

Call for Proposals

Consultancy to Develop a Costed Digital Government Roadmap to Operationalize the Government of Sierra Leone's Digital Development Strategy

30 March 2022



About DIAL

The Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL) is a “think, do, replicate” tank that investigates digital transformation best practice at the national, regional, and global level. DIAL combines practical research with evidence-based advocacy to identify which digital efforts work, package them as re-usable solutions, and encourage their use. DIAL is funded through a collaboration among the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the United Kingdom’s Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCDO) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and hosted within the UN Foundation in Washington, D.C.

In its new [Strategic Plan](#) period 2021-2025, DIAL is providing more direct support to national governments, beginning with one country in 2021, to enable more low- and middle-income countries to embark on and accelerate a whole of society approach to digital transformation and responsible data use. DIAL believes that if more countries can demonstrate that their digital and data transformation investments improve service delivery, then new countries can accelerate their own digital transformation and responsible data use journeys.

Background

Recognizing the opportunities in the digital era, the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) set a high-level vision in [2019-2023 Medium Term National Development Plan](#). Further, inspired by the [Principles of Digital Development](#), the promise to [Leave No One Behind](#) and the respect for human rights, GoSL sought to lay a foundation for better institutional coordination and implementation of the country’s digital transformation initiatives by developing National Digital Development Policy 2021, which was approved in 2021. The updated policy focuses on the enhanced growth facilitated by digital tools as critical enablers to make Sierra Leone a middle-level income country by 2039.

Considering the potential of transformative technologies—notably the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, and blockchain—and their impacts on the digital data as espoused in the 2021 National Digital Development Policy (NDDP), Sierra Leone will continue to witness a proliferation of data-driven digital platforms and will aim to unlock the power of data to spur innovation, improve the quality of public services, create new industries, and reshape existing ones.

The consultant will work with GoSL, DIAL, and Smart Africa Alliance to scope, draft and cost a Digital Government Roadmap to operationalize the National Digital Development Strategy (NDDS), awaiting Cabinet approval. The roadmap will comprise an evidence-based costed plan which outlines the key strategies, packages of interventions/implementations and expected results, targets, and milestones towards the achievement of a digital economy in Sierra Leone, with digital government as a key driver. Together with DIAL and Smart Africa, the consultant will work with GoSL’s Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) to convene and consult with key stakeholders, collect a broad range of input from government practitioners, the public and private-sector experts, prioritize strategic actions for digital government, and develop a costed Digital Government Roadmap (DGR).

Considering procurement is an integral part of the transformation process and acknowledging that procurement of digital technologies is distinct from procurement of other public goods and services, DIAL developed a [Procurement Guide](#) to assist governments in their digital transformation journeys. In developing the roadmap, the consultant is expected to integrate the salient learnings from the Guide in conceptualizing the “how-to” of the implementation of the DGR.

Further, the roadmap shall include a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan with key outcomes and outputs, indicators, targets, tools, and measurement plan to enable the Government to track performance and progress during the implementation of this roadmap. In developing the MEL plan, the consultant will build on an existing MEL framework that was developed alongside the NDDS focusing on evaluation and on outcomes rather than outputs in the assessment of NDDS objectives.

For the NDDS MEL framework, mostly international data sources were used since the document focused mostly on macro areas. The consultant will be expected to ensure that consistent definitions are used and incorporate local data sources and specific data collection for the DGR MEL plan. DIAL has developed an [Indicator Library](#) of critical data points and publicly available data on various aspects of the digital ecosystem at the country level, which DIAL expects the consultant to (where possible) leverage in the development of their research methodology.

These indicators are based on a range of frameworks, indices, and datasets; for example, the World Bank's Digital Economy for Africa (DE4A) Diagnostic Assessment and the [GSMA's Mobile Connectivity Index](#). The consultant is expected to use this indicator library as a foundation to develop and evolve the baseline assessment tool, as well as be open to sourcing data from other organizations and collaborating with other organizations conducting their own assessments in Sierra Leone.

