# PEACE CORPS
# OPEN DATA PLAN

**July 2025**

## PURPOSE

This plan, developed under the authority of Peace Corps *Manual Section (MS) 326 Data Governance and Management*, satisfies the requirements of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-25-05 regarding an agency Open Data Plan. It outlines the specific actions the Peace Corps will take in the upcoming fiscal year to advance the agency's data management practices, improve transparency, and ensure compliance with the *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act)*.

## BACKGROUND

The *Evidence Act* and M-25-05 require Federal agencies to manage data as a strategic asset. The Peace Corps' governing policy for this work is *MS 326*, which establishes the Enterprise Data Governance Council (EDGC) to lead the agency in developing a culture of effective data management. This plan represents the EDGC's operational strategy to implement the principles of *MS 326* and make Peace Corps data more findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable (FAIR).

## PEACE CORPS OPEN DATA GOALS

The agency's vision is to empower staff and the public with high-quality, reliable data. Our actions this year are centered on three core goals aligned with FAIR principles:

1. **Improve Data Management (Findable and Reusable):** Implement a formal annual process for auditing and updating the agency's data asset inventory to ensure its data assets are well-described, and their quality is continuously improved.

2. **Enhance Data Discoverability (Accessible and Interoperable):** Make Peace Corps data assets more findable by the public by publishing a standards-compliant comprehensive data inventory (data.json file).

3. **Establish Foundational Compliance (Governance):** Execute agency responsibilities under *MS 326* by creating this plan, formally rescinding the outdated *MS 894 Open Data Policy*, and empowering the EDGC to lead agency-wide data initiatives.

# AGENCY DATA REQUIREMENTS

This plan follows the structure of OMB M-25-05, Section 6. The ongoing activities and future plans described below also address requirements listed in section 4, *Agency Requirements that Apply to All Data Assets*, and Section 5, *Requirements That Apply to All Public Data Assets* of OMB M-25-05.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES FOR OPEN FORMATS

- **Intent:** To ensure that, by default, the Peace Corps collects data in open, machine-readable formats to maximize its utility and accessibility for downstream use and analysis.

- **This Year's Activities:** The EDGC will assess current data collection mechanisms across the agency to establish a baseline of open format usage and identify opportunities for improvement.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will establish interfaces to our source information systems that publish human and machine-readable open data format for downstream use and analysis. The agency will also seek to develop a data abstraction reporting layer that collects and stores its data in open data format for downstream use and analysis.

## DATA USAGE INFORMATION

- **Intent:** To understand how our data is being used by the public and internal stakeholders, allowing us to better prioritize resources and improve high-value data assets.

- **This Year's Activities:** The agency will identify methods and tools to track usage of the public data.json file and other public data assets upon their release.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will develop and publish an "Overarching Peace Corps Dashboard Repository" to provide staff with easy access to validated, high-value metrics and to improve internal data usage and understanding.

## COLLABORATION WITH DATA USERS

- **Intent:** To build a productive dialogue with data users inside and outside the agency to better understand their needs, improve data quality, and increase the value of our public data offerings.

- **This Year's Activities:** The EDGC will establish and promote a formal public point of contact to receive and triage data-related inquiries and feedback.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will implement a centralized "Data Request TrackIt!" system to increase the efficiency and transparency of data requests from internal and external users.

## OPEN DATA POINT OF CONTACT

- **Intent:** To provide a clear, single, and responsive channel for the public to ask questions, raise data quality issues, and provide recommendations for improvements.

- **This Year's Activities:** The EDGC will formally designate the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP) as the public point of contact for open data on the Peace Corps website by directing inquiries and comments to *OSIRP@peacecorps.gov*.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will refine the internal processes for routing public inquiries to the correct data stewards and ensuring timely responses, supported by a variety of data request workflow.

## IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

- **Intent:** To create robust, repeatable processes that continuously improve the quality, completeness, and usefulness of the agency's data assets and the inventory that describes them.

- **This Year's Activities:** The agency will execute a formal annual process to improve the data asset inventory. Led by OSIRP under the direction of the EDGC, this process includes:

  1. **Annual Cadence:** The update cycle will commence after the beginning of the Fiscal Year (October).

  2. **Stewardship Audit:** OSIRP will conduct an audit to identify data assets whose designated stewards are no longer with the agency.

  3. **Change Assessment:** The audit will identify data assets that may have undergone significant system or business process changes.

  4. **Office-Level Review:** Each agency office will receive a detailed list of its assets with a call to action (e.g., "Assign new steward," "Validate purpose"). This communication will also solicit the submission of any key business data assets not yet in the inventory.

  5. **Steward-Level Update:** OSIRP will conduct a direct data call to all active data stewards, requesting they review and update their inventory entries.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will launch an "Enhanced Data Asset Inventory" project to create a more user-friendly interface and expand metadata to include business use cases. The agency will also undertake a "Full Scope Agency Data Flow Diagram" project to map data lineage and improve data quality at the source.

## OPEN DATA GOAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Intent:** To ensure the agency has the skilled workforce, innovative technology, and effective governance needed to manage data as a strategic asset.

- **This Year's Activities:** The EDGC will meet quarterly to oversee the activities in this plan and provide strategic direction for data governance.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will develop a "Data 101 Training Guide" and launch a Data Community of Practice to provide training, resources, and support for data stewards and other employees across the agency.

## PRIORITIZING PUBLIC DATA ASSET REVIEW

- **Intent:** To develop a transparent, criteria-based process for determining which public data assets are of the highest value to the public and should be prioritized for release.

- **This Year's Activities:** The EDGC will develop and approve a formal process and specific criteria for prioritizing public data assets for proactive publication.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will implement the approved prioritization process and begin the systematic review and release of high-value data sets.

## COMPLIANCE STATUS

- **Intent:** To meet all requirements of M-25-05 and the *Evidence Act* in a timely and effective manner.

- **This Year's Activities:** To achieve foundational compliance, the EDGC will oversee two key deliverables:

  1. **Rescind *MS 894*:** The EDGC will facilitate the formal rescission of the outdated *MS 894* Open Data Policy, clarifying that *MS 326* is the sole governing policy.

  2. **Publish Comprehensive Data Inventory:** Following the annual inventory update, the EDGC will approve the publication of the agency's initial public comprehensive data inventory. This will be a data.json file hosted

on www.peacecorps.gov, containing, at a minimum, the Title, Purpose, IT System, and Exportable Format(s) for each inventoried asset.

- **Future Plans:** The agency will expand the metadata in the public inventory and move toward full compliance with all aspects of M-25-05.