Caribbean Open Data Conference
April 11-12th, 2013
Port of Spain – Kingston – Santo Domingo
Havana – Bridgetown – Basseterre – Georgetown – Paramaribo

The Caribbean Open Data Conference is a regional technology conference and code sprint, focused on open data, software innovation, and technology trends. With over 900 conference attendees and 120 registered developers spread across 5 islands at the 2012 event, it is the largest technology conference in the region. The event (http://developingcaribbean.org/) combines a two day conference with a 24-hour code sprint, in which teams of developers compete to build solutions to social problems using open data.

In 2012 the conference was branded "*Developing the Caribbean*" to highlight the focus on Open Data as a catalyst for regional *development*, and the role of software *development* as a locus of innovation. It also reflected the strong affiliation with "Developing Latin America", a similar multi-country event staged across eight (8) Latin American countries (http://desarrollandoamerica.org/).

While Caribbean societies share a wide range of pressing economic, social and environmental demands in many areas such as agriculture, trade, tourism, and education, solutions to these problems have traditionally been discussed in isolation. The ***Developing The Caribbean*** conference brings together government institutions and civil society with media, private sector and technology communities in the region around open data and global technology trends to catalyze local innovation through the creation of solutions to common development problems.

Since its inception in February 2010, ***Developing The Caribbean*** (DEVCA) has attracted global experts on open data and innovation, such as john Wonderlich and Eric Mill of the Sunlight Foundation, Tariq Khokar, Open Data Evangelist, World Bank, Carlos de La Fuente , Director of Technology Services, Fundación CTIC - España); regional dignitaries such as the Rt Hon Edward Seaga, former Prime Minister of Jamaica and Ms Bernadette Lewis, Secretary General, Caribbean Telecommunications Union, Dr. Philomen Harrison, Project Director, Regional Statistics, CARICOM and a myriad of other international and regional experts presenting on the open data movement, software development best practices, data visualization approaches and innovation policy.

The event has also facilitated the launch of a number government data sets and APIs. From national census data in the Dominican Republic, agriculture & fisheries data in Trinidad to hotels and tourist attractions data in Jamaica, ***DEVCA*** has been central to driving awareness and dialogue on Caribbean open data and catalyzing the region's emerging regional apps economy. A detailed report of the 2012 conference can be retrieved here: http://data.org.jm/DevelopingCaribbean_CountryReports.pdf

Highlights of the Upcoming 2013 Edition

The 2013 edition of *Developing the Caribbean* will introduce several new thematic areas and conference activities.

Data Journalism

We will be introducing a new **Data Journalism** track in keeping with the rapidly growing importance of the media and journalists in exploiting the availability, as well as propagating the awareness, relevance and emerging impacts of Open Data. The goal of this segment will be to empower journalists, researchers and non-technical persons with the skills to use data visualizations and a range of contemporary communications mechanisms in innovative and visual ways. This segment will be facilitated through a partnership with one of the Caribbean's premier media houses, and participation from one of the world's foremost global media companies.
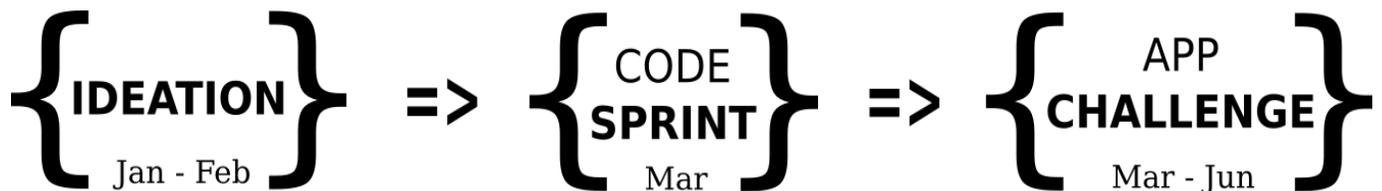
Census Round 2010

Developing The Caribbean will collaborate with the CARICOM Secretariat and National Statistics Offices across the region to use Open Data as a vehicle to promote the findings and availability of data and information from the recent **Census Round 2010** across the region.

Beyond the Code Sprint -- from ideation to impact

The 24-hour code sprint remains the highlight of *Developing Caribbean*. At the inaugural event in 2011 we launched with agriculture data on farmers, crops counts and price data from the Ministry of Agriculture in Jamaica. At the 2012 staging, we piloted a new approach to code sprints in which we expanded the event from a two-day developer focused activity, to a two-step process involving domain experts crafting problem statements for thematic areas in the months leading up to the event. These ideation sessions held across the region resulted in more than 30 problem definitions that helped guide the developers to solve real world development problems with better contextual information.