Scope of Work

Objectives

The main objective of this project is to develop a DGR to operationalize, and build on, the focus areas of the 2021 NDDP (Digital Infrastructure and Access; Digital Skills and Human Capital Development; Digital Government; E-commerce and Digital Financial Services; Emerging Technologies including streamlined and efficient acquisition of digital technologies across government, Innovation and Digital Entrepreneurship; Data Governance and Cybersecurity) and the 2022 NDDS. The roadmap should include the following features:

- **Costing and Pricing:** The roadmap interventions should be broken down to specific activities and sub-activities to facilitate the costing process. The consultant should work with relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government/Sectoral Focal Points (MDAs) to establish a baseline estimate of current budget allocations to develop an estimated budget envelope, identify funding gap and estimate resources and costs. Develop a costing tool for government to be delivered in the format of a spreadsheet that identifies the total cost of the DGR by activity/project by year of planned implementation. The tool should be easily customizable to enable GoSL to forecast costs and make strategic allocation decisions. The consultant should highlight key processes followed, including costing assumptions and parameters.
- **MEL Plan** to monitor progress against delivery of the roadmap. The MEL plan will also support decision making on the general status of the implementation of the DGR, grounded on evidence-based data collected from proposed interventions. The MEL plan will ensure effective and efficient implementation of the priority actions and interventions at all levels to inform whether changes need to be made to strategic areas of interventions and their respective activities

Activities

- **Conduct Secondary Research (Three (3) Weeks)**
 - Conduct an in-depth analysis of relevant country documents and extract digital government goals and linkages to advise development of the roadmap and ensure strategic alignment of sector and country priorities. Key documents should include: [Medium Term National Development Plan 2019-2023](#), the 2021 NDDP, the 2022 NDDS, the [2019 National Innovation and Digital Strategy \(NIDS\)](#), and the [2021 World Bank Digital Economy Diagnostic for Sierra Leone](#).
 - Conduct an in-depth analysis of relevant documents developed by regional and global institutions and identify trends and opportunity areas for the GoSL to align the digital government goals with those of neighboring countries, regional blocs, and the rest of the continent. Key documents should include [Smart Africa Digital Economy Blueprint for Africa](#) and [African Union Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa \(2020-2030\)](#).

- Conduct an in-depth analysis of global data and digital transformation trends and best practices in digital government and identify approaches to ensure that the roadmap strategically sets GoSL on the path of global competitiveness while addressing local challenges including containment measures around Covid-19, Ebola, and future epidemics / pandemics, if any and public procurement of digital technologies. Key documents should include the Procurement Guide developed by DIAL.
- Compile an inception report that includes a synthesis of the secondary research and outlines proposed approach and present to DIAL and MIC for review and sign-off.
- **Conduct Primary Research (Two (2) Weeks)**
 - Develop a stakeholder engagement matrix identifying key individuals, ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) and organizations across the entire digital ecosystem to underpin a consultative, holistic, country-led, and context-specific approach to development of the roadmap.
 - Schedule and conduct key informant interviews – public and private sector players, consultative workshops, and technical working groups in Freetown to gather input and feedback from key stakeholders which will be incorporated into the costed roadmap.
- **Draft the DGR and MEL Plan (Four (4) Weeks)**
 - Consolidate secondary and primary research outputs to develop a comprehensive digital government roadmap (initial internal draft).
 - Submit draft report for review and input by GoSL, DIAL and Smart Africa.
 - Revise initial internal draft report, incorporating feedback and input from GoSL, DIAL and Smart Africa and develop first external draft of the roadmap.
 - Develop and submit the Digital Government Roadmap MEL plan.
- **Convene and Facilitate Stakeholder Consultations and Validation Workshops (Four (4) Weeks)**
 - Organize and convene a validation workshop in Freetown, Sierra Leone under MIC guidance, to present the initial external draft report to stakeholders across government, private sector, and development organizations to get cross-sectoral input on the roadmap and accompanying MEL plan; document proceedings and outputs of the consultation workshop in a stakeholder engagement report.
 - Incorporate stakeholder feedback from consultation workshop into the draft report and compile second draft of the roadmap and MEL plan.
 - Develop and populate the DGR costing model.
 - Present the second draft of the DGR, MEL plan, and costing model to a technical committee comprising of representatives drawn from different MDAs across government for in-depth review and validation.
- **Submit Final Draft of the DGR to MIC (Three (3) Weeks)**
 - Incorporate and consolidate feedback and input from technical government committee into a third draft of the comprehensive DGR and submit to MIC for review.
 - Incorporate any final amendments and/input from MIC and undertake copy-editing.
 - Submit final costed DGR to MIC.

Deliverables

DIAL is seeking an experienced firm or individual consultant to conduct the study and develop the following deliverables for use by DIAL, Smart Africa, and GoSL. Timelines begin from the contract execution date.

