

Discovery for cloud-based digital services

Discovery is a pre-delivery phase that aligns stakeholders on vision, objectives and goals, outlines the solution and defines foundations for successful delivery. We analyse the problem domain from user, business and technological angles, risk and dependencies, outline a delivery strategy and measurement plan to track solution performance against business goals.

Cloud projects benefit from a well-executed discovery phase, during which the team will - as required - create, refine, validate or align on the value proposition of a product or service.

Features

- Lean process, delivering high-quality outcomes within weeks
- Small multi-disciplinary team of experienced senior consultants
- Highly collaborative with diverse stakeholder involvement from business to IT
- Supports user-centric ideation, solution analysis and design
- Holistic analysis covering to-be / legacy aspects (process, people, technology)
- Identifies, validates and aligns stakeholders on desirability, feasibility and viability
- Identifies and evaluates solution options
- Defines solution outline and delivery approach via lean, actionable artefacts
- Identifies key project risks, dependencies and assumptions
- Regular alignment via progress showcases and expert reviews

Benefits

- Facilitates quality decision making, provides high-quality, actionable outcomes
- Safeguards ROI by validating business case assumptions at earliest stage
- Focus on user-value, business-value and feasibility within given constraints
- De-risks through early risk analysis and technical feasibility assessments
- High degree of alignment across diverse set of project stakeholders
- Improves dependency management across client and third-party organisations
- Improves gateway compliance and governance
- Supports organisation-wide alignment and communication
- Helps compliance with the Government Digital Service (GDS) standard
- Provides solid foundations for subsequent project delivery

Our approach to discovery

Our team will explore, validate and align on business vision, objectives and goals, users and their needs and other characteristics, requirements and constraints from the problem domain, be this organisational architecture, policy or technology landscape.

Following this, the available solution options will be investigated and evaluated, specifically focused on return on investment and performance against other organisational goals. Where an existing product, service or other parts of the domain exist, the transition from the as-is state to the to-be state will be elaborated and analysed. The most appropriate solution option will be defined at a high level in terms of user experience and other aspects, such as key technology choices or cloud migration requirements. A “minimum viable product” for the delivery phase will be proposed, and a delivery approach and plan will be outlined.

Discovery is recommended for any public sector organisation embarking on cloud technology adoption and usage, with the consequent need to deploy new cloud-based digital products and services as part of managing their transition. It is key to find out what users actually need, what needs to be measured and what technological or policy-related constraints exist. It's important to understand what services or offline processes currently serve those user needs and how they are performing.

A discovery phase answers the key questions of ‘what is the best solution’ and is it desirable, viable and feasible and provides the information needed to successfully drive subsequent project delivery.

Discovery can also help understand legacy interfaces and infrastructure, and how to replace or decommission them.

Our teams have in-depth, hands-on experience and expertise in utilising mature, proven analysis, engagement, facilitation and alignment techniques. They employ these to help establish the criteria for success of the planned service, and meet the Government Digital Service standards in delivery. This can include:

- objective and goal setting
- business and process modelling
- stakeholder mapping and engagement
- requirements elicitation and analysis
- scope definition and prioritisation

- service and user experience design
- in-depth analysis of policies and laws

Discovery at Equal Experts is a timeboxed series of workshops and user research, designed to establish shared understanding and agreement among a diverse stakeholder group as to the vision, approach and roadmap for any change initiative – including the deployment of cloud-based digital services. Discovery aims to inform decision-making as to whether or not investment in any subsequent activity will deliver real benefit at an appropriate cost and facilitate subsequent delivery.

The discovery process is designed as a short, intense period of investigation, analysis and planning, with the express goal of enabling informed decision-making and an effective start to any programme of work.

