

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD1509

Title: Tech.London

Executive Summary:

It is proposed that tech.london will be a dedicated online platform to connect, support and grow London's tech business community. This will aggregate and promote the many resources, including those available via the GLA's London Datastore, LEP Growth Hub, and Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme. The platform will be developed by Gust, with sponsorship from IBM, which has sought in kind support from the GLA.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves the entry into an agreement by the GLA with Gust to provide in kind support for the delivery of its tech.london, dedicated online platform to connect, support and grow London's tech business community.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision, and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:

Date:

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Gust are a US based company introduced to the GLA by London and Partners. They have previously developed a tech startup hub in New York City www.digital.nyc in partnership with the New York City Mayor's office and are keen to develop a similar online platform for London in partnership with the GLA, called tech.london.
- 1.2 Tech.London will be a dedicated resource to connect, support and grow London's tech business community. The hub will be a catalyst for start-up growth and economic development across London and is an opportunity for the GLA to support the creation of a universal, city-wide initiative that offers the right tools and resources to the tech start up ecosystem. It aims to connect employees to jobs in the sector, investors to local high-growth companies that they can fund, multinational corporates to strategic partners, whilst also giving entrepreneurs access tools and resources they need to grow their companies. The site will not replace existing sites and resources, but will act as an aggregator, promoting their availability by providing short excerpts, and driving traffic to the sites. It will also act as a signpost for existing GLA and London Enterprise Panel (LEP) resources such as the London Co-Investment Fund, LEP.London, and the Broadband Connection Vouchers.
- 1.3 This platform will sit on an independent site and will carry a supported by Mayor of London logo. Gust will be designing and building the platform, maintaining and project managing the content development, providing a secondee to support population of the hub content and promoting and advertising the platform.
- 1.4 The proposal from Gust is uniquely beneficial as the agreement has met the following criteria;
 1. The partner has successful experience of delivering a similar platform with the New York City authority digital.nyc,
 2. The partner has provided evidence of significant press exposure previously achieved
 3. The agreement secures significant mayoral collateral on the site with promoted exposure of GLA content targeted at the technology sector
 4. The partner will be providing a fully funded secondee that will develop our relationships within the tech sector.
- 1.5 The GLA will provide general support, editorial direction and oversight over content input and support with the launch and marketing. The GLA is not providing any capital or revenue costs towards the project, so a private sector sponsor was required to fund the delivery of the project. The GLA were approached after this sponsor had been secured by Gust. There is no funding required from the GLA other than officer time being required leading up to the launch, and subsequent minimal officer time in coordinating the work of the Gust secondee.
- 1.6 It is proposed that the platform will be launched in time for London Technology Week taking place between Monday 15th June and Sunday 21st June. The platform will be operated by Gust, with a secondee based at City Hall providing editorial control over content and partnership development, and to this end GLA TG and HR have been consulted and are content with the proposals.
- 1.7 GLA support will be provided subject to GLA terms and conditions and officers will work with the GLA's commercial partnerships team in this regard. Officers are satisfied that the provision of in-kind support, including the licensing of the mayoral logo to Gust in this regard affords value money because of the value of activity being delivered in kind by partners.

- 1.8 There have been no previous decisions relevant to the tech.london project, but it has received endorsement from the Chief of Staff and Deputy Mayor, Policy and Planning, Special Adviser for Business and Science and the Executive Director for Development, Enterprise and Environment.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The project aims to address the information and coordination failure in the tech sector, reported anecdotally, by opening up and connecting entrepreneurs and businesses to existing resources. This partnership is developed with no funding required from the GLA, although there is a notional approximate cost of £13,628 (2 hours per week Grade 8 for 3 years - £8,142, and 1 hour per week Grade 10 for 3 years - £5,486) in officer time forecast as required. The GLA is best placed to drive this project as it is focussed on London and it brings together existing Mayoral tech programmes and networks.

Objective 1:	To generate awareness of GLA and LEP programmes amongst London's technology sector through the use of the platform.		
Measurable benefits and key outputs (including jobs):	1	Usage of the website measured by tracking traffic of the website, broken down to number of page views, users and number of sessions	Quarterly
	2	Number of GLA programmes featured on the platform	Quarterly
	3	Uplift in applications to key mayoral and LEP programmes	Quarterly
Non measurable benefits:	Providing a clear communication methods for reaching London's technology sector		
Objective 2:	To increase engagement with businesses and the tech ecosystem community through the platform.		
Measurable benefits and key outputs (including jobs):	1	Number of businesses signed up to the tech.london newsletter	Quarterly
	2	Number of businesses providing content and company to the website	Quarterly

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 One in ten Londoners is digitally excluded. The impact of being digitally excluded is significant. People who are digitally excluded are not able to access employment and training opportunities, engage with government services that are online, or shop for cheaper deals.
- 3.2 There is no single reason for people being digitally excluded. Often it is a combination of:
- people being unable to afford the kit or the cost of connectivity
 - not being able to access appropriate training
 - not understanding the benefits of being online
- 3.3 The Mayor's Digital Inclusion Strategy identified that 18% of Londoners (nearly two million) do not have basic online skills. The groups statistically most likely to not be online include older people, and disabled people.
- 3.4 Given the complexity and the multiple barriers people face to getting online, any intervention will require a partnership approach and will have to address the issue of kit, connectivity and training, often, simultaneously. The Mayor recognises that the work will have to build on existing good practice and will, therefore:
- support others;
 - coordinate activity;
 - undertake specific interventions and

- measure success.

