

Request for Proposals

Services of a Firm to Develop Digital Sierra Leone e-Portal

June 2, 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, the United Kingdom’s Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCDO) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and hosted within the United Nations 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

In December 2019, DIAL formalized its partnership with the Smart Africa Alliance for a Digital Economy Initiative to support Smart Africa Member States on national digital transformation and responsible data use efforts. In April 2021, DIAL partnered with the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to provide support for digital government and help accelerate the creation of an inclusive digital economy.

GoSL is keen on leveraging ICT to deliver quality services to its citizens. This commitment is reflected through the development of the National Digital Development Policy (NDDP) and National Digital Development Strategy (NDDS) with a vision to transform Sierra Leone into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

The [Sierra Leone Digital Economy Diagnostic](#)¹ report released by the World Bank in 2020 revealed that although the government has digitized some citizen centric public services, these services are not available through a one-stop-shop portal.

The portal will serve as the lighthouse for the service-seekers for Sierra Leone citizens and foreign residents. Through the portal or the online platform, the citizens of Sierra Leone will be equipped with a tool to simplify access to public services thereby reducing the time, cost, and number of visits (TCV) required to access an online service efficiently, reliably, and securely.

Examples of government one-stop-shop portals that caught our eye:

- <https://www.ghana.gov.gh/> : This website provides a simple interface to access government services such as passport, immigration service, birth and death registration etc. It is mobile-friendly and performs well on a low-bandwidth device
- <https://www.ecitizen.go.ke/> : A sleek and dynamic website with a good categorization of online government services
- <https://www.govt.nz/> : A simple and easy to navigate website, ranked amongst the top 10 e-government websites
- <https://www.gov.uk/> : Simple design and content with a list of basic topics

¹ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35805>

The primary objective of the Digital Sierra Leone e-Portal is to increase the availability of, and broaden access to, the information, content, and services that the GoSL makes available online to the general public and GoSL employees. Many different clients and customers stand to benefit from easier access to GoSL information: Sierra Leone citizens (both inside and outside the country), foreign investors, potential visitors to Sierra Leone, and government employees themselves are just a few examples. We are looking for a vendor with the necessary experience and skills to successfully develop a new website that is a modern, highly attractive, and built with responsive web design.

DIAL is seeking proposals from highly qualified, experienced website development service providers to design, develop, deploy, and maintain the official, public-facing GoSL website. The chosen strategic partner must be a service provider that has experience in managing government website design projects, and expertise with best practices regarding:

- Successful website design
- User experience and usability testing
- Information architecture
- Website development and deployment
- Content strategy
- Search engine optimization
- Responsive design
- Post-delivery maintenance and updates contracts of at least six (6) months' duration to ensure an effective transition of website to GoSL and to allow for bug fixes, security updates, content updates, and trainings of parties responsible for subsequent site management

Scope of Work

The selected vendor (the 'Consultant') will execute an online platform that is accessible to the general public. This platform shall provide at least five (5) government services with corresponding subservices. The platform shall be built to ensure a fast and secure environment for the GoSL to render services to its citizenry and general public. Major components of the portal are divided into the following:

1. Web Application (Customer-Facing)

- E-Service Inclusions:
 - Registration / Login
 - Scheduling / calendar system
 - Payment integration through available local providers
 - Form Submission system
 - Real-time status of application
 - Notification via SMS and email
 - Dynamic Checklist
 - Chatbots
 - GPS, maps
 - Scheduling system

2. Web Application (Admin Portal)

- Portal Inclusions:
 - Content Management System (custom framework)
 - User Management
 - Reports and Analytics (open for customization of fields)

3. Core Development

- Access devices (tablets, phones) with varying levels of bandwidth
- Service Tracker
- Multi-Layered Dashboards
- Workflow Engine
- Assisted Model Integration
- Third-Party System Integration
- News and Information Section: Online announcements, live announcements, etc.
- Knowledge Management Section to feature knowledge products, online training videos
- Responsive, Multi-Platform Design: Accessible on desktops, kiosks, mobile
- Multi-End-User: Processes must be accessible by all authorized stakeholders (citizens, government staff and officials, and other approvers and certifiers)
- Multi-Permissioned: Within the roles, multiple levels of permission on the platform need to be created to ensure that users are able to fulfill the process requirements
- User Acceptance Testing (UAT)
- Audit Trail

4. Support and Maintenance

- Application Level
- Infrastructure Level
- Knowledge Transfer and Capacity Building, including a training-of-trainers (TOT) on the use of the entire e-portal's services and features

5. Infrastructure Requirements

The firm will provide a technical recommendation on the following, with respect to the development of the portal:

- Web/Application Server
- Database Server
- Storage Server

6. Service Digitization and Validation

During the service digitization and validation, the firm will:

- Analyze existing systems (i.e., online services provided by the national government) and identify integration scope to be followed to integrate with the Digital Sierra Leone e-Portal
- Build the services and integrate to access point and systems in accordance with the service profiling documents
- Check functional and non-functional issues for each service in terms of service name, office name, wing name, desk information, application form, payment, attachments, back-office integration
- Conduct service specific user acceptance testing and adjust feedback. The firm shall develop the components needed for the portal

Website Requirements

1. Access

There is a primary registration and login module for the citizens to get into the system and a separate login module for the Government employees. Primary registration for citizens will include local mobile number or e-mail address with password or a one-time PIN (OTP). At the moment, the Digital Sierra Leone e-Portal will provide citizen access to all the services.

2. Service Tracker

The service tracker provides updated information about the applications made by the user. Through the portal, the user simply logs into his/her account to view the status of their application.

