCSD is responsible for meeting logistics, chairing each meeting and producing a record of the meeting. Meeting records should clearly indicate any members responsible for leading action arising along with report back dates.

The annual meeting may be co-hosted by CCSD and a Community Data Consortium.

In addition to quarterly meetings, Leads interact with CCSD informally on an ongoing basis via email, telephone and online discussions.

4.2 Agenda Development and Dissemination

1. Leads Meeting agendas are developed by the Program Team based on the advice of the Steering Committee. The final agenda is subject to the final approval of CCSD's President and CEO.
2. Program Steering Committee meeting agenda items are prepared by the Program Team, with input from Steering Committee members.
3. All potential agenda items for Leads meeting should be submitted to a member of CCSD's Program Team 14 calendar days prior to the meeting date.
4. A final meeting agenda shall be distributed to Leads at least calendar 5 days prior to the meeting.
5. CCSD's Community Data Program team is responsible for coordinating input for the development of agendas and for selecting facilitators and scribes for meetings.

4.3 Criteria for Identifying Issues for Discussion at Leads Meetings

To prioritize discussion during Leads meetings, the following criteria will be considered in recommending issues for discussion. Each issue must:

1. address community data needs;
2. be of common interest to Community Data Consortium Leads;
3. be solvable with realizable outcomes and within a reasonable time frame; and,
4. not detract from discussions or processes.

4.4 Decision Making at Leads Meetings

1. Any decisions made at Leads meeting will generally rely on consensus. Consensus is defined as an agreement by all members of the group, arrived at through dialogue. Although it may not be each member's preferred result, it is a result that all members can "live with" and support.
2. Where consensus is not achieved, CCSD may, at its discretion, either call a vote at the Leads Meeting or defer the decision to a meeting of the Program Steering Committee.
3. Each Consortium will be eligible for one vote. CCSD will be eligible for one vote.
4. Where a vote is taken at a Leads meeting, a passing vote will be based on 50 percent plus 1 of Leads present in the meeting room or participating via teleconference. Proxy voting will not be permitted.
5. The outcome of a vote taken by Leads at the annual meeting will be non-binding on CCSD.
6. The CCSD Board retains ultimate decision-making authority on all matters related to the Community Data Program. At the discretion of the CCSD, the outcome of a vote taken by leads may be brought to the attention of the CCSD Board for its review, and may be upheld or overturned by the CCSD Board.

5 Decision-Making Related to the Annual Program Budget

Preparation of the annual Community Data Program budget will adhere to the following steps:

1. CCSD prepares a draft annual budget.
2. The draft budget is shared with the Program Steering Committee which reviews and advises on changes.
3. The final draft budget is tabled at the Annual Leads Meeting for discussion, recommended changes, and consensus-based agreement. Leads' consensus on the budget is achieved through facilitated dialogue led by CCSD.
4. Where consensus is not achieved at the annual meeting, CCSD may use its discretion to rely on either a show of hands to vote on the budget, or to defer a decision to a meeting of the Program Steering Committee. As outlined in section 4.4, any decision taken by Leads is non-binding, and may ultimately be overturned by the CCSD Board of Directors.
5. Subject to any final decision taken by the CCSD Board, the Program team amends the budget based on the outcome of the Leads meeting.
6. The final program budget is presented to the Steering Committee for its endorsement, and, where necessary, for additional and final input.
7. The final program budget is posted at communitydata.ca.
8. The CCSD CDP Team implements the budget.
9. The CCSD CDP Team initiates the next cycle of annual program budgeting.

6 Decision-Making Related to the Data Acquisition Plan

Preparation of the annual Community Data Program Data Product Acquisition Plan will adhere to the following steps:

1. CCSD prepares a draft data product acquisition plan, with inputs from the Program Steering Committee and Working Group(s), input from Leads at quarterly teleconferences, and, where warranted, one or more online surveys of Leads and registered users. The data product acquisition plans are prepared on the basis of criteria developed in consultation with the Steering Committee.
2. The draft product acquisition plan is shared with the Steering Committee which reviews and advises on changes.
3. The final draft product acquisition plan is tabled at the Annual Leads Meeting for discussion, recommended changes, and consensus-based agreement. Leads' consensus on the acquisition plan is achieved through facilitated dialogue led by CCSD.

4. Where consensus is not achieved at the annual meeting, CCSD may use its discretion to rely on either a show of hands to vote on the data product acquisition plan, or to defer a decision to a meeting of the Program Steering Committee. As outlined in section 4.4, any decision taken by Leads is non-binding, and may ultimately be overturned by the CCSD Board of Directors.
5. Subject to any final decision taken by the CCSD Board, the Program team amends the data product acquisition plan based on the outcome of the Leads meeting.
6. The final data product acquisition plan is presented to the Steering Committee for its endorsement, and, where necessary, for additional and final input.
7. The final data product acquisition plan is posted at communitydata.ca in the form of an updated Schedule B.
8. The CCSD Community Data Program Team implements the data product acquisition plan.
9. The CCSD Community Data Program Team initiates the next cycle of annual data product acquisition planning.

7 Amendments to the Governance Structure and Operating Procedures

The Community Data Program Governance Structure and Operating Procedures are reviewed annually to reflect membership, priority and protocol changes. Changes to the governance structure and operating procedures may be recommended by Leads to CCSD. CCSD may make changes at its discretion, but only following consultation with the Steering Committee. Members of the Program Steering Committee may recommend to CCSD amendments to the Governance structure and operating procedures at any time.