

7 May 2013



Transition of Do-it
Specification for Bidders
May 2013



Introduction from YouthNet

In March YouthNet announced that we would be transferring Do-it to a [new owner](#).

When we launched Do-it, it was with the aim putting young people in touch with volunteering opportunities using the ease of online. We could not have predicted just how successful the service would become. 12 years on, Do-it has become a vital part of the UK's volunteering infrastructure and connects volunteers of all ages to opportunities in their communities.

YouthNet is immensely proud of the hard work and dedication of our staff, past and present, who have developed Do-it and worked closely with our partners across the sector – especially the Volunteer Centres. Together, we have made it easier for individuals to volunteer than ever before.

YouthNet's commitment to Do-it and to volunteering hasn't changed. We believe in the power of young people helping each other, and others. We want to grow our 200-strong young volunteers and involve even more young people in shaping and delivering support for example through our service [TheSite](#).

However, the reality is that Do-it has proved so successful that it has grown beyond our original aim and YouthNet's mission to support young people. In the last year alone, Do-it has had almost two million visitors and enabled 650,000 applications to volunteer, and it has been embraced by people of all ages. We think it is fair to say that we have more than achieved our aim.

Therefore, we believe it is time for YouthNet to handover Do-it to an organisation which can focus on volunteers of all ages, enabling YouthNet to focus on the support we provide to young people through TheSite. Young people are facing even more challenging times and now it is the time for YouthNet to prioritise the needs of young people.

Our aim is to find a new owner to continue to support the sector and engage individuals to volunteer, as well as lead Do-it to the next phase of its development. We will transfer Do-it, along with its software services and database of volunteers, by mid December 2013. We are very pleased that the Office of Civil Society shares our view that Do-it can continue to play a vital role in supporting volunteering. We both believe Do-it has real potential to evolve and develop in exciting new ways to inspire people to give their time and help them connect with opportunities to do so. Together we will select the new owner and Nick Hurd MP, Minister for Civil Society, has confirmed that transitional funding will be available to support the right plan for the future of Do-it.

Our aspirations for Do-it

YouthNet and the Office for Civil Society (OCS) view the transition of Do-it as an opportunity to build on the many successes of the service and to take it on to the next stage of its development.

The pace of change in online technologies presents huge opportunities for a national resource such as Do-it. It also means the infrastructure needs to be flexible in order to adapt, grow and connect with other platforms and networks, while also continuing to support the work of volunteering sector partners who engage directly with volunteers.

YouthNet and OCS have engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and built on insights from a range of different sources in developing the aspirations for Do-it set out in this document. We also held a workshop in April, facilitated by Nesta, bringing together representatives from across the voluntary, corporate and technology sectors to discuss the potential roles Do-it could play in increasing the giving of time.

A number of common themes and opportunities have emerged, which have helped to inform the criteria for bidders set out below. We believe Do-it can be taken forward and developed further to:

- Continue to provide a national database and infrastructure to support local action.
- Create new and innovative ways to match individuals with opportunities to give their time.
- Provide leadership in the use of open and common standards to make the national database as easy and compelling as possible for volunteer-involving organisations to use and interact with, utilising recent advances in online technologies.
- Support the sector in creating and publicising more diverse opportunities to give time, in ways that fit with people's lives, interests and skills.
- Help to address the challenge of engaging those who do not already participate and inspiring them to get involved.
- Provide stronger links into volunteering for employers seeking to share their skills and develop their staff.
- Place the giving of time more firmly in the context of the rest of an individual's life, by linking with other aspects of people's online and offline worlds such as work, leisure interests and social networks.
- Create a more interactive and participatory online sphere, in which individuals can build their volunteering profile and shape their own experience, utilising tools such as online feedback and social media to enhance the volunteer journey, engage with others and maintain their involvement for the long term.
- Help volunteer-involving organisations to describe their requirements accurately and compellingly, and make it as simple as possible for those who have those skills – at individual or organisational level – to provide them.

We are seeking bidders who can develop Do-it to take advantage of these opportunities, while also ensuring that the current, highly-valued service continues uninterrupted for all who use it.

Who we are looking for

We want to pass on Do-it to the best possible new owner. We have an open mind as to the type of organisation or organisations this might be. We expect that realising the vision and aspirations we have for Do-it will require a range of different skill sets and experience, so it may be that some organisations will want to work together and bid jointly. Any successful bidder will need to have a strong core of expertise in the voluntary sector.

