

Valcon G-Cloud Lot 3 Service Definition

AI Discovery

[Cloud Migration Planning | Cloud gap assessment, Architecture options analysis]

Version 1.0

1. About Us

Valcon is a leading European consultancy specialising in AI and data-driven business transformation, with a growing and established presence in the UK. A trusted partner to major organisations including multiple UK Government departments and public sector agencies. Valcon connects strategy and operations, helping organisations create value in their transformation programmes.

With over 1,750 consultants across Europe, Valcon brings deep expertise across data, AI, technology and consulting. In the UK, Valcon works with clients across financial services, public sector, retail, industrials and infrastructure. Valcon is backed by private equity firm Rivean Capital.

2. Service Description

The traditional GDS framework has proven to deliver value sustainably while minimising wasted effort. When it comes to AI, desk-based discoveries do come short off what is needed to ensure safe progression to alpha phase. Valcon's AI discovery aligns with GDS and provides hands-on experimentation enhancing confidence in alpha progression.

Features

- Identify target user base and plan out interviews
- Conduct extensive user research in line with GDS requirements
- Develop user journeys and service blueprint
- Translate user needs into functional and non-functional requirements
- Develop high-level design document and select AI technology candidates
- Evaluate data requirements, availability and readiness
- Identify and conduct experiments required to prove AI technology readiness
- Issue recommendations for further risk areas to evaluate during alpha
- Develop and defend discovery report for GDS review board
- Validate readiness to move to alpha and support business case

Benefits

- Agreed go/no-go decision on whether to proceed to alpha
- Validated scope, trusted revised estimates and requirements for alpha
- User-centric (desirable), feasible and viable solution designed collaboratively
- Revised and validated input for alpha phase's business case
- Clear actionable delivery roadmap and itemised backlog of activities
- Avoided wasted resources on unviable options through hands-on assessment
- Understanding of current data estate related to use case requirements
- Reduced risks through iterative experimentation-based approach

- GDS-aligned methodology ensures smooth progression through different phases
- Engaged stakeholders through shared understanding and partnership-based approach

3. Approach

Delivery Overview

Our delivery approach follows Government Digital Service standards and the agile discovery-to-live framework, ensuring robust user-centred design and evidence-based decision making throughout. We begin by working with our key stakeholders to identify and segment the target user base, developing a comprehensive research plan that meets GDS requirements. Our team conducts extensive user research using multiple qualitative and quantitative methods to understand user needs, pain points, and behaviours in their real-world context. This research informs the development of detailed user journeys and a service blueprint that map the end-to-end experience and identify key touchpoints and dependencies.

User insights are systematically translated into prioritised functional and non-functional requirements, ensuring traceability between user needs and technical solutions. We then develop a high-level design document that outlines the proposed service architecture and evaluates candidate AI technologies against defined criteria including technical feasibility, scalability, and alignment with government technology standards.

A critical component of our approach is rigorous data assessment. We evaluate data requirements, assess current data availability and quality, and determine data readiness for the proposed solution.

Where AI technologies are being considered, we identify and conduct targeted experiments to prove technology readiness and validate assumptions before significant investment.

Throughout discovery, we proactively identify risk areas and provide clear recommendations for further evaluation during subsequent alpha phase activities. This forward-looking approach ensures smooth phase transitions and reduces downstream risk.

Our discovery phase culminates in a comprehensive discovery report prepared to GDS standards, which we present and defend to relevant governance boards. The report includes clear evidence of user need, technical feasibility, and a validated business case. We provide explicit recommendations on readiness to proceed to alpha, supported by evidence and aligned with the Government Service Standard, and support the client in developing the business case for progression.

Governance, Collaboration and Quality Assurance

We work with architecture, security and governance teams to ensure the target solution meets compliance, risk and data management requirements.

Change Management, Stakeholder Engagement and Methodology

Stakeholders engage through workshops, prototyping and iterative design. Our methodology combines agile delivery with responsible AI practices, ensuring smooth adoption, training and long-term sustainability of the solution.

4. Effort and Cost

Effort will be determined collaboratively between the Valcon and the client based on the skills mix and scope required.

Please refer to the Pricing Document for current rates.

- Rate card prices are exclusive of VAT.
- Expenses are recharged at cost and supported by receipts.
- Expenses may include reasonable travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs.
- The payment schedule will follow milestone completions as agreed in the Statement of Work.

5. Assumptions

The successful delivery of the engagement depends on assumptions and dependencies jointly agreed between Valcon and the client. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Access to required stakeholders, technology and documentation,
- Timely decisions and approvals
- Availability of resources
- Defined governance and communication processes

All assumptions and dependencies will be recorded and validated as part of the Statement of Work (SoW).