# Good Practice #7 – Birmingham in Real Time

| Organisation in charge of the good practice | |
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| **Is your organisation the main institution in charge of this good practice?** | *No* |

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| **Location of the organisation in charge:** | *Country* | *United Kingdom* |
| | *Region* | *West Midlands* |
| | *City* | *Birmingham* |
| **Main institution in charge:** | *Birmingham City University* | |

| Good practice general information | | |
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| **Geographical scope of the practice:** | *Local* | |
| **Location of the practice** | Country | *UK* |
| | Region | *West Midlands* |
| | City | *Birmingham* |

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| **Practice image:** |   |
| **Title of practice:** | *[30/100 characters]*<br>Birmingham in Real Time (BiRT) |

| Good practice detailed information | |
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| **Short summary of the practice:** | *[145/160 characters]*<br>BiRT is a consortium of universities, industrial partners, businesses and key decision makers, aiming to develop a common platform for open data. |

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| **Detailed information on the practice:** | *[1386/1000-1500 characters]*<br>83% of global businesses have implemented the use of data in order to seize a competitive advantage. That number is set to increase with the introduction of smart cities – cities that use information and communication technologies to increase efficiency, share data and improve the quality of services. However, businesses – especially SMEs – are often forced to pay large sums of money to third party contractors in order to access data (which is often complex and difficult to decipher).<br>Recognising this issue, the Birmingham City University has teamed up with the Birmingham City Council (BCC) and the West Midlands Combined Authority to make real-time data about the city available, affordable and understandable. To begin, they had developed an application programme interface (API) in order to facilitate and simplify the process of analysing traffic data in Birmingham.<br>Since BiRT has launched, academics have met and worked with a range of SMEs from multiple industries, allowing businesses the chance to plan for the future more effectively by analysing and assessing data over certain periods to establish trends and growth. Academics are also working with BCC to incorporate a low-power, high-bandwidth system to better monitor real time data on Birmingham's streets which will also prove pivotal in the introduction of autonomous cars (i.e. vehicle-to-vehicle communication). |
| **Resources needed:** | *[250/200-300 characters]*<br>BiRT is supported by the ERDF-funded Innovation Engine II project, as well as Birmingham City Council, West Midlands Combined Authority, Birmingham City University, University of Birmingham, Birmingham Science Park Aston (Innovation Birmingham), etc. |
| **Timescale (start/end date):** | 2011-ongoing |
| **Evidence of success (results achieved):** | *[375/300-500 characters]*<br>By enabling SMEs and local organisations to access and use data, they no longer have to outsource to private companies, saving vast amounts of money that can be better directed elsewhere. BiRT also provides organisations with cleaner, more interpretable data before they could arrive in a variety of contrasting formats that would take considerable time and effort to decode. |
| **Challenges encountered:** | *[300 characters]* |
| **Potential for learning or transfer:** | *[975/500-1000 characters]*<br>Birmingham in Real Time is a good practice aiming to provide a real-time data platform for all things related to a city through the collection, analysis, transformation and delivery of actionable data from a range of sources. In a wider scope, BiRT is aiming to create value through combining a range of existing and new data sources, such as car parking data, public transport, air quality, cycling, etc. The practice delivers this transformed data openly, allowing decision-makers, service-creators and the public to use it freely to improve life locally (to provide services, make better decisions and unlock the innovation potential). The practice also identifies challenges (detecting issues quicker and reliably) and builds local SME and university consortia to develop and deliver solutions. Being able to monitor and gather data in real time, local authorities no longer have to outsource to private companies which saves money for the government to invest elsewhere. |
| **Further information:** | *Link to where further information on the good practice can be found*<br>https://www.bcu.ac.uk/computing/research/cyber-physical-systems/research-projects/birmingham-in-real-time |
| **Keywords:** | *Select from existing keywords*<br>(something similar to *online platform, partnership, big data, data analysis*) |