OCS is prepared to provide financial support on a transitional grant basis to enable the right owner to take Do-it on to the next stage of its development and put it on a sustainable financial footing. Any such funding would be provided under the powers granted at Section 70 of the Charities Act 2006. We would also be very interested to receive proposals that would not require Government funding.

All prospective bidders are encouraged to attend sessions to be run by YouthNet throughout May and June. There will also be the opportunity to have a one-to-one session with YouthNet and OCS to ask specific questions in advance of the deadline for proposals. See below for details of next steps and timings.

Assessment criteria

Bidders will be assessed on the strength of their proposals against each sub-section in Sections 1 and 2 below. Each sub-section (i) to (viii) carries equal weighting.

Section 1 – Vision and capability

In this section bidders should set out:

- i) **Your vision and ambitions for Do-it.** This should demonstrate the role you believe the platform can play in the future to increase the giving of time and how you will determine success within three years of taking on Do-it. It should also explain the ways in which you propose to work with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to maximise the utility and use of the platform.
- ii) **Your leadership and capabilities.** This should demonstrate the track record of your organisation or consortium in developing and delivering relevant major IT-enabled services and the appropriate skills and experience of the team that will lead and manage the development of Do-it. If you are operating as a consortium, this section should also explain its governance and financial management arrangements.

Section 2 – Plans for service development and delivery to achieve to the vision

In this section bidders should set out their proposals in each of the following areas:

Continuation of Do-it

iii) **Ensure the continuation of the service at current levels through the transition, with no interruption or degradation of service for users or partners.** Bidders should demonstrate their technical and organisational plans to ensure Do-it can continue to provide its current service upon taking full ownership in mid December 2013, and plans for any interim period before launching their preferred solution.

Development of Do-it

iv) **Utilise new technologies and open, common standards to make it as easy and compelling as possible for individuals and organisations to use, interact with and integrate with the Do-it platform.** Proposals should include approaches to architecture and data management that will maximise the utility of the platform for those involved in engaging volunteers and offer leadership for the volunteering sector in the use of common standards. Whilst bidders are not obligated to follow the Government Digital Service Manual - <https://www.gov.uk/service-manual>; we would expect them to demonstrate an understanding of the Design Principles - <https://www.gov.uk/designprinciples> and an awareness of the principles of effective service delivery - <https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/digital-by-default> where they apply to Do-It.

v) **Develop the Do-it platform as a catalyst to increase the availability of diverse opportunities to give time and improve the matching process.** Bidders should propose ways to enable the matching of opportunities and individuals in dynamic ways that fit with people's availability, skills, interests and locations.

vi) **Improve the overall experience for individuals seeking to give their time.** Bidders should propose ways of promoting and championing volunteering, and bringing dynamic and participatory tools (such as feedback and links to social networks) to the online volunteering process to inspire, motivate and engage existing and new volunteers. Bidders should also propose ways to use these approaches to maintain and improve the quality of individuals' experiences when engaging with volunteer-involving organisations.

vii) **Provide compelling engagement and support for partner organisations** currently using Do-it, and for new partners in the future. This should recognise the diversity of the partners already involved and the client groups they work with. It should also recognise the role those partners play in ensuring the breadth and scale of opportunities on Do-it and the value of the supporting systems that underpin their work.

Sustainability of Do-it

viii) **Build the financial sustainability of the platform, in order to operate independently of central Government funding by April 2016.** Bidders should set out their proposed business model for Do-it, including their cost and income models to March 2017, and present clear and credible plans for financial sustainability by April 2016.

Financial eligibility

The Office for Civil Society (OCS) is prepared to make funding available to support the transition of Do-it to the right new owner. Any funding we provide to support this work will be made under the powers granted to the Minister for the Cabinet Office under Section 70 of the Charities Act 2006: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/50/section/70>. The Act sets out the types of organisation we are able to fund.

Any Government transitional funding will end by March 2016. Bidders should set out their financial projections from the point of transfer (December 2013) to the end of the financial year ending 31 March 2014, and for the following three full financial years of operation (2014/15, 15/16 and 16/17), demonstrating financial sustainability independently of central Government funding by the start of financial year 16/17 (the year beginning 1 April 2016). This information can be in any format but must provide sufficient detail for us to understand and assess the financial sustainability of your proposals under Criterion (viii).

