HOSTING AND DATA SERVICES

BY GLOBAL INITIATIVE

1. Service overview

Global Initiative provides secure, scalable hosting and data services covering architecture design, build, migration, and optional ongoing operation of cloud based systems. The service is flexible by design and can be delivered as a discrete implementation project or as an ongoing managed service, depending on buyer preference. We support public cloud, private cloud, and hybrid deployment models, ranging from isolated single tenant environments to large scale multi-tenant platforms.

We have extensive experience delivering infrastructure for data intensive, regulated, and high availability systems, including healthcare, research platforms, financial services, and national scale digital services. This includes secure integration with restricted networks such as HSCN, large scale data warehousing, microservices based ETL architectures, and high throughput transactional systems supporting millions of users. All solutions are engineered with a strong emphasis on security, resilience, automation, and long term operability, while remaining cost effective and aligned with modern cloud and data best practice.

2. Service scope

The Hosting and Data Services offering covers the full lifecycle of cloud infrastructure and data platform delivery. This includes architecture design, environment build, migration from legacy or existing platforms, and optional ongoing operational management.

In scope activities include cloud infrastructure design and provisioning, application hosting, data storage and data platform setup, secure networking, access control, monitoring, and backup. The service supports public cloud, private cloud, and hybrid deployments, including integration with regulated or restricted networks where required.

Data services include structured and unstructured data storage, data warehousing, ETL and ELT pipelines, data retention and archiving, and secure access for downstream systems and users. By default, data is hosted and processed in the UK, unless otherwise agreed.

3. Case Studies

CRIS: NHS-integrated clinical research infrastructure (Akrivia Health)

Global Initiative designed, built, and implemented the hosting and data infrastructure underpinning the CRIS platform for Akrivia Health. The service supports NHS-facing and commercial research workflows, with secure connectivity into NHS environments via HSCN and controlled interfaces for non-NHS users.

The platform uses a modular, microservices-based architecture, comprising over 20 data processing and ETL services feeding a large-scale data warehouse. This enables secure ingestion directly from multiple NHS Trust electronic patient record systems, alongside transformation and interrogation of high-volume clinical and operational datasets. Additional services support controlled data interrogation and analytics, including the use of cloud-hosted proprietary AI models.

All data is hosted in the UK, with strict separation of environments, dual-layer anonymisation, and role-based access controls aligned with healthcare governance requirements. The delivery included automated deployment pipelines, monitored infrastructure, and production-ready hosting.

While Global Initiative no longer operates the CRIS platform day to day, we continue to provide advisory support covering platform evolution, data architecture, and operational assurance within a regulated healthcare context.

TGHN: The Global Health Network – supporting over 1.2 million users

Global Initiative designed, built, and operates the hosting and data infrastructure for The Global Health Network (TGHN), a large-scale digital platform supporting global health research capacity building. The platform serves over 1.2 million registered users across low, middle, and high income countries, with highly variable usage patterns and peak demand driven by global research activity.

The service is hybrid-hosted on DigitalOcean and within the University of Oxford, and designed for resilience, scalability, and cost efficiency. The architecture supports a multi-tenant platform composed of multiple integrated services, including a unified single sign-on system, a large-scale learning management and eLearning environment, and a substantial content

management system used to manage hubs, resources, and community spaces.

The platform handles high volumes of concurrent users, complex permission models, and multilingual content delivery. Infrastructure is deployed and managed using automated provisioning and deployment pipelines, with monitored services and routine operational maintenance. Data storage and processing are designed to support global access while maintaining appropriate security controls and separation between services.

Global Initiative provides ongoing hosting, platform management, and technical evolution of the TGHN infrastructure, supporting the long-term sustainability of a mission-critical system used by researchers, institutions, and global health programmes worldwide.

4. Key features

This service brings together Global Initiative's core strengths in secure cloud architecture, data platform engineering, and large scale operational delivery. We support demanding hosting and data workloads that require careful design around security, scalability, automation, and long term maintainability, including regulated environments, high throughput systems, and complex data flows. The features below describe the technical capabilities we apply across these engagements, regardless of sector or delivery model.

- Cloud architecture design across public, private, and hybrid environments
- Secure hosting on AWS, DigitalOcean, and other buyer preferred platforms
- Single tenant, multi-tenant, and hybrid deployment models supported
- UK based data hosting by default, configurable where policy permits
- High availability infrastructure with automated scaling and failover
- Data warehousing and large scale structured and unstructured data storage
- ETL and ELT pipelines using microservices based architectures
- Secure network design including private networking and restricted access
- Automated deployment pipelines and infrastructure as code
- Backup, disaster recovery, and long term data archiving capabilities

5. Key benefits

Working with Global Initiative means engaging a team that has designed, built, and operated complex hosting and data platforms for over two decades, often in environments where service continuity and reliability are critical. We combine deep technical delivery with practical judgement, strong automation, and an understanding of regulated and high-risk contexts. Buyers value our ability to move comfortably between architecture, delivery, and long-term operation, without locking them into rigid platforms or unnecessary complexity.