We do this by looking at the problem space in terms of:

- **Breadth:** we ‘paint’ the as-is and to-be domain in broad brushstrokes across business, user, value proposition, process and technology. We focus on desirability (are we doing the right thing), feasibility (can we solve the problem and what is the best way) and viability (does this meet business goals).
- **Depth:** based on the broad understanding and insights gained, we prioritise high-value, high-risk items and focus on these with further analysis. Normally, this covers a mix of key features, technical areas and process aspects that we believe will benefit from further attention.

Our goal is to gain sufficient insight and ‘flesh out’ the solution and approach sufficiently to enable the business to make informed decisions, and communicate insights and outcomes easily within and outside the team, so that the initiative can transition smoothly into the next phase. While it is a key goal to create solid foundations and address risks early, it is also a goal to avoid both engaging in activities that, in time, will turn out to be irrelevant, and having closed options at too early a stage.

The process requires widespread participation by a diverse group of stakeholders – who will likely include the executive group, product owners/managers or other subject matter experts, delivery team members, architecture group, operations (both business operations and technical operations), product specific people (policy, commercial, account managers) and internal users or user experts (help desk/support staff/trainers).

As outlined above, the intention is not to plan every element of delivery (or even to discuss detailed scope, outside of specific and tangible roadmap deadlines). Rather, we aim to understand the problem space in terms of the following high-level parameters (among others):

- How do we best deliver value commensurate with the investment made – how does the organisation innovate and deliver against strategic objectives?
- Are the ‘business’ and IT engaged effectively – are project governance and change management fit for purpose?
- How do we transform the infrastructure, the environments, the technology architecture and the delivery process for the incremental, rapid delivery of business value at scale?
- What are the engineering and delivery practices that need to be in place to de-risk delivery and the path to production, and ensure high-quality, fit-for-purpose delivery?
- What are the blockers and dependencies we have to remove to enable a self-sufficient autonomous delivery team to build and operate products and services end-to-end?
- What are the experience levels and delivery capabilities of the client people earmarked for assignment to the delivery team?

During our workshops, we aim to understand the current state and “As Is” processes, and agree on the “To Be” vision, including areas for improvement and the planned approach. We look at the following list of activities and areas for investigation (non-exhaustive list):

- Understand ambitions, constraints, portfolio priorities and architecture strategy.
- Mobilise the client team that will form the kernel of the ongoing delivery.
- Get buy-in to the vision for the change journey from all stakeholders.
- Establish the steering group and governance processes that will effectively manage the change.
- Create a simple list of issues, risks and dependencies
- Decide on the first domain area to focus on in delivery, the desired outcome and the required budget for initial delivery only.

For the prioritised domain area chosen, we then delve into further details:

- Carve out the desired scope (at epic level), in order to deliver thin vertical end-to-end slices of functionality, support emergent design and enable regular feedback. This avoids long stretches of ‘horizontal work’ and latent value.

- Highlight any data required, but not currently available.
- Develop an understanding of what the day-to-day team working model/process will look like – as well as what the team composition, roles and responsibilities are
- Run early-stage technical proofs of concept to ascertain the feasibility of any technical recommendations.
- Conduct ethnographic and observational user research and in-depth interviews to understand the problem space.
- Test concepts using low-fidelity paper-based or clickable prototypes to explore and clarify our understanding of user needs and behaviours.
- Investigate the need for assisted digital support, and what those user needs are.
- Provide a documented route to release
- Understand system constraints (scale, security, SLAs, etc) and target architecture.
- Understand legacy interfaces and infrastructure, and any processes in place for replacing or decommissioning these.
- Create an 'Impact map' that ties together the business goal, user personas, the impacts we are trying to deliver, and features. This helps to maintain user-centricity and measurability.
- A prioritised list of the broad themes or epics within the problem space for Alpha delivery. A proposed first theme to tackle/identification of the most valuable story.

We follow user-centred design and research processes, based on an understanding of user personas, behaviours and scenarios, to gain a greater understanding of user needs, including accessibility needs and assisted digital support.

