

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2206

Title: Contract with digital agency for onsite user research

Executive Summary:

The Digital team in the GLA is responsible for delivering a number of both internally transformative and externally facing digital services. A vital part of delivering fit for purpose digital products is to repeatedly test them with users during development. This is a key part of Agile delivery, the core ways of working advocated by the Government Digital Service (GDS) and is Point One of the Local Government Digital Service Standard. This decision form asks for approval for expenditure from the GLA Technology Group for a contract with a digital agency to provide a user researcher to be based at City Hall to undertake this important role.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Resources approves:

Expenditure of up to £130,000 on a one-year contract with a digital agency to provide an onsite, full-time user researcher. The expenditure will fund both the staff resource and other resources such as the use of user research laboratories.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities. It has my approval.

Name: Martin Clarke

Position: Executive Director, Resources

Signature:



Date:

3. 7. 18

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The development of digital services requires the insights gained from the gathering, analysis and communication of high quality research with representatives of the real users of the product. Point Two of the GDS Service Standard and Point One of the Local Government Digital Service Standard both specify that regular user research must be undertaken in order to achieve a successful and usable product.
- 1.2 Currently the Digital team works with user researchers on an ad-hoc basis and products are often only tested with real users once during development, and rarely at all before development starts or after release. This can have an impact on achieving the desired policy outcome.
- 1.3 Current user research and testing has to be arranged individually with an external supplier. This is sub optimal in terms of time and cost.
- 1.4 This proposal is to work with TfL Procurement to appoint a consultancy organisation through the Crown Commercial Service Digital Marketplace framework. That company will then provide the GLA Digital team with full time user research resource based onsite at City Hall and other resources as required. Please see associated Request for Procurement as Appendix one.
- 1.5 This will enable:
 - A saving of effort in onboarding short-term researchers to projects
 - E.g. in 2017/18 we procured user research on five separate occasions
 - A centralised collection of user research insights from Londoners
 - A more coordinated planning of research between projects
 - A common well understood process used across all digital product development
 - User research to take place during the discovery period of projects (when requirements and needs are gathered)
 - A systematic way that the outputs of user research are communicated to product owners and stakeholders both within the GLA and to relevant external parties
 - Training of GLA staff in user research tools and techniques in order for the Digital team and Technology Group to become more self-sufficient in this area.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 To recruit an agency to supply a full time experienced user research resource to work across a variety of digital projects.
- 2.2 The benefits of this approach include providing cover during planned and unplanned absences, access to knowledge and tools from other specialists in the agency and access to agency resources such as interview labs. Further, it was agreed that this method provides the maximum amount of future flexibility.

2.3 Mandatory experience:

- Working with multidisciplinary Agile teams
- Owning every stage of research including session planning, script preparation and undertaking sessions as well as compiling and delivering results to a wide variety of stakeholders
- Leading on recruitment of research candidates
- Working with research candidates spanning a range of demographics ensuring minority / hard to reach groups, such as those with accessibility needs, are represented
- Working with internal organisational staff and the general public
- Working in a wide range of contexts including dedicated labs, guerilla testing and onsite research (businesses, user homes, etc)
- Usability testing with a wide variety of prototypes (paper outlines, clickable demos, early software deliveries)
- Use of a wide range of user research tools and techniques (e.g. customer experience mapping, etc)
- Delivering actionable user research insights in every stage of a project including discovery, delivery and post go-live (for continual iterative improvement)
- Able to present findings and related design / business recommendations and customer insights to senior decision makers
- Providing value-for-money user research with limited budgets
- Training other members of staff in user research tools and techniques
- Keen to evangelise user centred design principles best practice within the GLA

2.4 Advantageous experience:

- Development of organisational user research strategy
- Development of product team user research plans
- Worked in a public sector context
- Creating a range of user research briefing and reporting templates
- Working with user research software tools such as Silverback or Usability Studio
- Setting up new user research labs
- Running and collating remote research sessions over the internet
- High quality survey writing and analysis
- Knowledge of human factors and ethnography

2.5 There will also be an advantage for any agency applying for this contract to have their own London-based user research labs that could be easily booked by the onsite researcher.

