Request for Application #2024-012
Global Goods Rapid Projects – Multilingual Support and Security

I.   Summary of Deadlines

The expected schedule for this solicitation is outlined in the following table. Note that PATH reserves the right to modify this schedule as needed. All parties will be notified simultaneously of any changes through a modification posted on Digital Square's website.

Request for Application (RFA) released	Tuesday, March 5th, 2024
Deadline for submitting fact-finding questions to digitalsquaresolicitations@path.org	Friday, March 15th, 2024 at 5:00 PM EDT
PATH to respond to fact-finding questions	Wednesday, March 20th, 2024
Applications due	**Thursday, March 28th, 2024 at 5:00PM EDT**
Applicants notified of decision	Friday, April 12th, 2024
Funding details	Number of fixed amount awards to be issued: Digital Square intends to sign multiple awards with a maximum amount per award of US$50,000, depending on the recommendation of the technical evaluation committee. Anticipated maximum duration of the awards: three to four months.

II.   PATH Statement of Business

PATH is the leader in global health innovation. An international nonprofit organization, we save lives and improve health, especially among women and children. We accelerate innovation across five platforms—vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, devices, and system and service innovations—that harness our entrepreneurial insight, scientific and public health expertise, and passion for health equity. By mobilizing partners around the world, we take innovation to scale, working alongside countries primarily in Africa and Asia to tackle their greatest health needs. Together, we deliver measurable results that disrupt the cycle of poor health. Learn more at www.path.org.

III.   Project Background

A. Project Background

In pursuit of our Mission: ***connect health leaders with the resources necessary for digital transformation***, Digital Square offers a new way to invest in digital health—providing a space where countries and members of the global community can gather to think big and do good, together. By convening government officials, technological innovators, donor and implementation partners, and others across borders and boundaries in the Digital Square, we can grow possibility into reality by focusing on our common goal: **connecting the world for better health**.

Digital Square's work support three result areas:

1. **Alignment and Co-investment:** Digital Square helps to identify promising investment opportunities and provides operational support to streamline procurement.
2. **Global goods:** Digital Square promotes the development, adoption, and reuse of global goods, and helps increase their availability, adaptability, and maturity.
3. **Regional and Country Systems:** Digital Square helps elevate country priorities and strengthen regional and national capacity.

Digital Square is requesting applications from qualified vendors or consortiums focused on **enhancing existing Digital Square–approved software global goods** in one or both of the following aspects of software maturity:

1. **Multilingual support through localization (i10n) and internationalization (i18n).**
   Internationalization refers to the process of designing and building a software application so that it can be easily adapted to various languages and regions without needing engineering expertise. Localization refers to the process of adapting internationalized software for a specific region or language by translating text and adding locale-specific components. Through these small awards for multilingual support, we aim to make global goods more accessible and more usable for users across a wider user base and contribute to a more inclusive digital health marketplace.

   Enhancements in this aspect may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

   - **Documentation:** technical and/or user documentation, guidelines, and training resources available in one or more additional languages.
   - **Multilingual user interfaces**
   - **Internationalization**: ability to support additional languages, character sets, right-to-left text, or additional calendar formats.
   - **Multilingual code systems**
   - **Translation:** multilingual FHIR implementation guides.

2. **Security and privacy.**
   Through these small awards for cybersecurity and data privacy for existing global goods, we aim to support initiatives that foster innovation, awareness, and practical solutions in the realm of digital security. We seek to empower global goods innovators that contribute to enhancing cybersecurity practices, developing privacy-centric technologies, and promoting a safer digital ecosystem. The awards are designed to encourage research and implementation of measures that address emerging threats, protect sensitive data, and align with evolving industry standards and regulations in global good tools/projects. We are particularly interested in supporting efforts that demonstrate creativity, inclusivity, and effectiveness in tackling cybersecurity and data privacy challenges, ultimately contributing to a more secure and trustworthy digital environment for all.