Outcomes of discovery

The key outcome of discovery is to enable evidence-based decision-making and we typically expect to produce some or all of the following deliverables:

- A shared understanding of the service, its vision, mission, objectives and goals
- A clearly articulated and validated value proposition based on insights gained from user research and experience/service design
- Business case realisation/measurement strategy to ensure continuous learning and ROI monitoring
- A high-level view of the feasibility of the team being able to address the specific business goals within the given project constraints
- List of key issues, assumptions, risks and dependencies
- Highlighting of any data/areas that we think are required but not currently available or sufficiently clear, aligned on
- Visualisation of the overall as-is and to-be user experience via experience maps

- Design concepts for further testing in alpha
- A prioritised list of the broad themes or epics within the problem space, often visualised as a delivery roadmap
- A clear understanding and articulation of relevant business processes with pain, risk and opportunity points identified. Where applicable and valuable, as-is and to-be process models
- A clear understanding of the technical estate/landscape. Where applicable and valuable, as-is and to-be architecture models. This would include migration, transition and decommissioning concerns and approaches
- Understanding system constraints and non-functional requirements (scale, security, SLAs, etc.)
- A curated set of collateral collected and insights generated during the discovery period (e.g. a project wiki) for subsequent alignment and communication
- Project plan and estimate, recommended next steps

Examples of discovery in action

Small multi-disciplinary teams of Equal Experts consultants have led the discovery process on several cloud-based delivery projects within large central government departments.

A cross-government 'Building our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper identified that people choosing apprenticeships or further technical education faced complexity when selecting and applying for a course. Effective information and support should be available for everyone, and a central government department wanted help to explore how to give technical education students clear information and better support throughout the application process.

We completed an eight-week discovery, where our multi-disciplinary team conducted user interviews with students, parents, advisors and colleges, literature reviews and internal stakeholder interviews with SMEs and policy teams, revisited the original vision and reworked it to have a more specific focus; developed a research plan and user research discussion guides and recruited participants for user research.

Our conclusions challenged the client's expectations going into discovery. We explored initial expectations for an alpha on a single application system for FE and apprenticeships, however this option was not recommended because, based on our user research, there was no compelling evidence of user need. Instead, we recommended conducting a further discovery and alpha on a data exemplar for FE courses, standardising data - canonical, comprehensive, able to validate and open - in support of multiple product/service opportunities.

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The department held an internal service standard assessment (with GDS participation) at the conclusion of discovery to ensure we met GDS standards for any subsequent delivery. Our team led this successful assessment with the client PO. We coached the client members of our team in GDS standards and product management approaches throughout the course of discovery. These team members (a senior policy advisor and her deputy, a fast streamer and an admin apprentice) had no previous experience of digital service design and delivery. We used a RAG rating against each service standard criterion as part of our weekly status reports to demonstrate progress towards the goal of successful assessment.

Equal Experts also recently conducted a nine-week discovery for another government department to provide a platform for the better discovery and exploitation of data in support of effective evidence-driven operational and strategic decision-making. The finance transformation programme had proposed fundamental changes to traditional ways of working for teams producing business information.

In discovery, our team sought to understand the data product landscape. They conducted interviews with key stakeholders to identify where there was an opportunity to generate value through the provision of reliable data. They surfaced and further interrogated two such use-cases and proved the user need through a Proof of Concept.

To set up discovery for success, we worked closely with the client inception team to conduct knowledge transfer workshops, review existing stakeholder and business domain mappings, review the existing product roadmap, review the project backlog and agree on the team's 'ways of working'.

During discovery, we conducted workshops and interviews with client stakeholders across the various business lines (Operations, OED, BI, Business Partner, OPP) to gather and prioritise user needs and integrate the discovery data transformation team. We also conducted interviews with senior stakeholders to ensure their expectations were aligned with user needs and the team's delivery approach.

We conducted user research among digital, data and other analysts and operational and strategic decision makers. We defined and agreed on effective governance practices and procedures to be adhered to with all business lines involved in delivering data transformation.