3. Equality comments

3.1 Under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act), as a public authority the Mayor/GLA must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any

conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics under the Equality Act are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership status (the duty in respect of this last characteristic is to eliminate unlawful discrimination only).

3.2 Any collaboration agreement and third party contracts entered into by the GLA will be consistent with these duties, and with the Mayor's strategies and plans, including associated equality impact assessments.

3.2 No adverse impacts are identified for the proposed contract described in this document.

4. Other considerations

4.1 Project risks include:

- Supplier personnel not fit for purpose: Mitigated by entering into a contract with an agency which can supply multiple members of their staff if required. We would work with them to ensure replacement with an appropriate alternative, and include provision for this in the service contract.
- Poor response to RfP, unable to attract supplier: Mitigated by ensuring all procurement documentation is clear and concise. We are flexible to suggestions from suppliers as how to meet this requirement as long as they cover our key needs. We envisage bidders will be attracted to working with City Hall.

4.2 Internal consultations will take place before the completion of the Request for Procurement and the final contract including:

- Technology Group - to ensure that they on board with how the researcher will work with the development of digital products
- Intelligence Unit - to ensure that the planned work of the researcher compliments their research work on behalf of the GLA.

4.3 Success measures will include the following.

- Improvement in the quality of digital products produced by the GLA by furthering our ability to gather initial user needs and test products during development. To be measured by satisfaction surveys with end users.
- Improvement in the delivery speed of digital products that could otherwise have been blocked by lack of access to external user research professionals. To be measured by tracking product roadmaps.
- Improvement in the skills of appropriate members of the Digital team, Technology Group and others who will gain knowledge of user research tools and techniques. To be measured by their ability to organise and run their own research sessions.
- Increase in understanding of end user needs by digital product managers and senior stakeholders. To be measured by internal feedback.
- To increase usage of high quality user centred design. To be measured by feedback from appropriate industry experts such as the Government Digital Service.

- To facilitate the ability of the GLA to produce digital products that pass the Local Government Digital Service Standard. To be measured by taking products through reviews run by external parties (such as other local government digital teams).

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 The proposed one-year contract has no minimum spend and is effectively a call off contract for a value of up to £130,000; thus, meaning the GLA will draw down on services on a 'as and when required' basis and will not exceed the £130,000 contract limit. £50,000 of the contract costs will be funded from the existing Technology Group Revenue budget for 2018-19. The balance of up to £80,000 will be funded by local budgets within the GLA as and when individual Teams require new or improved digital products and services.
- 5.2 If the value of services and products exceeds the £130,000 contract limit for the one-year period, a contract variation will be required and be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Sections 1-5 of this report indicate that:

- the decisions requested of the Director (in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code) concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development or the promotion of the improvement of the environment in Greater London; and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:
 - Pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
 - Consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
 - Consult with appropriate bodies.

- 6.2 In taking the decisions requested, the Director must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty; namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

- 6.3 Officers have indicated in this report that:

- The framework under which it is proposed the services required are to be "called-off" can be used by the GLA by virtue of its procurement by Crown Prosecution Service on behalf of bodies such as the GLA in accordance with relevant procurement law; and
- The services required have been procured fully in accordance with the requirements of that framework.

- 6.4 Officers must ensure that appropriate “call-off” documentation is put in place and executed by the successful bidder(s) and the GLA before the commencement of the services.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
RfP sent to potential suppliers	02/07/18
Written submissions	02/07/18 - 13/07/18
Interviews and decision	16/07/18 - 27/07/18
Sign-off Inform winning vendor	27/07/18
User researcher starts on site	06/08/18

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 – Request for Procurement

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

Note: This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer
to confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

David Durant has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Emma Strain has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

Corporate Investment Board:

The Corporate Investment Board reviewed this proposal on 2 July 2018.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature

M. D. Allen

Date

3.7.18

