FOIWorks

Service Definition

An open-source FOI service for councils, launched in 2018, that improves the quality of FOI requests by providing a user-centred request process that intelligently leverages already published information.

Developed in collaboration with Hackney Council, **FOIWorks** is a user-needs focused solution to streamlining authorities' FOI workflows and reducing request volumes. Like all of our services we can integrate FOIWorks with your existing backend management services – we have an established integration with the Infreemation and iCasework FOI case management systems, and can work with you to integrate with other similar systems including options for an end-to-end open source case management solution, developed for and within government – contact us for more information.

- A simple interface for citizens, building trust and reducing customer support time.

- Intelligent suggestions from the disclosure log and custom links help make it easier to access Section 21 'information already available' responses. Hackney reduced correspondence per request by 10% through the use of intelligent suggestions.

- Integration with your case management system allows the citizen to receive a reference number immediately.

- Disclosure Log integration resurfaces past responses, helping you to get more value out of your officers' past work.

- The system becomes more effective as more responses are added to the disclosure log.

- Built-in analytics provide feedback on which suggestions are most effective at reducing duplicate requests.

- Proudly Open Source software, following the Government Digital Service Standard.

Benefits for citizens

FOIWorks is built on over a decade of SocietyWorks' experience in making simple, easy to use websites that empower citizens. We've combined that with a deep understanding of how authorities handle FOI requests most efficiently and effectively.

Simple process

No complicated forms, no unnecessary questions. We ask only for the citizen's request, name, and email address.
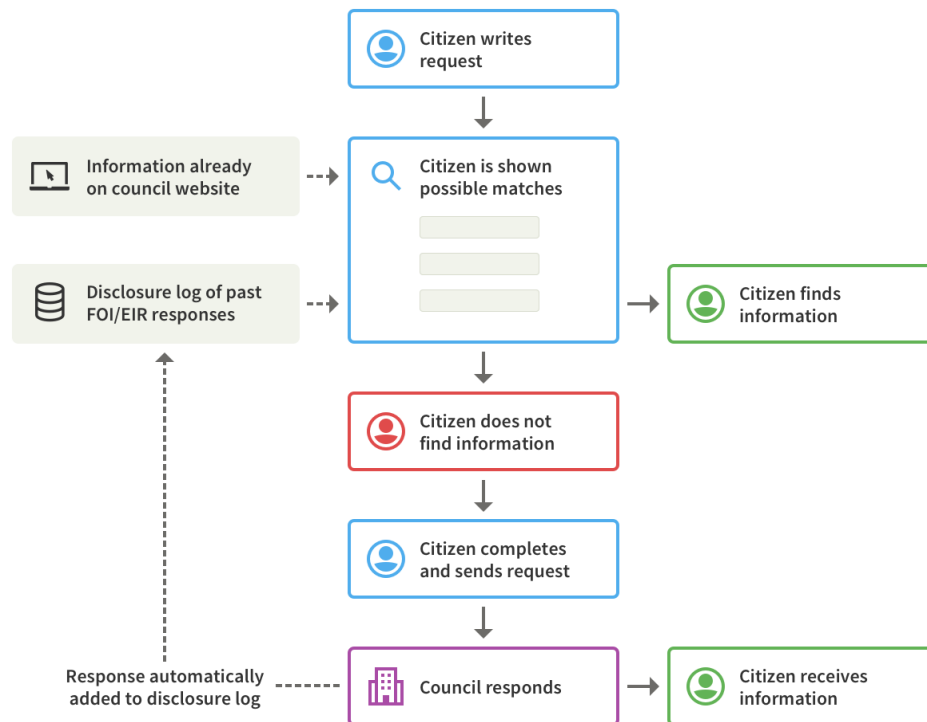
Reference number

Once the request has been submitted, the citizen receives a reference number and confirmation email from the integrated case management system.

Intelligent suggestions

We match the request against pre-existing content and the disclosure log, so the citizen doesn't have to wait for a response if their question has already been answered.

Increased trust

Whether their question is answered automatically through the suggestion engine or not, citizens have a good experience, increasing trust that the authority has nothing to hide.

Benefits for councils

We worked closely with Hackney Council to understand the challenges faced by Information Officers, and the untapped value in channel-shifting more FOI requests into a fully integrated, automated solution.

Citizen writes request

Information already on council website

Citizen is shown possible matches

Disclosure log of past FOI/EIR responses

Citizen finds information

Citizen does not find information

Citizen completes and sends request

Response automatically added to disclosure log

Council responds

Citizen receives information

End-to-end integration
Requests get sent straight through to your case management system.

Get value out of your responses
Answers to FOI requests that have been published to your Disclosure Log are automatically fed to citizens as suggested answers.

Built-in analytics
Instantly see which suggestions are most popular, and which are helping to direct citizens to existing information.

Reduced duplicates
Suggestion system helps redirect citizens to existing material before making a request.

Hand-picked suggestions
Links to existing information (such as pages on the council website) can also be curated by Information Officers to feed suggestions.

Government Service Standard
FOI Works was built from the ground up to meet the Government Digital Service Standard, including WCAG AA accessibility.