We established governance procedures based on feedback from the business lines, and conducted regular (based on delivery cycle) show & tell sessions to present progress to stakeholders and assure them that the team adhered to governance practices and procedures.

We created a prioritised list of departmental metrics, outlining metrics suitable for automation, and ensuring metrics are data-driven and aligned with departmental priorities.

We also conducted technical workshops and interviews with technical stakeholders to understand the current technical landscape, disparate data source systems, and the architectural roadmaps of the various teams. We used these discussions to identify technical user needs and prioritised these along with business needs. This included conducting technical spikes to understand the effort required for source system integration, and identifying preferred technologies and languages best suited to a successful project delivery based on outcomes from interviews, workshops and spikes.

Our discovery recommendations for alpha included: delivering a POC/MVP using prioritised metrics, interviews and workshops as a guide to user needs, proposing an architecture, identifying the team of people necessary for delivery, delivering a prioritised list of user needs, providing a Product Roadmap, proposing candidate functionality for Beta, identifying potential risks, agreeing budgets, and updating the stakeholder map based on information gathered during discovery.

Services

We have four core UK-based teams that provide expertise and advice to the organisation, our clients and our partners:

Data and AI

The Data and AI service helps clients make better use of data and create powerful AI solutions that improve and transform any business. We use our deep expertise in data engineering to improve the quality of data that flows through the organisation, providing better insights into customers and operations. Applying our expertise in MLOps, Generative AI, AI in the SDLC and algorithms, we help upskill client teams, automate key services and create new ones.

Design and Product

The Design and Product service helps clients increase adoption and user satisfaction by designing exceptional digital products and services. We use our expertise in user-centred

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design and product management to discover and solve the most valuable problems, aligned to a client's digital strategy. We help to create delightful customer experiences that deliver real business value, increased user engagement, better brand reputation and additional revenue.

Technology Strategy

Our Technical Strategy service helps teams to confidently navigate the technology landscape and make decisions that will sustain long-term value. Our expertise covers all aspects of technology strategy, including architectural choices, operating model changes and the adoption of emerging technologies. Using our extensive industry and technology experience, we help to plan the practical steps clients need to be ready for the future.

Modernisation and Platforms

Our Modernisation and Platforms service helps to accelerate time-to-value and reduce total cost of ownership, while scaling digital products and systems. Using modern engineering practices, we help to build and run cloud-native services and improve heritage systems. We bring deep expertise in cloud architectures, secure delivery, "you build it, you run it", and platform engineering on AWS, Azure and GCP clouds.

Team

Our core culture and business model prioritise providing value and doing what is best for all our stakeholders, particularly our clients, rather than maximising short-term profits and shareholder returns. Our founders sold the business to an Employee-Owned Trust (EOT) in May 2024 to secure the long-term future of our collaborative approach, highlighting this commitment. The EOT trustees include the founders and representatives of our employees, Associates and clients, ensuring the interests of all stakeholders are considered and balanced in our operations.

Equal Experts is a worldwide network of technology experts who are dedicated to driving innovation. We have Business Units in the UK (London and Manchester), USA, South Africa, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia and India. Our resourcing model is based on a core of permanent senior consultants and a supply chain of 4,000+ carefully selected, expert, independent SME consultants - our Associate network. On a typical engagement, we pass ~£2 in every £3 of our contract income directly to this network, creating opportunities for entrepreneurship and helping new SMEs to grow.

90% of our consultants have more than 12 years of experience (average more than 18 years) in the development, delivery, operation and maintenance of digital services using

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agile methods. Many have significantly more and, in some cases, are global influencers, authors and presenters. Their maturity and pragmatism mean they are highly collaborative, happy to transfer knowledge and keen to help clients build internal capability.

We have grown organically, mostly through personal referrals, prioritising quality, experience and cultural fit above all else. After a rigorous selection process, experts are added to our network, whether we need them immediately or in the future.