Enhancements in this aspect may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- **Improvements to software:** upgrade standard authentication to latest technologies according to best practices; implement at rest encryption; conduct code reviews focused on privacy and security.
- **Improvements to processes:** include security measures in the DevSecOps pipeline—such as setting up ongoing vulnerability scanners, etc.; and setting up a vulnerability disclosure program.
- **Security audits and assessments**: conduct assessments of software and hosted SaaS that review access control (authentication and authorization), encryption, key management, and other aspects of compliance to best practices.
- **Incident response planning**: develop incident response plans and strategies to mitigate the impact of cybersecurity incidents.
- **Community guidance**: provide implementation guides that focus on setting up secure environments and security considerations when implementing the global good technology; develop a cybersecurity toolkit specifically for the global good's community developers/implementers that helps them to establish robust security measures within typical budget constraints.
- **Innovative solutions**: encourage applications that bring innovative approaches to cybersecurity and data privacy, such as novel encryption techniques, secure authentication methods, or advanced threat detection mechanisms. Example: explore the integration of artificial intelligence for predictive threat analysis and proactive cybersecurity measures.
- **Privacy-centric technologies:** Improvements designed to enhance data privacy, such as decentralized identity systems, privacy-preserving analytics, or secure communication platforms.

Applicants must submit a very concise and focused application using the attached application template that clearly outlines what you are proposing with very clearly defined and distinct deliverables that can be delivered within an approximately three to four month timeframe. Applications are to be submitted by **Thursday, March 28th, 2024 at 5:00 PM EDT.**

Digital Square is expected to issue multiple (up to eight) fixed amount awards with a maximum amount of US$50,000 per award (fifty thousand US dollars) depending on the recommendation of the technical evaluation committee. Therefore, we encourage you to ensure that your deliverables are well defined and easily severable should the technical evaluation committee decide to select a subsection of your proposal and deliverable list to fund. These will be fixed amount/deliverable-based awards, (i.e. invoicing and payments made per deliverable).

B. Proposed Project Timeline

PATH anticipates that awards will begin upon signature and must end by **September 30, 2024.** As part of Digital Square's due diligence, we will conduct pre-award evaluations of all shortlisted vendors.

IV.   Scope of Work and Deliverables

A.   Scope of Work

Background

- Enhancements are limited to **existing Digital Square–approved software global goods only.**
- Enhancements must be focused on improvements in two key aspects:
    - Enhanced internationalization/localization and multilingual support of the software global good, and/or
    - Improvements that will enhance the security and privacy of the software global good.

B.   Deliverables

The deliverables of this RFA will vary according to the proposed enhancements but should at minimum, include:

- Clearly defined proposed enhancements that lead to measurable improvements to an existing software global good, resulting in a more mature software product in the two key aspects:
    - Multilingual support through internationalization and/or localization.
    - Security and privacy.

V.   Application Requirements – Technical

Provide a narrative on your technical approach to accomplish the Scope of Work and Deliverables as per section IV. The application must use the application template attached and is limited to **8 pages in an unlocked Word document (excluding appendices)**.

Checklist of requirements for application submission includes:
- Completed technical application (using template linked in Section V. Application Requirements – Technical.
- Completed cost application as described in Section VI. Application Requirements – Cost, including detailed budget in Excel.

VI.   Application Requirements – Cost

Digital Square has allocated US$200,000 for this activity and intends to issue multiple awards with a maximum amount per award of US$50,000 for a 3- to 4-month period (ending on September 30th, 2024). This figure is just an estimate provided for informational purposes to the applicant and is non-binding.

Digital Square's technical evaluation committee, comprised of at minimum five members with qualifications and experience in a range of technical areas, will evaluate the cost applications.

No analysis will be performed on applications if they are determined as non-responsive or if the technical application is determined to be technically unacceptable. The price/business evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the quoted utility-based solution and proposed labor categories, their rates, and Evaluation Criteria. Digital Square will conduct an analysis to determine if all quoted prices are reasonable.

