

Service Finder application - invitation to quote

Summary

We are looking for a supplier to provide an open source application which will query an API for details of quality of life improvement services and present details that best match a person's location, circumstances and needs. The application should be user friendly on a touch screen device to enable a frontline worker to have a conversation with a client/patient and identify appropriate local support services.

The supplier should participate in frequent short meetings during which details of the API and how it is used by the application can be reviewed and refined. Meetings will normally be online and involve representatives of the Local Government Association (LGA), local authorities who publish the data, iStandUK, Porism (the LGA's technical partner) and suppliers of software that supports the standard API format for outputting service data.

We expect the software to be developed from 1st October 2019 to December 2019 (with main functionality completed in November) and thereafter be made available as a free-to-use hosted demonstrator until at least March 2021.

Background

The LGA in association with iStandUK (the local eGovernment Standards Body) is developing a second version of its Services Schema that defines the structure of data describing local services offered by public, voluntary and private organisations. The schema is closely aligned with Open Referral's Human Services Data Specification (HSDS).

As part of a 2019-20 national pilot project in partnership with the Department of Digital, Data, Media and Sport (DCMS), the LGA is working with three councils to gather data compliant with the specification. Other councils have compiled data in accordance with version 1 of the specification and their software suppliers are liaising with us to steer and then support version 2. We expect these suppliers to provide API calls which get data in a standard JSON format that we will agree and document.

Porism is coordinating work between other participants and will itself provide an API that feeds data in the standard format. Porism's API will also filter services returned according to geographic location and the needs and circumstances of an enquirer. Hence we expect to provide (along with many supporting web methods) a web method request of the format:

`/getService?latitude=nnnn&longitude=nnnn&circumstance=xxxx&need=xxxx`

The circumstance parameter(s) will be applied to test the suitability of a service and someone's eligibility for it.

The project will test the viability of using standard vocabularies of service types, circumstances and needs that have been developed for the LGA and are being reviewed by participating councils.

Controlled lists supported by the LGA are hosted and maintained at <https://standards.esd.org.uk/> they can be accessed via the LG Inform Plus API [Lists web method](#).

Application requirements

The required application should:

- Provide a means of ascertaining a user's location, needs and circumstances
- Request from the API a prioritised list of services with as much or little of the above information as the user provides
- Present information in an easily consumable format that enables the user to discover and go on and use their chosen service(s)
- Offer extra features to make the application appealing
- Work on desktop, tablet and mobile devices with the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge and Internet Explorer browsers.
- Be delivered as open source code hosted on GitHub

The supplier

The supplier should:

- be able to show similar applications that it has developed and are currently operating
- commit to working with the team to help refine the standard, apply it and respond to feedback on the application as it is developed
- commit to providing a (non-functioning) mockup of the application for presentation to the team during October 2019 and making reasonable modifications in response to feedback
- commit to hosting the application linked to one or more API endpoints (hosted by Porism and other suppliers) through to at least March 2021 or hand it over such that Porism or another provider identified by the LGA can host it.

Although the application is largely a proof of concept, it should be visually appealing and suitable for live use. Extensions to the application and its hosting outside the scope of this project can be pursued on a commercial basis directly with third parties.

Budget

The project has a budget of £10,000 + VAT for the work payable in two equal installments on presentation of a basic application and on sign-off by 31 December 2019.

How to make a proposal

If you would like to develop the application, please submit by email with subject “Proposal for service finder application” to support@esd.org.uk a document of no more than three pages stating:

- Your name and organisation (if any) details
- Confirmation that you can meet the requirements given above for the application and ways of working
- Additional features that you would like to trial or commit to
- Examples of prior similar work
- Your price for the work

Please submit by 5pm on ~~Friday 13th~~ Monday 16th September. A decision will be made by 5 pm on ~~Wednesday 18th~~ Thursday 19th September 2019. Work should start no later than 1 October 2019, but earlier if the supplier wishes.

If you have any questions, please email them with the subject “Proposal for service finder application - Question” to support@esd.org.uk by 5pm on Wednesday 11th September. The substance of questions and responses will be shared at the bottom of this document.

Please say if you’d still like to be informed of the work even if your quotation is not accepted.

Decision criteria

We will select a proposal on the basis of:

1. Understanding of the objectives of the project
2. Evidence of ability to deliver
3. Ability to work with the team
4. Extra features proposed beyond the basic requirements

See also

- Blog - [Not another directory of services!](#)
- [Service Directory schema version 2 - an overview](#)

Questions on the requirement

The substance of any questions and responses will be shared here as questions come in.

6 Sept 2019	What you do mean by “application”? We are looking for web pages that will load in web browsers on desktops, tablets and smartphones, not a native IOS or Android application
6 Sept 2019	What is the status of the data? We expect to transform and load some pre-existing data over the coming

	<p>month. Real data from pilot councils is likely to be received around the end of the calendar year.</p>
6 Sept 2019	<p>Will there be security on accessing the API?</p> <p>We are likely to use public private keys to limit access to the API, so we know who is using it and to manage the load.</p>
10 Sept 2019	<p>Will you extend the deadline for submissions given here to 5pm on Monday 16th September?</p> <p>Yes. This means that we cannot guarantee a decision before Thursday 19th September.</p>
11 Sept 2019	<p>Can I just ask whether the supplier can assume an API will be available e.g. I would want to ensure that the user could say they are free Tuesday afternoon so would need an API to only pull out those services. Or are you expecting the app to pull all the service info and then filter it themselves.</p> <p>Also does the API to pull out service-types from needs and circumstances allow several needs and circumstances to be used as an AND OR?</p> <p>Our aim is for the API is do as much filtering as possible. We may need to make compromises in the illustrative API developed initially. As a bare minimum, we expect to filter by location, one need and one circumstance.</p> <p>We hope the application supplier will feedback preferred extra filters and we'll do our best to accommodate these in the API. Extra filters might include more than one need and circumstance with boolean operators, timings, maximum fees, etc. We'd also like service directory suppliers who aim to support the standard directly to say what filters they recommend applying and what they can achieve.</p> <p>Please bear in mind that structured data on timings and fees may be patchy at first so we'll need to decide if we want to illustrate functionality that can't be applied to most records for now.</p>
11 Sept 2019	<p>Would you consider offshore developers?</p> <p>Yes, although there would be an advantage in being able to make a face-to-face presentation of the mockup. We do need a supplier with a good understanding of the requirement.</p>
11 Sept 2019	<p>Would you expect us to download the data?</p> <p>We expect services data to be requested live over the API and not stored by the application.</p>



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