We select the most suitable people for any contract role from this large pool, not just from a bench of off-charge employees. Our model is resilient and efficient; we form small expert teams, reducing cost and risk for our clients, while achieving outcomes faster than less experienced teams. Our experts train and upskill the whole supply chain, including client staff and those of other suppliers. We have delivered many public and private sector systems (e.g., for HMRC, HMPO, Defra, DWP and MoJ), including CNI, over the past 17+ years using this model. Our approach is data-driven, user-focused and sustainable, allowing us to deliver results quickly and efficiently, using small teams of real experts.

Our standard working model for teams is hybrid remote/on-site, with a core generally based close to client offices, minimising travel costs and environmental impact. This ensures they can be on-site for workshops, meetings and onboarding activities, and can work collaboratively with client team members, stakeholders and other suppliers. In the words of one client, *“your consultants truly leave their Equal Experts badges at the door”*.

Our focus on senior talent means that all our consultants have the skills and experience required to thrive in dynamic, challenging client environments. It means we can focus on work that adds real value, rather than micro-managing more junior consultants. Our non-hierarchical structure also allows us to operate with lower overheads. For our teams, this creates a mature, pragmatic and innovative working environment, where they can implement the best solutions of their already distinguished careers. And for our clients, it translates to better services, delivered faster and at lower overall cost. We were ranked 2nd in Glassdoor’s UK Best Places to Work 2025, up from 4th in 2024, and 15th in Newsweek’s Most Loved Workplaces 2022.

For more information and case studies, please visit <https://www.equalexperts.com/> or contact us at solutions@equalexperts.com.

Roles

Collectively, our consultants have the multi-disciplinary experience and expertise needed for successful transformation to cloud-first delivery, live service maintenance and new

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operating models. Our network gives us fast and flexible access to the DDaT skills our clients need. We have specialists in all areas required for digital success, including:

- Delivery managers
- Change managers
- Product managers
- Engagement managers
- Strategic advisors
- Security specialists
- Data scientists
- Data engineers
- Data architects
- Technical leads
- Technical architects
- DevOps consultants
- Developers
- Testers
- Business and performance analysts
- Accessibility experts
- Service designers
- User experience designers
- Content designers
- User researchers

When a client needs specialists or niche skills, we can rapidly and confidently engage with other organisations in our established ecosystem of proven partners. EE interviews each partner consultant to ensure a high level of knowledge and cultural fit before we assign them to clients.

Public sector clients

We're proud to be one of the top suppliers to the public sector via the G-Cloud and DOS frameworks. Our services are also available through RM6190 Technology Services 4, RM6195 Big Data and Analytics (the only supplier on all 6 capabilities), RM6335 DALAS (Lot 2a) and DPS Frameworks including RM3764 Cyber Security 3, RM6173 Automation Marketplace, RM6094 Spark, RM6200 Artificial Intelligence and RM6235 Space-Enabled and Geospatial Services.

The Equal Experts approach has a successful track record of delivery across the private and public sectors. Some recent award-winning deliveries include:

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- HMPO's passport renewal service,
 - ranked #1 public service with a score of 81.2/100 in the July 2025 ICS customer satisfaction survey.
 - Winner of Public Sector Project of the Year and Development Team of the Year at the UK IT Industry Awards 2024.
- HMRC's Data Platform Services Core Engineering Platform, winners of Computing DevOps Excellence Awards 2025 Best Implementation of DevSecOps.
- John Lewis & Partners Best Implementation of DevSecOps at the DevOps Excellence Industry Awards 2023

We know what it takes to implement and support cloud-based applications within complex public sector organisations and across large multi-vendor programmes. We understand and adhere to the GDS digital service standards for delivering solutions and handling and securing data within critical national systems. We have experience in consulting, deploying and supporting security-accredited solutions and have passed numerous GDS assessments. Many of our consultants hold current SC clearance (some have DV) as they have previously worked with public sector clients.