- Proven delivery of secure, scalable platforms in regulated environments
- Experience operating national and international data platforms at scale
- Flexible use of public, private, and hybrid cloud architectures
- Strong automation for deployment, monitoring, and operational consistency
- Deep expertise in data pipelines, warehousing, and long term data retention
- Architectures designed for high throughput and variable demand
- Clear separation of services to support maintainability and change
- Practical integration with NHS, HSCN, and public sector networks
- Designs that support handover and long term buyer ownership
- Independent technical decisions without reliance on single vendors

6. Service delivery model

Global Initiative delivers hosting and data services using an iterative, delivery-led model aligned with Agile principles and proven across complex public sector programmes. Engagements are structured to support early progress, frequent review, and controlled evolution, rather than large, upfront design phases. This allows buyers to de-risk delivery, validate assumptions early, and adapt to changing requirements where necessary.

Work is typically delivered through small, multidisciplinary teams led by a named Delivery Manager, who is responsible for coordination,

communication, and day-to-day delivery oversight. Delivery is managed using established tooling for issue tracking, backlog management, and change control, providing transparency over progress, risks, and dependencies.

Infrastructure and data services are designed to be “always releasable”, supported by automated build and deployment pipelines, environment segregation, and clear configuration baselines. This enables changes to be tested, reviewed, and promoted in a controlled manner, while maintaining operational stability.

Delivery approaches are tailored to buyer preference and context. Services can be delivered as discrete implementation projects, phased migrations, or as part of an ongoing operational engagement. Where appropriate, Global Initiative works alongside in-house teams, providing knowledge transfer, documentation, and structured handover to support long-term sustainability

7. Security, Data, and Compliance

Security and compliance are embedded into Hosting and Data Services from the outset and treated as core delivery requirements rather than add-ons. Global Initiative is certified to ISO/IEC 27001 and ISO 9001 and is compliant with the NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT). The organisation also holds Cyber Essentials certification.

Services are delivered using a security-by-design and compliance-by-design approach. Architecture, build, and migration activities incorporate risk assessment, access control, auditability, and data protection controls as standard. Environments are designed to support role-based access control, least-privilege principles, encryption of data in transit and at rest, and clear separation between development, test, and production systems.

Data handling and governance are aligned with UK GDPR and public sector requirements. Where healthcare or other regulated data is involved, designs reflect sector-specific governance expectations, including controlled interfaces, anonymisation or pseudonymisation strategies, and restricted network access where appropriate.

Global Initiative works with agreed third-party specialists to provide independent assurance where required, including penetration testing, security reviews, and specialist compliance validation. These activities are coordinated with buyer governance processes and documented as part of delivery.

Security risks, incidents, and corrective actions are managed through documented processes, with clear ownership, escalation, and audit trails. Where ongoing operation is provided, security monitoring, patching, and review activities form part of the agreed service scope.

8. Testing, Validation, and Assurance

Testing and assurance are embedded throughout Global Initiative's delivery approach, rather than treated as a discrete final phase. Services are delivered using a lean, iterative model within an Agile framework, emphasising early validation, continuous testing, and measurable outcomes at each stage of delivery. Work is defined against agreed acceptance criteria and a clear definition of done, ensuring infrastructure, data services, and integrations are testable, reviewable, and releasable at all times

Infrastructure and data services are validated through a combination of automated testing, environment-based verification, and controlled release processes. Automated pipelines are used to build, test, and deploy changes, allowing configuration, infrastructure-as-code, and data pipelines to be exercised repeatedly and consistently. This supports early detection of defects, configuration drift, or performance issues before changes reach live environments.

Testing activities typically include configuration validation, integration testing, performance and load testing where appropriate, and security-focused checks aligned to the sensitivity of the data and operating environment. For complex platforms, multiple environments are used to support review, client acceptance, and production validation, enabling stakeholders to confirm behaviour before go-live.

Where required, Global Initiative supports formal assurance activities, including operational readiness checks, controlled user acceptance testing, and evidence preparation for audits or inspections. Independent security testing and specialist assurance services are engaged where appropriate, working with buyer-appointed or mutually agreed third parties.

This approach supports proportionate, risk-based validation suitable for regulated environments, while remaining practical and efficient for wider public sector delivery.

9. Onboarding, Knowledge Transfer, and Handover

Onboarding is structured to ensure that buyer teams can engage effectively with the service from the outset, with clear roles, responsibilities, and delivery expectations agreed early. At the start of each engagement, Global Initiative works with the buyer to confirm scope, governance arrangements, communication channels, and technical prerequisites. This typically includes access provisioning, documentation review, and alignment on delivery approach and timelines.

