

D’Hub Challenge –Proof toward progress

On October 12 and 13, 2023, the Ministry of Digital Transformation presented 15 letters of contract to the individual developers and developer groups who were successful at the first stage of the Developers’ Hub Concept Challenge at its Head Office, International Waterfront Complex, Wrightson Road, Port of Spain. The presentation of the letters of contract is a formalisation of MDT’s D’Hub Concept Challenge Inaugural Awards, held previously, on September 29th at the Trinidad Hilton.

“No one does anything by themselves anymore!” was the reminder of the collaborative culture of the tech community relayed by Irwin Williams, Head of Software Development at the National Information and Communication Technology Company Limited (iGovTT). He emphasised that developers are surrounded by the greatest sounding boards through their friends, family and colleagues, and they should leverage those relationships to help them develop the best solutions possible for their proofs of concept.

Relative to software development, Proof of Concept (PoC) is a verification procedure for testing the feasibility of the software idea (i.e. concept). It essentially aims to verify that the solution can be created and actually work in a real-life application.

MDT’s Digital Transformation Adviser, Devindra Ramnarine related that D’Hub was indeed a major vehicle for the government toward diversification and building much needed capacity for a growing global digital environment. He stated that following this initial cohort of D’Hub developers, there is the intention to expand the scope of this initiative to include budding developers at the secondary school level. The vision of the D’Hub is to create the vehicle that would support digital development across all sectors, with the public sector being its first target group.

Ramnarine and Williams also assured the developers, that they would be provided, at no cost to them, with the necessary tools to support the development of their solutions, via resources on the D’Hub platform. Some of the D’Hub resources currently available include access to Gitlab, premium learning courses from Coursera, SimpliLearn and Linux Foundation. Technical assistance is also available from iGovTT. They will also soon have access to ‘innovation spaces’: Physical locations where developers will be able to meet to discuss ideas and collaborate on solutions.

The developers will be required as part of the next stage of the process to “pitch” their solution to a panel. Of the 15 successful teams, five will be selected towards the development of the final end-user solutions in service of the five government agencies, identified as ‘Challenge Owners,’ whose issues or ‘challenges’ were selected for solution development.

These government agencies and their challenges are:

- Customs and Excise Division - Liquor License Data Management Solution

Requiring a digital solution for the management of liquor license data from the various Customs and Excise offices (Port of Spain, San Fernando and Tobago) in a unified manner, to improve data accuracy, accessibility and security.

- Immigration Division - Online Passport Application Tracking Solution

Request for the development of a digital solution that enables passport applicants to receive updates on the availability and readiness of their passport throughout the application process.

- Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation (TTPost) - Real-time S42 Address Identification Solution: How to enable residents to better access information about their postal address?

Seeking the development of a solution that provides the public with easy access to residential and commercial S42 addresses.

- Environmental Management Authority (EMA) - Noise Pollution Measurement and Reporting Solution

Requiring a digital solution that provides the public with the ability to measure noise pollution via personal devices and subsequently make reports.

- Ministry of Health, ICT Division - Personalised Health Monitoring and Advisory Solution

Wanting a digital solution that provides the public with the ability to monitor their health, push prescriptive advice and allow individuals to subscribe to information on NCDs (non-communicable diseases) to help them take control of their wellness.

For more information on Developers' Hub (D'Hub), visit the D'Hub page on the Ministry of Digital Transformation's website at <https://dhub.mdt.gov.tt/>

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