Stage	Deliverable	Due Date
1	Inception Report	Week 3
2	Stakeholder Engagement Report	Week 5
3	First Draft of the Costed DGR	Week 9
	First Draft of the MEL Plan	
4	Stakeholder Engagement Report	Week 13
	Second Draft of the DGR and MEL Plans	
	DGR Costing Model	
5	Third Draft of the DGR (incorporating MEL plan)	Week 16
	Revised DGR Costed Model	
	Final Draft of the Costed DGR	

Project Period of Performance

Work will start on or around **1 June 2022** and should be completed by **30 September 2022** at the latest. During this time, we anticipate a close working relationship with the chosen vendor, which will also include regular discussions of Smart Africa and GoSL.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposal submissions must be created in Microsoft Word in 12-point font and must include the following components (respondents may include additional elements as needed):

- **Proposed Approach**
 - Demonstrate understanding of GoSL’s digital journey and country context.
 - Demonstrate understanding of the project objectives and activities.
 - Describe stakeholder identification and engagement approach, methodologies, and workshop/interview deliverable formats.
 - Describe how you plan to include the Principles for Digital Development and Leave No One Behind Agenda.
 - Describe costing and pricing approach, method of allocation and assumptions.
 - Describe your understanding and plan to integrate procurement process in the development of Digital Government Roadmap.
 - Describe project management approach, including suggested timeline based on the proposal contained herein, as well as any recommended updates, including timing and level of effort on the part of the DIAL team e.g., to participate in scoping and requirements, workshops, and validation, etc.
 - Describe MEL approach, including data collection methods, how you plan to include indices of Digital Transformation Indicator Library (amongst others), identify and incorporate national data sources and targets.

- **Staff and Team Structure**
 - Identify the team structure including roles, responsibilities, and level of effort of staff and any sub-contracted resources.
 - The team should have at least one MEL specialist.
 - Provide rationale and background on any sub-contracted firms or individuals, as well as any gender considerations in the formulation of your team.
 - Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined.
 - DIAL will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors; however, we reserve the right to refuse the subcontractors you have selected.
 - Please include a description of how the team will work virtually with DIAL staff across different time zones.
- **Relevant Experience**
 - Demonstrate firm and key participants’ experience relative to the scope of work through submission of CVs and/or resumes.
 - Specifically, please highlight your team’s experience with related research in digital transformation and digital government, as well as provide links to publications and/or thought pieces.
 - Provide at least three (3) examples of resources produced for donors and/or similar research conducted by your firm.
 - Demonstrate experience working with national governments if applicable (please specify which donors), especially in the African content.
- **Budget**
 - Provide a detailed budget, including assumptions and costs and level of effort for staff and subcontractors.
 - Provide professional fees budget, including cost and level of effort per staff member.
 - Provide separate line items for any sub-contractors.
 - Provide expenses budget by type of expenses, e.g., travel, research, etc. Travel estimates should indicate the anticipated destination and duration of each trip.
 - Price quotes must be inclusive. If your process excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.
- **References**
 - Provide names and email addresses of at least two (2) prior clients willing to discuss their experiences working with you.

Submission Format

- All submissions must be delivered electronically with the subject line “Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL) Sierra Leone Digital Government Roadmap Submission – Company Name.”
- Please send all proposal submissions to RFP@digitalimpactalliance.org
- In case respondents encounter a problem submitting, please contact Theresa Nyamupachitu at tnyamupachitu@digitalimpactalliance.org.

Submission Timeline

- All submissions are due on **Friday, April 15th, 2022, by 5:00 PM ET**
- Questions and clarifications will be communicated to respondents on an ongoing basis
- The selected respondent will be notified by **April 25th, 2022**

Questions and Answers

Please forward any questions to RFP@digitalimpactalliance.org. DIAL will make every effort to respond to questions within 24 hours and may choose to share the questions and answers from these bilateral discussions with other Respondents.

Evaluation Process

DIAL will review all written proposals and may request a phone or in-person interview and/or updated submission to address questions or provide clarification. The selection decision will be based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Score (100)
Knowledge of DIAL Objectives (10 points)	
The proposed approach shows an understanding of DIAL, the digital transformation ecosystem and promotes responsible use of data.	5
The proposed approach appreciates that data is at the heart of digital government transformation, demonstrates application of Principles of Digital Development and advances the Leave No One Behind agenda.	5
Subject Matter Expertise (40 points)	
Appropriate and demonstrable understanding of the whole of government/society approaches and government enterprise architecture	10
Demonstrable understanding of digital government and digital economy initiatives and trends in Africa.	10
Appropriate level of understanding of government functions at National and local levels, both from political and technical perspectives.	10
Demonstrable understanding in costing and pricing public sector services in Africa	10
Project Management (15 points)	
Clear description of team roles and interaction with DIAL	5
Achievable action plan that will deliver the project on time and on budget	5
Thoughtful risk identification and mitigation strategies	5
Capabilities and Experience (25 points)	
Demonstrated firm and team member experience with similar projects in Africa	10
Demonstrable experience in costing and pricing similar government projects in Africa	10
Demonstrates ability to access necessary resources and knowledge centers to be successful	5
Value (10 points)	
The proposed pricing is within budget	5
The proposed pricing demonstrates a competitive price and good value for money.	5

Intent and Disclaimer

This Call for Proposals is made with the intent to identify a consultant to deliver results as described in this Call for Proposals. Issuance of this Call for Proposals does not obligate DIAL to award a resulting contract and any costs incurred in preparation of a proposal is the sole responsibility of the respondent.