Equal Experts has helped implement digital services to government digital service standards (including passing many formal GDS service standard assessments) for:

- His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- The Home Office and His Majesty's Passport Office (HMPO)
- Ministry of Justice (MoJ), His Majesty's Prisons and Probations Service (HMPPS) and His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
- Border Force
- Department for Education (DfE)
- Registers of Scotland
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- Intellectual Property Office (IPO)
- States of Guernsey
- Cabinet Office
- Government Digital Service (GDS)
- Valuation Office Agency (VOA)

Planning

To build detailed knowledge of the context and domain for any project, an initial phase of planning, definition and knowledge transfer will generally take place at the start of an engagement.

We have found that this takes place most effectively through a short time-bound inception to develop a shared understanding and agreement on vision and objectives across a broad stakeholder group. This covers the business, technical and user aspects of the project and the outputs may include user personas and scenarios, key user journeys, as-is and desired business processes, a prioritised backlog of user stories, technical constraints and vision, and a release roadmap and plan. The techniques and principles applied are also used on an ongoing basis throughout the course of delivery, to ensure the solutions developed are fit for purpose and meet real and changing user needs.

This initial inception phase can be contracted separately if required.

Setup and migration

In addition to ongoing development and operation of live cloud-based services, we can help with the initial set up and migration as part of a transition to cloud. We look for opportunities to automate processes (for example, test, deploy) that will yield real benefit and high ROI. Our approach helps to address integration, dependencies and risk early. We capture actionable metrics to measure and manage progress towards meeting the agreed success criteria and KPIs identified for building and operating the service. The highly collaborative, interactive processes we follow foster continual learning and improvement of services. They help to establish and evolve the overarching service design, management processes and the team capabilities.

We can ensure projects hit the ground running through our experience in designing, configuring and setup of many continuous delivery and automated cloud deployment environments. These techniques allow software to be repeatably and reliably deployed and tested through each stage into production on the cloud. We have substantial experience when it comes to the tooling required for continuous delivery and automated software deployment, greatly facilitating the software set up, build and migration process, which increases programme productivity and reduces project risk and cost.

Quality assurance and performance testing

We hold ISO9001:2015 Quality Management System certification. All our consultants have extensive experience in both manual and automated testing, including performance testing, continuous integration and delivery into production environments at scale. With all clients, we actively encourage the adoption of robust and meaningful automated test coverage, delivery and test techniques, to reduce risk and safely increase delivery velocity. We are happy to work with a client's existing quality management system (QMS) where appropriate.

Security services

We hold ISO27001:2022 Information Security Management System, Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus certifications.

We can provide the following security services if required:

- Security strategy
- Security risk management
- Security design
- Security incident management
- Security audit services

Training

For every client, we aim to transfer and embed knowledge of technology and process innovation. Our consultants have the expertise, skills and enthusiasm to help transfer knowledge of new technologies and ways of working to our clients' team members, upskilling staff and helping to build their internal delivery competence and capability. This improves internal competencies and builds long-term sustainable capability, as clients migrate to modern cloud-based products and services. We tailor particular practices to address specific organisational constraints – we recognise that every organisation is different and there is no “one size to fit all”.

We tend not to offer classroom-based training as our consultants are happy to share their knowledge throughout a project. They take responsibility for helping individual client team members adopt new practices and ways of working.

Ongoing support

Our operational philosophy is “you build it, you run it”. The delivery team responsible for the development of a live service usually also takes responsibility for its operation. We have found that development teams which support their own products are motivated to deliver higher quality, more robust and maintainable code.

When a service is live with real users, we expect the delivery team to provide 2nd line (infrastructure, in conjunction with hosting support agreements) and 3rd line (applications) support during business hours. We can agree on an appropriate model for 24/7 on-call coverage if required - see our G-Cloud On-Call Support offering for details. We typically establish an on-call rota with delivery team members assigned weekly.

Our experience is that digital services are never really finished and that it is important to retain some level of investment to allow the addition of new features as the needs of customers (both internal and external) change. Our design of the end-to-end service can include establishing Service Level Agreements for ongoing service evolution and operational support (ensuring agreed levels of service availability).