Bidders should note that all OCS grant funding is subject to annual Parliamentary approval and any OCS funding requested in financial year 2015/16 is subject to the outcome of the forthcoming spending review.

We are also very interested to receive bids that do not require central Government funding during a transitional period, or which require transitional funding for a shorter period than specified above.

Bidders will need to complete the “Information about your lead organisation” section of the application form and provide the financial documents requested.

Process Steps

Key dates in the process are as follows:

Process Stage	Date
YouthNet available for 1-to-1 conference calls with interested parties	15 th May
Open information session – overview on Do-it, OCS funding and insight into partners	22 nd May
Specific sessions with YouthNet on Technical, Partnerships and platforms & user interface	10 th and 11 th June
1-to-1 sessions for potential new owners with YouthNet and OCS	25 th and 26 th June
Deadline for submission of bids	8 th July
Technical assessment meetings with longlisted bidders	w/c 22 nd July
Final presentations from shortlisted bidders	w/c 5 th August
Decision on new owner	Mid-August
Announcement of new owner	Mid September
Transition of Do-it complete	Mid December

Supporting potential owners to develop their proposals

It is YouthNet's intention to ensure the best possible proposals from potential new owners by sharing detailed information and background on Do-it. This will take the form of:

1. Detailed documentation about Do-it published on YouthNet.org alongside this specification document
2. Initial 1-to-1 conference calls with YouthNet for interested parties on 15th May
3. An open session with group Q&As on 22nd May
4. Specific sessions on aspects of Do-it with group Q & As on 10th and 11th of June
5. Final 1-to-1 sessions ahead of final proposal deadlines for specific Q & As on 25th and 26th of June

Please see next page for further information on these dates and how to book on to them.

Information from YouthNet and OCS on Do-it and funding will only be provided at the sessions outlined above. In the interests of fairness, staff and trustees are unable to discuss the transfer outside of these sessions.

Any further relevant information not provided within the Do-it documentation will be shared with all parties via updates posted on the YouthNet.org website.

Information and Q&A opportunities

Event	Date and location	Purpose	Detail	Instructions
Initial 1-to-1 conversations with YouthNet	9.00 – 4.00pm on 15 th May. Conference call slots throughout the day to be booked in advance	To give interested parties opportunity to ask initial questions and to establish level of interest or suitability in taking on Do-it.	Up to 30 minutes slots available throughout the day. In the case that all available slots are filled, we will hold additional sessions on other days.	Potential owners to book slots for conference call by 14 th May by contacting info@youthnet.org or 020 7250 5700 and ask for Nora Nording
Do-it open information sessions	9.30 – 1pm on 22 nd May. At YouthNet offices, First Floor, 50 Featherstone Street, EC1Y 8RT	To support and bring to life the Do-it documentation and our aspirations; and to highlight the work of volunteer centres and volunteer involving organisations and their use of Do-it	This will include: Introduction and overview of Do-it Criteria and funding Panel discussion and Q&As	Potential owners to confirm attendance, name and number of individuals by 10am on 20 th May to info@youthnet.org or 020 7250 5700 ask for Nora Nording. The number of attendees from any one organisation will be limited to 2.
Do-it detailed Q&A sessions	10 – 1.30 on 10 th June at YouthNet offices.	To offer sessions in specific groups on key aspects of Do-it. Potential owners can book into individual sessions and send relevant staff to each session.	10 – 11.30 Technical, Platforms and User Interface 11.45 – 1.30 Partnerships and Stakeholders	Potential owners to book name into specific sessions on specific dates and send areas of specific questions by 5 th June to info@youthnet.org or 020 7250 5700 ask for Nora Nording. The number of attendees for any individual session will be limited to 2 per bidder.
1-to-1 sessions with relevant YouthNet staff	9.00 – 5.30pm on 19 th June at YouthNet offices. Meeting slots throughout the day to be booked in advance. (26 th June will also be available if needed)	Aim to enable questions relevant to specific proposal by individual potential new owner	Hour long slots to be booked in advance. Indication of key questions/queries and areas to cover should be sent to YouthNet by 19 th June.	Potential new owners to book for specific time and date, stating number & names and specific areas of interest by 19 th June to info@youthnet.org or 020 7250 5700 ask for Nora Nording