- 3.5 There are many issues to improving connectivity, and tackling digital exclusion is a key part of it. Other areas of Mayoral work look at addressing other issues.
- 3.6 The scheme will need to make sure that digital inclusion is made a key part of the project, not only through the promotion of skills projects , but also through promoting the Mayor's digital inclusion strategy to key stakeholders through the platform.

4. Other considerations

a) Key Risks and Issues

	Risk description	Mitigation / Risk response	Low/Medium /High	GLA risk owner
1	Platform fails to be delivered on launch of London Technology Week	This risk is being mitigated through strict project management on behalf of both the GLA and the delivery partner Gust, including twice weekly phone calls and regularly updated project schedules. Should the project fail to meet the deadline of the first day of London Technology Week it can be launched later in the week. A 'holding page' can also be put in place as a back stop should this not be possible	Medium	EBPU
2	The sector does not respond positively to the platform	The platform has been carefully positioned to have a unique offering. Key sector representatives are being consulted through round tables in the run up to the launch. They will also be public supporters of the platform after launch. Any issues affecting messaging will be discussed cleared with approval from the press team.	Medium	EBPU

b) Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities c) impact assessments and consultations.

- The hub will help to achieve the Mayoral commitment to expand the capital's hi-tech economy as stated in the **Manifesto**.
"Lobby the Government to devolve the Tech City Investment Organisation and its budget to London as part of continued support for the expansion of the capital's hi-tech economy."
- It will help deliver the **Mayor's 2020 Vision**, to support start-ups by providing a centralised resource to signpost more start-up businesses to funding opportunities such as the LEP's London Co-Investment Fund and connect them to investors.
"We need to do everything we can to encourage these entrepreneurs"; "We must do far more to ensure that these start-ups are able to raise the capital they need"
- The platform supports objectives in the **Smart London plan** such as showcasing London's emerging innovation to attract global investment to enable solutions to be more rapidly commercialised and

enabling the digital economy to grow.

- Tech.london will also help deliver the **LEP's Jobs and Growth priorities:**
Priority 2 – Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs)
Increase the number of SMEs that access finance to grow their companies
Attract private sector leverage across the actions and activities to be promoted and funded by the Mayor and the LEP.
To encourage business support organisations, including those which are LEP members, to work together in coordinating and signposting SMEs to relevant business support programmes and initiatives.
Priority 3 – Digital Creative, Science and Technology
Put London firmly on the global investment map as a science and technology hub

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for the GLA to enter into a value in kind partnership with Gust to deliver tech.london, a dedicated online platform to connect, support and grow London's tech business community.
- 5.2 The GLA will not incur any direct costs associated with this partnership, other than officer time leading up to the launch, and subsequent minimal officer time in coordinating the work of the Gust secondees.
- 5.3 A strategy to ensure future funding sustainability for the platform will need to be developed prior to March 2018, at which point the sponsorship received from IBM ceases.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:
 - 6.1.1 the decisions requested of the Mayor fall within the statutory powers of the GLA to do such things as may be considered to further, and or be facilitative of or conducive or incidental to the furthering of, the promotion of economic development and wealth creation in Greater London; and
 - 6.1.2 in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:
 - (a) pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
 - (b) consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
 - (c) consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2 Officers ensure that appropriate agreements are entered into and executed by the GLA and Gust to govern the GLA's proposed provision of support and the secondment noted in section 1 of this report before any commitment is made to and the commencement of the provision of the support and/or the secondment proposed liaising the GLA's commercial partnerships and HR teams accordingly. In addition to standard provisions the agreement for the provision of GLA support should contain express provisions concerning the licensing of the Mayor of London logo, the licensed use and condition applicable in this regard and the in-exclusivity of the agreement.
- 6.3 In taking the decisions requested of him, the Mayor must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty; namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other

conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Mayor should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this Mayoral Decision.

7. Investment & Performance Board

This decision was approved in principle using the IPB urgency procedure on 8 June 2015.

8. Planned delivery approach and next steps

	Milestones, deliverables and promotional activity	GLA lead	Planned date
1	Completion of commercial agreement	Caroline Khoo	15 June 2015
2	Announcement of launch during London Technology Week	Sara Kelly Jon Weisgard	15 June 2015
3	Delivery Start Date	Sara Kelly	15 June 2015
4	Interim evaluation start-finish (self/external)	Sara Kelly	May 2016
5	Final evaluation start and finish (self/external)	Sara Kelly	May 2017
6	Delivery End Date	Sara Kelly	May 2017
7	Project Closure:	Sara Kelly	May 2017

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Sara Kelly has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following have been consulted on the final decision.

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Jeremy Skinner has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Fiona Fletcher-Smith has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Sir Edward Lister has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature

Date

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature

Date