Digital Square will also compare the proposed prices to historical prices paid for the same or similar services and the independent government cost estimate. Other techniques and procedures may be used to ensure quoted prices are fair and reasonable. A cost realism analysis will be performed to determine whether the quoted Level of Effort is realistic for the work to be performed, reflects a clear understanding

of the requirements, and is consistent with the unique methods of performance set forth in the company's technical quote.

Required Elements

The Cost Application must include a detailed budget that is itemized to the cost categories defined below. This detailed budget should be submitted in an <u>unlocked Excel spreadsheet</u> and must include the following information:

- Personnel—all proposed staff/positions with daily rates and total number of days.
- Details of all subcontracting out of work. This includes proposed consultants.
- Itemization of all other direct costs (e.g., hosting costs, licenses, administrative costs, supplies, etc.).
- Indirect Cost Rate and calculation (if applicable).

The Cost Application shall begin with a summary budget detailing costs in the following categories (as applicable), example:

Name/Position	Unit	Cost	Deliverable A #	Deliverable A total	Deliverable B #	Deliverable B total
Ex. Jones - System architect	Days			$ -		$ -
						$ -
						$ -
TOTAL SALARIES				**$ -**		**$ -**
Consultants						
Interoperability Expert	Days			$ -		$ -
TOTAL CONSULTANTS				**$ -**		**$ -**
Other Direct Costs (ODC)						
Office Supplies	Item			$ -		
TOTAL ODC				**$ -**		**$ -**
Indirect Cost				$ -		
TOTAL Indirect Cost						
TOTAL				**$ -**		**$ -**

VII. Application Evaluation Criteria

Digital Square's technical evaluation committee, comprised of three to five individuals with qualifications and experience across a range of technical areas, will evaluate the application according to the criteria detailed below. The evaluation scores will be utilized to make the final decision.

Area	Points
Technical	75

Clarity, level of detail, and relevance for the following aspects:
   1. Executive summary: objectives and expected value-add.
   2. Workplan: level of detail, feasibility.
   3. Proposed technical enhancements/value to existing software global good/community.	

Cost	25
1. Costs as detailed in section VI.	

Once applicants are notified of the final decision, shortlisted applicants will be provided feedback by the Digital Square operations team via the WizeHive platform within one week of the final decision date and will include the total score and breakdown of scores by evaluation criteria level.

Note: PATH reserves the right to include additional criteria.

VIII. Instructions and Deadlines for Responding

A. PATH Contacts

Program Contact: digitalsquaresolicitations@path.org

B. Deadline for submitting fact-finding questions

Questions on this RFA will be accepted via email to digitalsquaresolicitations@path.org **through Friday, March 15th, 2024 at 5:00 PM EDT**. All submitted questions and answers will be provided on **Wednesday, March 20th, 2024** to all participants via email and posted on the Digital Square sites. Please note that responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved. Inquiries after this date cannot be accommodated.

C. Application Due: **Thursday, March 28th, 2024 at 5:00 PM EDT**

All applications must be submitted via the WizeHive platform. Any questions related to the platform should be addressed to digitalsquaresolicitations@path.org. The process for submission is as follows:

- Navigate to the submission portal to create a new User Profile if you have not used the portal before, or "Log In" using your profile credentials if you are an existing user.
- Once logged in, click "Create an **Application Profile** to Get Started." This profile is in addition to the User Profile and is specific to this application. This step must be completed before you can proceed with the application.
- Click the "Get Started" box (marked with a "+").
- You can now access and edit the application form, where you will upload the two required application materials (the technical proposal and cost application).
- The form can be saved in draft prior to submission.
- Once both required application materials are uploaded, save the form and the "Submit" button will be green and clickable. Once submitted, the form and materials can be viewed but cannot be edited.

We advise that you pay close attention to upload instructions for file types. We will not accept responsibility for resolving technical transmission problems with applications.

