

Sandboxes Assessment Framework

24 July 2025

14:00 - 15:30 WAT/16:00 - 17:30 EAT/ 15:00 - 16:30 SAT/15:00 - 16:30 CET

DATASPHERE
INITIATIVE

This GSF Insights Session on the Sandbox Assessment Framework provides a timely and much-needed space for policymakers, academics, civil society, business leaders, and innovators to come together and shape the future of sandboxing.

As the world increasingly turns to sandboxes as an agile tool to navigate emerging technologies and complex data ecosystems, there is growing demand to evaluate their effectiveness, track outcomes, and learn from their use across diverse contexts. In this interactive session, participants will explore what it takes to effectively prepare for sandboxing; to not only ensure functionality, but also inclusivity, adaptability, and impact. The discussion will contribute directly to the development of the Sandbox Assessment Framework (SAF), a practical tool currently being designed by the Datasphere Initiative.

The meeting will:

- Review and build on valuable insights and experiences from sandbox models across the globe.
- Refine and identify practical, actionable building blocks for effective sandboxing, with a focus on goal setting, viability, diversity and transparency, participation, resources requirements, risk mitigation, sustainability, and ecosystem impact.
- Generate collaborative input for the ongoing development of the SAF.

Agenda

Thursday, 24 July, 3pm - 4:30pm CET

15:00 - 15:10	Welcome and introduction to the session
15:10 - 15:30 (20min)	I. WHAT AND WHY: Assessing the Purpose of a sandbox <i>A critical element for assessing and setting up sandboxes is understanding the "why." The session will explore how clearly defined goals, viability, and expected outcomes shape both the immediate purpose and long-term strategic impact of a sandbox.</i>

Discussants

- Alany Reyes Pichardo, Sr. Supervisor AI - Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens (Dutch DPA)
- Prof. Antonino Rotolo, Coordinator of "EU Regulatory Sandboxes for AI" (EUSAiR)
- Ahmad Rizal Azwir, NTIS Lead - National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS)

The discussion in this session will aim to answer the following 'what and why' questions

- Effective sandboxes are built around specific regulatory, policy, or operational challenges that justify experimentation. How can teams be supported to rigorously define this and envision or determine the expected outcomes?
- Identifying clear goals for a sandbox, particularly the crucial learning goal that justifies its existence, is vital. In your experience, what are the common challenges, or conversely, the best practices, for establishing these goals effectively?
- When defining the core problem or challenge a sandbox aims to address, what level of detail and precision should teams pursue to ensure clarity and actionable insights?

15:30- 15:55
(25min)

II. WHO: Stakeholder Engagement and Support

This session explores how to effectively engage key stakeholders and build institutional support when initiating a sandbox. It will focus on strategies for securing buy-in, developing internal capacity, and aligning human and technical resources to ensure feasibility and meaningful impact.

Discussants

4. Dr. Abigail Gilbert, Co-Director - Institute for the Future of Work
5. Keith Sabilika, Senior Specialist in Financial Technology at the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA), South Africa
6. Nasubo Ongoma, Research Consultant - Qhala

The discussion in this session will aim to answer the following ‘who’ questions

- **Securing buy in:** For organizations looking to implement a new sandbox environment, what are the most effective strategies you've seen for demonstrating the tangible benefits and return on investment to top management and other critical stakeholders (e.g., legal, compliance, security, and end-users), thereby securing their crucial buy-in and ongoing support?
- **Knowledge to implement a sandbox:** What knowledge and practical skills are needed to effectively design, implement, and manage a secure and efficient sandbox environment? What other support do teams need? How did you or can practitioners go about equipping teams with the knowledge?

15:55 - 16:25
(30min)

III. HOW: Resources, Processes and Safeguards

This session will explore how to design sustainable sandboxes by aligning processes, resources, and safeguards. It will focus on building mechanisms that proactively manage risks while supporting the testing of emerging technologies and business models.

Discussants

7. Eliza Victoria Lemos, Senior Legal Advisor, Attorney General's Office of Brazil (AGU - Advocacia-Geral da União União)
8. Jonathan Middleton, Director, Financial Services - NayaOne
9. Ms Lee Chein Inn, Deputy Director, Development of Data Driven Tech - IMDA
10. David Benhamou, Legal Advisor - Luxemburg National Commission for Data Protection (CNPDP)

The discussion in this session will aim to gather insights on the following ‘how’ elements

- costs of running the sandbox (including human resources, infrastructure, operations, etc.)
- Preparedness with collecting information to test sandbox hypotheses
- Identifying appropriate safe guards for the sandbox.
- Sandbox governance and decision making

16:25 - 16:30

Closing and next steps

Background

In 2022, the Datasphere Initiative produced the report “[Sandboxes for data: creating spaces for agile solutions across borders](#)” with the support of the United Kingdom’s Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The report provides a roadmap for policymakers on how to design and initiate cross-border sandboxes for data and explores how sandboxes could help address the cross-border nature of data value chains, complementing multilateral negotiations which can be lengthy in achieving consensus. The report kick-started the Datasphere Initiative’s work to examine the model of sandboxes to address the complex policy challenges of the digital age and how cross-border sandboxes for data could be realized and offer workable solutions for complex data challenges. The Datasphere Initiative initiated research on sandbox experiences around the world and facilitated a number of consultations with interested stakeholders in international forums (Examples: [D4D AI webinar series](#), [Internet Governance Forum](#), [G20](#), [UNCTAD](#)) and produced a number of thought pieces and articles explaining how sandboxes can be used for data governance challenges and has been contracted to provide sandbox expertise in a range to policy and research institutions.

The Datasphere Initiative is building a Global Sandboxes Forum to empower public and private actors by sharing experiences, building capacity, developing evidence-based guidance on how to implement sandboxes, and catalyzing concrete initiatives at the local, national and regional levels to responsibly unlock the value of data for people and the planet. An inaugural meeting was held as a side event during Brazil’s G20 2024 Presidency. Following this meeting, the Datasphere Initiative continued convening its global sandbox expert group, conducting research on emerging sandbox issues, developing guidelines and designing projects with interested partners. During the AI Action Summit in Paris, February 2025, the Datasphere Initiative launched the Sandboxes for AI: Tools for a New Frontier. The report presents concrete cases of sandboxes for AI and analyzes why regulators, companies and civil society should consider sandboxes for AI and lays down a blueprint for how to implement sandboxes, outlining a structured approach. It also presents a number of recommendations. In June 2025, the Datasphere Initiative will launch the first Sandbox Summer School providing an executive training program on how to sandbox and drive governance innovation.

As part of its Africa Sandboxes Forum over the past six months, the Datasphere Initiative (DI) has produced the first Africa Sandboxes Outlook and convened two landmark in-person Co-Creation Labs in Kigali and Abuja, bringing together diverse stakeholders to explore how sandbox models can be harnessed to support responsible, inclusive, and context-relevant AI and data governance in Africa. These labs surfaced promising ideas and critical challenges, from the need for local capacity-building to cross-border regulatory collaboration and ethical guardrails for AI experimentation.