

Section II: Schedule of Requirements – User Research OCHA Centre for Humanitarian Data

General Background

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has a Centre for Humanitarian Data in The Hague with the goal to increase the use and impact of data in the humanitarian sector. The vision is to create a future where all people involved in a humanitarian emergency have access to the data they need, when and how they need it, to make responsible and informed decisions. The audience for the Centre includes OCHA staff and humanitarian partners in the field and at headquarters.

The Centre focuses on four workstreams: data services, data policy, data literacy, and network engagement. The Centre's data services work includes direct management of the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) platform and the Humanitarian Exchange Language (HXL) data standard. Data services also supports the adoption of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) financial data standard. The Centre's data literacy work focuses on improving the data skills of technical and non-technical humanitarians. In the area of data policy, the Centre has created a working draft of the OCHA Data Responsibility Guidelines and provides support to staff and partners to improve approaches in this area. Finally, the Centre works to further build and engage an active community in support of its mission and objectives through a number of events and communication activities

In 2019, the Centre launched a two-year project funded by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), which focuses on the management of sensitive data and improving data responsibility. The project aims to ensure responsible data exchange by partners in the humanitarian sector. The Centre will address this challenge by establishing and promoting uptake of a secure infrastructure, process, and service model for de-risking sensitive data about crisis-affected populations. The technical support will be reinforced with guidance notes and community events and outreach. The results of this project are as follows:

1. the development and prototyping of a secure technical infrastructure that will allow key partners to process and share sensitive data responsibly via HDX;
2. the drafting and distribution of guidance notes on managing personal or sensitive data for the humanitarian sector; and
3. at least two events focused on responsible data use in the humanitarian sector with partners from the private sector, academia, government, and IASC agencies.

With regards to Result 1, the project focuses on two areas related to the safe sharing of data: First, we will create an enhanced detection process for sensitive data that is shared through HDX. This involves creating an algorithm or set of rules that will identify high-risk data before it is shared openly on HDX. This processing is currently handled manually by the HDX data team within 24 hours after a dataset is uploaded, but given this time lag, survey data with a high risk of re-identification of affected people has been shared publicly in the past. An automated detection process will remove this risk and send high-risk data into a quarantine process where it can be analyzed through statistical disclosure control (SDC), reducing the risk of the data before it is shared more widely.

Second, we will create a secure infrastructure and process where we can work with specific partners to de-risk data before it is shared with anyone. We will develop a service model to offer advanced data science techniques (including SDC) to partners that do not have these skills but are working with data about affected people.

User research requirement:

The Centre is looking for a research and design team or firm to help us: 1) improve the user experience with our enhanced detection process for sensitive data shared on HDX ; and 2) identify requirements and explore options for an external service model for SDC. Through feedback from internal and external partners, the goal of the research is to provide the Centre with a set of options to consider for both components that are viable to our team and meet user requirements.

Deliverables

- User research plan including timeline, methodology, key questions, stakeholders to interview, and approach of the final report.
- Presentation of preliminary findings and insights to the Centre Lead and relevant staff and stakeholders for feedback.
- Final research report/deck and design assets.

Requirements

The team or company should include at least two people:

- A project lead with experience in user experience design, design research or interaction design.
- A researcher(s) to support with service delivery and UX/UI considerations.

Education and Work Experience

- The project lead should have at least 7 years of experience design research and an advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent work experience) in interaction design, behavioural sciences, business, social sciences or other relevant discipline. A first-level university degree in combination with qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.
- The researcher(s) should have 5 years of experience in design research and an advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent work experience) in interaction design, behavioural sciences, business, social sciences or other relevant discipline. A first-level university degree in combination with qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

Other Skills:

- Synthesizing research findings and to articulate insights that will inform and inspire design.

- Developing new products and entities for a variety of organizations, businesses, brands, and systems.
- Knowledge of humanitarian and development ecosystems is a plus.
- Previous experience in report writing
- Proven experience in developing methods of inquiry and assessment such as surveys and interview questions.

Languages

Fluency in English is required (both oral and written). Knowledge of another UN official language is an advantage.

Contract Duration

It is anticipated that the user research will run over a period of 4-6 weeks. The estimated timeline is:

- 18 May - 9 June: conduct research
- 10 June: share initial insights with Centre Team
- 10 - 20 June: refine and synthesize findings; develop design assets
- 20 June: share draft report and assets for feedback
- 30 June: deliver final products