D. Conclusion of Process

Applicants will be notified of the decision by **Friday, April 12th, 2024.** The final award is subject to the terms and conditions included in this solicitation, as well as successful final negotiations of all applicable terms and conditions affecting this work.

IX. Terms and Conditions of the Solicitation

A. Notice of non-binding solicitation

PATH reserves the right to reject any and all bids received in response to this solicitation and is in no way bound to accept any application. The applications submitted through this RFA process are the responsibility of the submitter and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation or PATH.

B. Confidentiality

All information provided by PATH as part of this solicitation must be treated as confidential. In the event that any information is inappropriately released, PATH will seek appropriate remedies as allowed. Applications, discussions, and all information received in response to this solicitation will be held strictly confidential, except as otherwise noted.

C. Conflict of interest disclosure

Applicants must disclose, to the program contact listed in the RFA, any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest could be present if: there is a personal relationship with a PATH staff member that constitutes a significant financial interest, board memberships, other employment, and ownership or rights in intellectual property that may be in conflict with the supplier's obligations to PATH. Suppliers and PATH are protected when actual or perceived conflicts of interest are disclosed. When necessary, PATH will create a management plan that provides mitigation of potential risks presented by the disclosed conflict of interest.

D. Communication

All communications regarding this solicitation shall be directed to appropriate parties at PATH indicated in Section VIII.

Contacting third parties involved in the project, the review panel, or any other party may be considered a conflict of interest and could result in disqualification of the application.

E. Acceptance

Acceptance of an application does not imply acceptance of its terms and conditions. PATH reserves the option to negotiate on the final terms and conditions. We additionally reserve the right to negotiate the substance of the finalists' application, as well as the option of accepting partial components of an application if appropriate.

F. Right to final negotiations

PATH reserves the option to negotiate on the final costs and final scope of work, and also reserves the option to limit or include third parties at PATH's sole and full discretion in such negotiations.

G. Third-party limitations

PATH does not represent, warrant, or act as an agent for any third party as a result of this solicitation. This solicitation does not authorize any third party to bind or commit PATH in any way without our express written consent.

H. Application validity

Applications submitted under this request shall be valid for 90 days from the date the application is due. The validity period shall be stated in the application submitted to PATH.

I. Limitation of liability

The terms and conditions set forth in this RFA do not exclude or limit the liability of PATH or the supplier in relation to fraud or in other circumstances giving rise to liability under any applicable law.

J. Tender costs and liability

Applicants are responsible for obtaining all information necessary for preparation of their application and for all costs and expenses incurred in preparation of the application. Subject to the "Limitation of liability" section in this RFA (section I), the applicant accepts by their participation in response to this RFA, including without limitation the submission of the application, that it will not be entitled to claim from PATH any costs, expenses, or liabilities that it may incur in tendering a response to this RFA, irrespective of whether their application is successful.

K. PATH's variation or termination rights

PATH reserves the right to vary or terminate this RFA process with written notice to all suppliers from which it has received application. It is intended that this solicitation process will take place in accordance with the provisions of this RFA, but PATH reserves the right to terminate, amend, or vary (to include, without limitation, in relation to any time scales or deadlines) the solicitation process by notice to all suppliers from which it has received applications. Subject to section I, "Limitation of liability," PATH will have no liability for any losses, costs, or expenses caused by its termination, amendment, or variation to this RFA.

L. Joint venture or consortium or subcontractors

Any lead organization that submits an application in response to this RFA takes responsibility and accountability for enforcing the RFA requirements set forth herein among the members of the joint venture or consortium, and each of their advisers, subcontractors, and staff.

M. Payment and invoicing

PATH will pay correctly addressed and undisputed invoices within 30 days. Suppliers shall ensure comparable payment provisions apply to payments to their downstream parties. Advance payment is not preferred. If an advance payment is envisaged and is other than industry or country known practice, such must be made clear in the financial application to PATH.