Knowledge transfer is treated as an integral part of delivery rather than a separate activity. Throughout the engagement, Global Initiative provides practical, hands-on knowledge sharing covering architecture decisions, infrastructure configuration, deployment processes, data flows, and operational considerations. This may include walkthrough sessions, paired working, technical briefings, and written documentation, depending on buyer preference and capability.

Where services involve build or migration activities, onboarding includes familiarisation with environments, tooling, and operational controls. For ongoing engagements, this extends to service management processes, monitoring approaches, and escalation paths.

Handover is planned and managed explicitly, particularly where responsibility transitions to buyer teams or third-party suppliers. Handover activities may include documentation finalisation, environment walkthroughs, operational runbooks, and supported transition periods. Where requested, Global Initiative can assist with recruitment support, role definition, and skills transfer to enable buyers to build or extend in-house capability.

The aim throughout is to leave buyers informed, confident, and able to operate or extend the delivered services independently where required.

10. Service Constraints

Hosting and Data Services are delivered primarily on a remote basis, with on-site delivery available by prior agreement where required. Delivery is dependent on timely access to buyer stakeholders, technical documentation, existing environments, and relevant third-party systems. Delays or limitations in access may affect delivery timelines.

Where services involve regulated environments, legacy platforms, or external suppliers, Global Initiative's ability to deliver may be influenced by

dependencies outside its direct control, including third-party change processes, security approvals, or contractual restrictions.

Unless otherwise agreed, all services are delivered using UK-based infrastructure and data residency. Requests for alternative hosting locations or sovereign environments are subject to feasibility, regulatory review, and commercial agreement.

This service is primarily delivered on a project-based, advisory, or time-and-materials basis and does not include formal service level commitments by default.

Where ongoing operational support is required, a Standard or Extended service level agreement may be agreed as part of the Call Off Contract. Any service level commitments apply only to explicitly defined operational components of the service and do not extend to project delivery, advisory activities, or third-party services.

All deliverables produced under this service are covered by a 30-day warranty period, where applicable. During this period, defects directly attributable to the supplied work will be remedied at no additional cost.

11. Support Model, SLAs, and Warranty

Global Initiative provides support for Hosting and Data Services through a structured, delivery-led support model. Support is provided via email and an online ticketing system, with phone support available during UK business hours for incident coordination and escalation. A named Delivery Manager provides continuity and oversight throughout the engagement.

Support arrangements and service level commitments apply only where ongoing operational support is explicitly included in the Call Off Contract.

Standard SLA

Where ongoing operational support is required, a Standard SLA may be agreed as part of the Call Off Contract. The Standard SLA is suitable for most project-based and operational support arrangements and applies only to explicitly defined operational components of the service. Under the Standard SLA:

- Support is provided Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm UK time, excluding UK public holidays
- Incidents are handled on a best-efforts basis

- Planned maintenance is scheduled in advance, where possible
- No uptime percentage is contractually guaranteed

The Standard SLA is intended to support delivery, operational continuity, and issue resolution without formal availability commitments.

Extended SLA

An Extended SLA may be agreed for buyers requiring higher operational assurance for live or business-critical services. The Extended SLA applies only to explicitly defined operational components of the service, as set out in the Call Off Contract. Under the Extended SLA:

- Support is provided Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm UK time, with prioritised incident handling
- Incidents receive same working day response
- Target time to recovery is one working day, subject to issue severity and scope
- A target uptime of 99.9 percent is applied to agreed operational services, measured over rolling three month periods

Uptime commitment

The extended SLA includes a target of 99.9 percent uptime for operational aspects of the service, measured over each three month cycle. The uptime target reflects availability of the hosted service to perform its intended function under normal operating conditions.

Definition of uptime

Uptime is defined as the percentage of total minutes in a three month cycle during which the service is fully operational and able to perform its intended functions under normal operating conditions.

Exclusions

The following are excluded from uptime calculations: scheduled maintenance notified in advance; emergency maintenance required to address critical issues; customer induced downtime including misconfiguration, unsupported software, or excessive demand; external network or third party service issues; force majeure events; and security related downtime required for threat response or emergency patching.

Service credits

The Extended SLA does not include financial reimbursements or service credits unless explicitly agreed in the Call Off Contract.

12. Pricing model

All consultancy and development services are provided on a time and materials basis unless otherwise agreed.

Global Initiative operates a deliberately simple and transparent charging structure, reflecting a senior, multi-disciplinary delivery model.

Day rates are fixed by level of seniority and applied consistently across applicable roles listed in the framework.

- Directors / Heads of Department / Department Lead - £1320+VAT per day
- Senior Staff - £1144+VAT per day
- All other staff - £920+VAT per day

Third-party hosting, infrastructure, and service costs are charged at cost, with an agreed administrative fee where applicable.