



Press Release
Berlin, 14th July 2014
For immediate release

Open Knowledge Festival kicks off in Berlin

Open Knowledge Festival 2014, the world's biggest Open event, kicks off in Berlin today. The eagerly anticipated event brings together around 1000 attendees from across the world, for 3 days of workshops, discussions, hackspaces and action around open knowledge and open data.

The Festival opens with the Open Knowledge Fair, an action-focussed evening showcasing participatory projects and initiatives at the forefront of the global movement for open knowledge. A packed schedule of events will cover hot topics such as personal data and privacy, government transparency and openness, the role of open data in international development, the latest technological innovations, and the contribution of the data revolution to journalism and to social change activities.

The diverse international keynote line-up features Neelie Kroes, Vice-President and Digital Commissioner of the European Commission; Beatriz Busaniche, Founder of Wikimedia Argentina; Patrick Alley, Founder of Global Witness; and Eric Hysen, Head of Politics and Elections at Google. A last-minute special guest was also announced last week, Ory Okolloh, the world renowned Kenyan activist, lawyer and blogger.

This year's event builds on the success of OKFest 2012 in Helsinki, the first global event of its kind which attracted over 1000 in-person participants and 12,500 more online. Other Open Knowledge events include OKCon, running since 2007, and the Open Government Data Camp which took place in London (2010) and Warsaw (2011) and was a key catalyst in putting open data at the heart of the twenty-first century movement for government transparency.

Patrick Alley, Founder of Global Witness, who will give a keynote on Wednesday 16th said:

"What we don't know we don't worry about, but there has never been more to worry about. At a time when we need our political and business leaders to devote their skills and energy to tackling the fundamental issues behind some of the gravest threats facing the planet - and humanity - like climate change, over-consumption, poverty, war, the escalating scramble for finite natural resources, environmental destruction and corruption, we instead see corporate power reaching new heights, bending political systems to their will, whilst resisting the regulation and accountability that would keep them in check. The key to tackling this is to know what's going on, so we can act. The Open Knowledge Festival and its supporters are a crucial link in the quest to obtain and use information so we can tackle some of the greatest problems we face today."

Eric Hysen, Head of Politics and Elections at Google, who will give a keynote on Thursday 17th said:

"The civic technology ecosystem is growing and evolving rapidly around the world. Open Knowledge Festival is an important gathering for the community to discuss how civil society, governments, foundations, corporations, developers, and advocates can better work together to create more effective and innovative societies."

ENDS

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Press accreditation applications are now closed, but please get in touch with press@okfestival.org or with Theodora on 004915211838416 if you would like to attend.

Notes to the Editor:

- The Open Knowledge Festival takes place from 15th-17th July 2014, at the Kulturbrauerei, Schönhauser Allee 36, 10435 Berlin. Full info is at <http://2014.okfestival.org/>
- Press information is at <http://2014.okfestival.org/press> and interviews can be arranged upon request.
- The Open Knowledge Festival is organised by Open Knowledge, a worldwide non-profit network of people passionate about openness. Open Knowledge uses advocacy, technology and training to unlock information and enable people to work with it to create and share knowledge. <https://okfn.org/>
- Images from OKFestival 2012 are available on flickr here: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/okfn/sets/72157628319216831/>. Logos and banners for this year's event are downloadable here: <http://2014.okfestival.org/press>