In submitting a proposal, the respondent certifies that information contained therein is truthful and accurate to the best of the respondent's ability. Should any information later be found to not be in-line with this certification, DIAL reserves the right to terminate any resulting contract(s) and/or select an alternative contractor. DIAL assumes it can be confident in the Consultant's ability to deliver the product(s) and/or service(s) proposed in response to this Call for Proposals.

If DIAL amends the Call for Proposals, copies of any such amendments will be sent to all respondents.

DIAL is partially funded by Sida with a commitment to women and non-US owned organizations, DIAL will consider all proposals in consideration of the selection criteria but will give preference to women and non-U.S.-owned businesses.

Contract Terms

The UN Foundation/DIAL will negotiate contract terms upon selection. A copy of the contract terms and conditions will be provided upon pre-selection. All contracts are subject to review by UN Foundation's Business Services Budget Reporting (BSBR) team. Once a draft contract is reviewed by BSBR, DIAL's Program Administrator will contact the Vendor. The project will start upon the execution of the contract. The contract will outline terms and conditions, scope, budget, and applicable flow-down terms prescribed by the funding partners and the UN Foundation.

Release

Consultant understands that DIAL has chosen to solicit a Call for Proposals for consulting services, and that consultant's response does not guarantee that DIAL will enter a new contract with consultant or continue any current contract(s) with consultant.

Consultant agrees that DIAL may, in its sole discretion:

- Amend or cancel the Call for Proposals, in whole or in part, at any time
- Extend the deadline for submitting responses
- Determine whether a response does or does not substantially comply with the requirements of the Call for Proposals
- Waive any minor irregularity, informality or nonconformance with the provisions or procedures of the Call for Proposals
- Negotiate with all consultants UNF deems acceptable
- Issue multiple awards
- Copy the responses

This Call for Proposals is not an offer to contract. DIAL assumes no responsibility for Consultant's cost to respond to this Call for Proposals. All responses become the property of DIAL.

The Consultant, by submitting a response to this Call for Proposals, waives all right to protest or seek any legal remedies whatsoever regarding any aspect of this Call for Proposals.

Consultant represents that it has responded to the Call for Proposals with complete honesty and accuracy. If facts provided in Consultant's response change, Consultant agrees to supplement its response in writing with any deletions, additions, or changes within ten (10) days of the changes. Consultant will do this, as necessary, throughout the selection process. Consultant understands that any material misrepresentation, including omissions, may disqualify it from consideration for a contract award.

Consultant understands it may receive proprietary and confidential information from DIAL during the Call for Proposals process ("Confidential Information"). Consultant agrees to not use Confidential Information for any purpose other than its participation in the Call for Proposals process and to not reveal Confidential Information directly or indirectly to any other person, entity, or organization without the prior written consent of DIAL. Consultant further agrees to exercise all reasonable precautions to maintain the proprietary and confidential nature of Confidential Information where it can best demonstrate its value and capacity to deliver ecosystem-wide, meaningful value.

Intellectual Property Considerations

DIAL's mission is to create public goods that enable a more efficient digital economy for everyone's common benefit. To serve this goal in partnership with other organizations and individuals, DIAL funds the development of important hardware and software, databases, computer protocols, research, and useful industry standards.

Intellectual property (IP) is at the heart of all things creative and inventive. DIAL's IP policy is shaped by our key funders' i.e., Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the United Kingdom's Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCDO) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) policies. DIAL's work products thus must comply with BMGF's "Open Access" policy. Further, any IP DIAL funds should be licensed for free use worldwide. This is accomplished through open source and Creative Commons licensing and by open standards, unencumbered by restrictive copyrights and patents.

The scope of work for this project and deliverables will, as such, abide by DIAL's IP policy and its donor's compliance requirements. If special considerations are required, DIAL will negotiate those on a case-by-case basis with selected vendors.

As required by its donors, DIAL is committed to "Global Access." As such, DIAL will ensure that knowledge and information gained from any project and any deliverable produced will be prompt and broadly disseminated under a creative commons license, and any funded developments will be made available at an affordable price to:

- People most in need within developing countries and /or
- In support of the U.S. educational system and public libraries, as applicable.

DIAL will take into consideration consultants' intellectual property issues as part of the selection process.