User support

We provide an engagement manager on all G-Cloud engagements with responsibility for ensuring clients objectives are met and for addressing any issues with service delivery. Our engagement managers act as an escalation point and can be reached via phone or email to respond to issues beyond the control of the team providing the service. Engagement management is included within our service pricing.

When a service is live with real users, we expect the delivery team to provide 2nd-line (infrastructure, in conjunction with hosting support agreements) and 3rd-line (applications) support during business hours, within the agreed service cost. We can agree on an appropriate model for 24/7 on-call coverage if required - see our G-Cloud On-Call Support offering for details. We typically establish an on-call rota with delivery team members assigned weekly.

Social Value, the Environment and CSR

Our values and ethos extend beyond our organisation and people, and we take our corporate social responsibility seriously. We are committed to working with all our clients to

share our knowledge and learnings, and contribute to their CSR goals, e.g. we will facilitate discussions with their designated digital sustainability leads, to collaborate on environmental policy goals, discuss current practices for greening software and agree enhancements aligned with industry policies, like the Greening Government Strategy.

We willingly collaborate closely with our clients, other suppliers, competitors and the wider ecosystem to discuss, share and test innovative environmental and social value ideas and initiatives, to improve sustainable practices and create added value throughout any contract.

We will follow our proven social value methodologies for any G-Cloud 15 contract, aligned with the UK's Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, PPN002 (PA2023) and the Social Value Model, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to actively create additional opportunities to develop, measure and improve social value for our client and their entire supply chain. In a recent [Government Transformation Magazine interview](#), Mike Potter, ex-UK Gov CDO recalled his HMRC experience partnering with us for transformative results. *"We didn't just buy their capability - we bought their culture,"* he said. *"Cultural alignment is key. When you pick partners who share your values and ways of working, you find areas of mutual advantage."*

We review, update and publish our Carbon Reduction Plan, Modern Slavery and EDI statements annually, are a Disability Confident employer, a member of the Business Disability Forum and a participant in the Government Digital Sustainability Alliance (GDSA). Our commitment to providing a fulfilling workplace for everyone is reflected in Glassdoor's Best Places to Work in the UK, voted for by our staff, ranking us 4th in 2024, 2nd in 2025.

We complete the [EcoVadis](#) assessment tool, which evaluates performance across four dimensions: Environment, Labour and Human Rights, Ethics and Sustainable Procurement. We complete the assessment, create an improvement plan and review and update it annually. We willingly share the results with clients and use their feedback and learnings to influence our improvement plans.

Examples of other social value initiatives for clients include:

HMRC Joint Value Initiatives: we work closely with HMRC to organise and fund JVs, e.g.:

- [School visits](#) to encourage children to pursue STEM careers & find future data engineers,

- Data Engineering Academy - supporting HMRC to onboard and upskill new starters and develop their technical expertise through bootcamps and placements on EE projects,
- Hosting the [Women in Tech & Leadership Conference 2025](#) in collaboration with HMRC's Women in Tech Network.

Hace: We co-funded a [project](#) to develop an AI-based data analysis tool to objectively quantify a company's Child Labour performance.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF): We staffed a pro bono project to build the [Malaria Anticipation Project \(MAP\)](#), deployed in Lankien, South Sudan and being planned for Anka, Nigeria.

John Lewis: We shifted to lower-footprint GCP cloud data centres in Switzerland to meet JL's environmental sustainability goals.

Government: We are an active member of the Government Digital Sustainability Alliance ([See more details here](#)) and are actively working with Defra to implement exemplar projects such as:

- Implementing Green coding Standards ([See Version 1 Github](#)) in our teams working with Defra to help support learnings for wider Government.
- Working with Defra and our partner [Heata](#) to develop an innovative decentralised cloud compute project. The aim is to reduce the carbon footprint of cloud workloads by 80% and heat farmers' domestic water tanks to save them money.