The 2013 event will not only see the expansion of the ideation sessions based on emerging best practices, but also the introduction of a post-event Caribbean-wide App Challenge. The **Caribbean App Challenge** will be a 2 month virtual competition in which participating code sprint teams will have the opportunity to build out their applications with help from international and regional mentors.

The goal of the **Caribbean App Challenge** is to motivate and support the participating teams as develop the prototypes started at the event to more mature applications and startups that are closer to having an impact on development challenges.

{IDEATION} Jan - Feb => {CODE SPRINT} Mar => {APP CHALLENGE} Mar - Jun

Appendix: Participating in the Caribbean Open Data Conference

The Caribbean Open Data Conference is more than just an event. It is a process of engagement that seeks to demonstrate the power of "openness", specifically Open Data, Open Innovation and Open Source as a catalyst for innovation, collaboration and ultimately value-creation for Caribbean individuals, organizations and societies at large.

Participation in this uniquely Caribbean experience can take place at several levels:

Event Host
Developing The Caribbean is a truly regional event. The Conference itself is a regionally distributed event with conference presentations and code sprints occurring simultaneously across multiple islands the region. Attendees can participate and view any of the participant sites presentations, open data resources, problems statements or domain experts.

Participating hosts can organize conference sites or code sprint sites:
- **Conference Host**: Conference sites consist of both conference presentations and code sprint activities. Conference hosts will work together to organize presentations and tracks that highlight trends in open data, software development and tech innovation. The conference event will be staged over a 2-day period with the 24hr code sprint running concurrently with other conference activities.
- **Code Sprint Host**: Code Sprint sites focus primarily on organizing the 24hr code sprint. In the lead up to the event, code sprint organizers are encouraged to host ideation sessions with civil society and domain experts to capture problem statements and application ideas for the participating developers. Code sprint hosts may source Open Data from local government agencies and/or other institutions (academic, NGO's, businesses), but may also work with Open Data published in any of the participating countries.

Event hosts will work together to share ideas and resources that leverage technology such as video conference, social media and common platforms to provide a shared experience across all sites. For more information on hosting a site, please contact Matthew McNaughton of the SlashRoots Foundation at matthew@slashroots.org

Data Contributors
Government Ministries, Departments or Agencies that are custodians of public sector data in any of the selected thematic areas, can contribute this data to be a open data resource for the code sprint competition. The following guidelines apply:
- Data in any of the following thematic areas can be submitted: *Agriculture & Fisheries; Training/education; Trade & Tourism; Telecoms access; National Statistics (Census, etc.)*
- Any privacy-related information should be scrubbed (removed) from the data before it is submitted
- The data will be used for the Caribbean Open Data Code Sprint, where programming teams from across the region will access the various contributed data through read-only APIs' to create competing applications.
- Your organization will be recognized and given full attribution for issuing your data.
- The data will be available in the public domain, in read-only format and will be licensed under the Creative Commons agreement.

Idea Contributors

In the lead up to ***Developing The Caribbean*** event sites will be hosting a number of ideation sessions with members of civil society to collect problems, and ideas for applications, services and data visualizations to tackle various development problems. Participation in these sessions are open any member of the Caribbean Civil Society (i.e. Public/Private sector, NGO's, individuals), that have an interest in local and/or regional priorities and challenges.

As part of the event, we will be establishing an online ideas platform that allows participants to submit problem/solution ideas and vote or comment on submitted ideas in any of the selected thematic categories.

Technical Contributors (Software Developers)

While providing access to data is an essential first step, the ultimate value in the open data movement lies in how agencies and the public can make use of the data. It is the members of the local and regional software development community that will ultimately create this value by building the applications and services that can provide new ways for communicating valuable information and positively impacting and empowering different communities with access to collaborative solutions to our indigenous problems. We welcome all members of the tech community (businesses, academic institutions and individuals) to participate and contribute your creativity and talent to this unique event.

Sponsors

Private Sector sponsorship is encouraged and facilitated in a variety of ways. By contributing to this conference, you are investing in the future of the social and political development of each of these Caribbean countries. Your organizations will have the chance to participate and be part of the innovative ideas and technological initiatives, alongside global leaders that we will be engaging through our international partnerships (see Sponsorship Prospectus).