

## FCDO Strategic Partner for Digital and Data

### Overview:

FCDO is looking to bring on one strategic partner to help build out the capacity of the digital function and to support the use of digital products across FCDO (Digital), and one strategic partner to help deliver an ambitious programme of improvements in our management and use of data across the enterprise (Data).

FCDO is planning to host an event at 2pm on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 to inform the market about our upcoming requirements and get some feedback from the market on the intended commercial model, route to market and the feasibility of the requirement.

### Commercial details

- Route to market not yet determined (likely to be CCS framework further competition).
- Expected to run as a single procurement with two lots, one for the digital partner and one for the data partner.
- Expected 2 +1 year contract duration.
- Expected budget Digital £2m, Data £3-4m.
- Invitation to tender expected to be published in early August of 2023.
- Target contract award September 2023.

### Partner capabilities:

The partner(s) will need:

- A pool of people with in-depth technical and delivery understanding.
- Capacity to surge using experienced practitioners.
- A track record of upskilling in-house teams using knowledge transfer and upskilling approaches.
- A true partnership approach including blended teams and shared objectives.

## DIGITAL

The digital partner will be required to work with the existing digital team within the Information and Digital Directorate (IDD) to understand the potential use of digital solutions in key areas. The will be asked to identify the best solutions to solving existing problems (optimising solutions already in our tech stack and considering new/different ways of doing things), design and build new products/services and in some cases support/improve these products once live.

Priorities over the next 12+ months are likely to include:

- Planning for and managing global crises.
- Streamlining the management of FCDO's global operations.
- Automating and streamlining corporate services.

As this is in support of the building of our function, this partnership must include support for building in-house capability. We would like the opportunity to run both mixed squads (of digital/supplier individuals) as well as supplier only squads.

IDD would like this support across the product lifecycle – e.g. ideation through to live service, and working within the overall FCDO governance and technology frameworks This may include sharing industry best practise in particular areas.

**Key work areas;**

**Scoping/problem identification:**

- Work with digital teams to consider ways in which we can better support business outcomes/solve business problems. For example, short discovery sprints to understand the business problem and develop opportunities to deploy digital in solving that problem. This will also include sharing expertise on technical options/solutions that might meet business needs (and examples of where this has worked elsewhere to gain buy-in).

**Design/Pilot:**

- Hackathons/sprints to show the business the art of the possible (e.g. to undertake rapid prototype solutions to business problems/share solutions others have used).
- Piloting approaches to solving problems (running Alphas to test approaches, refine requirements)
- Deploying solutions in pilot sites, test/iterate and provide recommendations on next steps.

**Build:**

- Build out solutions, providing required expertise to build, test and deploy products and services into live operations (within the FCDO governance structures).

**Live service support/continuous improvement:**

- As products are released into live operation, support the FCDO team in building a robust service model that supports continual improvement. In some instances, on a case-by-case basis, we may require support to be provided for products that have been built through the contract, for both live service support and improvement.

**Surge capacity:**

- While we envisage that packages of work will be set up on a case-by-case basis, there may be instances where we need individuals to bolster in-house teams to deliver work e.g. user research, developer etc. which would be embedded into the digital team for a set time period to support delivery.

**FCDO systems and technology**

- FCDO mainly operate on the Microsoft platform, including Microsoft 365, Power Platform and Azure IaaS and PaaS, although there are elements of our digital estate on other cloud platforms (Oracle Cloud, Salesforce). A partner will be expected to have significant depth of expertise in Microsoft platforms.

**DATA**

The data partner will be required to help deliver an ambitious programme of improvements in FCDO's management and use of data across the enterprise. The key elements of this partnership are: filling skills gaps, through having access to people who can further develop and equip the core team,

providing surge capacity to enable faster and more robust delivery at scale and bringing specific platform understanding of the Microsoft Azure [and Oracle Cloud] platforms.

A true partnership is required, including working as a single team, embedded knowledge transfer and internal capability building. The data team don't want a contract purely to bring in people to fill roles, they are looking for key skills, knowledge and momentum building, along with strategic input. FCDO's current platforms are Azure (enterprise data and analytics) and Oracle (ERP), they aren't seeking alternative product suites.

#### Key work areas;

1. Establishing a defined **data architecture**, meaning at least:
  - Mapping data assets so that we know what we have, where it is and who owns it.
  - A data permissions model, defining who can own and use (e.g. role based access).
  - MDM practices, so that we can keep our data up to date and meaningful, particularly where it stretches across domains (e.g. org units, projects, countries etc).
  - Data standards to support data use and understanding. Not just ISO standards (e.g. countries) but also de facto standards (what we mean by budget, forecast, YTD spend etc). This also covers the use of common open formats for data sharing.
  - Data products, datasets grouped and organised so that analysts and consumers can make use of them.
  - A data catalogue for data consumers, listing those data products, along with metadata, guidance and permissions.
2. Building an **enterprise data ecosystem of services**, allowing analysts and users to obtain, manipulate, analyse and visualise data
  - This may be more than one single platform, more of an ecosystem. For example OACS may be the best platform for financial data; Azure may be the best for data processing and pipelines, Azure may be good for machine learning?
  - Create analytical environments to facilitate better collaboration and access to data with requisite controls, storage and tools to allow people to develop data products and applications that best meet user and business needs
  - Expanding access for key existing tools (such as Power BI, R), ensuring they are visible on desktops and come with access to key datasets. Use consistent operating principles should be the same, and there should be clear guidelines so that users can pick the right tool for the job.
  - Start with MVP and user needs, based on the key personas already defined. MVP examples could be:
    - CFDA Data Gateway to ingest and manage open source data
    - Delivery Data Factory (in train) to support programme delivery
    - Corporate data lake to support MI on key corporate indicators
3. Maturing the **Power BI Service**, supporting a community of dashboard creators and analysts to create, manage and publish data visualisations that support needs across the organisation.

#### Capability areas required

FCDO has internal capability in service design, data architecture, data engineering (Azure), dashboarding (Power BI), but has gaps in the following areas:

- **Agile delivery teams** to support the build of data products

**Commented [SM1]:** @John Adams Does this include formats as well so that we can data share on open standards and architectures?

**Commented [JA2R1]:** In principle yes, although there's a nuance in that the same standard (i.e. meaning) can be expressed in different formats (e.g. CSV, JSON, XML, Parquet etc)

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- **Data architecture** - practices and tools
- **Data platform architecture and engineering**
  - Azure and Microsoft Fabric
  - (Oracle-Azure integration)
  - (OACS)
- **Corporate support**, eg dashboarding

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