3. Workflow Engine

Workflow Engine will complete the full-service delivery eco-system maintaining three basics which are: application-receive, application-processing and Decision making regarding each service. First, service application of citizen will be received through the system. Application will be processed through desk routing. Application will route responsible government officers' desk to desk through the system and each officer will be able to attach files and provide their decisions through their panel.

4. Integration

Vendor will provide technical assistance to integrate the following services:

- Web Chatbots
- SMS Gateway and Notifications (including email notifications)
- Citizen National Identity (if deployed)
- Payment Gateway: Adheres with the appropriate governance, policy, disclosure, and privacy compliance (if deployed)

5. Conform with the WCAG 2.0 or 2.1

The development feature must consider and conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 that defines the creation of web content that make it more accessible to people with disabilities (PWDS). Accessibility involves a wide range of disabilities, including visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, language, learning, and neurological disabilities.

Deliverables Timetable

The following table reflects the anticipated deliverables and schedule required for producing the microsite. While each deadline will be subject to discussion between DIAL and the Consultant, the Consultant must work with and ensure the DIAL team that the project is on budget, on scope, an on time. These deliverables will be adjusted as the scope of work is agreed with the selected vendor.

#	Deliverable/Outputs	Effective Working Days
1	Kick-off meeting	1 day
2	Inception Report	10 days
3	Final Wireframe delivered	10 days
4	Content development complete	30 days
5	Beta testing of website complete	25 days
6	Website launch complete	10 days
7	Handover and support contract complete	60 days
Total Number of Effective Working Days		Up to 146 days

Period of Performance

Consultant contract will begin on or around **August 1, 2022**. During this time, we anticipate a close working relationship with the chosen vendor.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposal submissions, which may be created in Word, PowerPoint, or a combination of the two, must include the following components. Respondents may include additional elements as needed.

- **Proposed approach:** Describe how you would approach the deliverables and related activities in the previous section. Please also provide:
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the type of page DIAL is seeking to create and the types of content we are anticipating.
 - Plan for collaboration with DIAL. What support do you anticipate needing from us?
 - How would your team go about tackling challenges that might arise?
 - Cutting room floor (optional): Inevitably there will be efforts you would have liked to have included in this proposal but did not think were feasible given time and budget constraints. We would like to know what some of those were. This section is optional.
- **Staff and team structure:** Provide some background on your firm, identify the team structure, including roles, responsibilities, and key staff. Please disclose any plans to use third-party vendors.
- **Relevant experience:** Evidence of similar engagements: demonstrate firm and key participants' experience relative to the scope of work, providing at least three examples of similar work. What was successful about these projects? Please include examples of audio-visual work and interactive graphics.
- **Budget:** Provide us with an expected timeline, project hours, and cost for your team to substantially complete each phase, deliverable, and sub-deliverable.
 - Provide daily/hourly rates for all key staff.
 - Detail any additional costs or fees.
- **References:** Provide names and email addresses of at least two 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) Digital Sierra Leone Portal– 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, June 24th, 2022, by 5:00PM ET**. It is preferred that submissions should not exceed **12 pages** in length, but DIAL will not penalize submissions that are above or below this range
- Questions and clarifications will be communicated to respondents on an ongoing basis
- The selected respondent will be notified by **July 1, 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. In case respondents encounter a problem submitting, please contact Theresa Nyamupachitu at tnyamupachitu@digitalimpactalliance.org.

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 evaluation committee will use the following criteria to evaluate candidates' response. The selection decision will be based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Score (1-5)
1. Approach	
The proposal clearly outlines the way in which the vendor or consultant intends on building a microsite and building a relationship with DIAL.	
2. Subject Matter Expertise	
The selected vendor has experience working with diverse and ideally international audiences, as well as with driving engagement and awareness around global issues and/or organizations	
Appropriate level of understanding of the key stakeholders of the microsite viewership and dynamics within the ecosystem	
Experience building website and microsites for small nonprofit organizations that are managed by non-technical experts	
3. Project Management	
Demonstrated understanding of their proposed scope of work, including overall project structure and how their scope of work relates to other consultants	
Achievable action plan that will deliver the project on time and on budget	
Effective staffing and/or team structure	
Thoughtful risk identification and mitigation strategies	
4. Capabilities and Experience	
Demonstrated selected vendor experience with similar projects	
Team members with demonstrated skills and experience with similar projects and activities	
High-quality sub-contractors and external advisors, if relevant	
Appropriate access to resources and knowledge centers	
5. Value	
The proposed pricing is within budget	
The proposed pricing demonstrates a competitive price and good value for the money	
Development and Emerging Market Experience	
6. Mission	
Preference for selected vendors or organizations based in LCDs	
Preference for selected vendors founded or lead by women	
Preference for selected vendors with staff based in target countries where work will be done	

Intent and Disclaimer

This RFP is made with the intent to identify a consultant to deliver results as described in this RFP. Issuance of this RFP 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 RFP.

If DIAL amends the RFP, 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-US 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 Manager 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 proscribed by the funding partners and the UN Foundation.

Release

Consultant understands that DIAL has chosen to solicit an RFP for consulting services, and that consultant's response does not guarantee that DIAL will enter into 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 RFP, 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 RFP
- Waive any minor irregularity, informality or nonconformance with the provisions or procedures of the RFP
- Negotiate with all consultants UNF deems acceptable
- Issue multiple awards
- Copy the responses

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

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

Consultant represents that it has responded to the RFP 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 RFP process ("Confidential Information"). Consultant agrees to not use Confidential Information for any purpose other than its participation in the RFP 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 (IP) 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., the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Foreign, Commonwealth and Development 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 these projects and deliverables will, as such, abide by DIAL's intellectual property (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.