

## Terms of reference: Infrastructure Anti-Corruption Toolbox (IACT) Web Platform Development.

### 1. Background

---

CoST, the Infrastructure Transparency Initiative, works with government, the private sector, and civil society to promote transparency and accountability in public infrastructure. Through its multi-stakeholder approach, CoST has built a track record currently supporting 18 member partners in 16 countries, with data publication on thousands of infrastructure projects representing billions of dollars in public investment.

A recurring finding across CoST Member independent reviews, is that integrity and performance risks in infrastructure are well documented in isolation but poorly accessible to the practitioners who need them. Risk identification tools exist, mitigation strategies have been codified, and standards have been developed, yet these resources remain scattered across organisations, formats, and languages. The absence of a single, authoritative platform means that investors assessing corruption exposure, government officials managing procurement integrity, firms seeking good practice benchmarks, and civil society monitors tracking public spending each face the same problem: discovering what already exists takes longer than it should, and applying it to a specific context requires expertise that is unevenly distributed.

Funded by the US Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the Infrastructure Anti-Corruption Toolbox (IACT) is a response to this gap. Hosted by CoST, IACT will serve as a knowledge hub that brings together curated anti-corruption resources, risk identification and mitigation tools into a single, navigable platform. Using the [OECD IACT Handbook](#) as a starting point, the initiative builds on the knowledge hub paradigm, where the platform's value increases with use as it aggregates intelligence from its user base.

These Terms of Reference set out the requirements for engaging a web development consultancy to design, build, and support the IACT platform through a phased development approach. The phased structure reflects both the ambition of the platform and the practical need to deliver demonstrable progress at defined intervals, manage budget exposure, and incorporate learning from each stage into the next.

### 2. Objectives

---

The overarching objective is to develop a web-based platform that serves as the primary digital infrastructure for the IACT, enabling users across different stakeholder groups to identify, understand, and mitigate corruption risks in public infrastructure.

#### 2.1 Specific Objectives

- **Create an accessible, searchable platform** that houses curated anti-corruption resources including dashboards, digital media such as videos, pictures and infographics, tools, standards, templates, guidance notes, and worked examples, organised by risk type, project stage, stakeholder group, and geography.

- **Develop guided user journeys** through an intelligent intake mechanism (chatbot or guided questionnaire) that directs users to the most relevant resources based on their stakeholder group, geographic context, and priority risks.
- **Generate aggregated risk intelligence** through heat maps and analytics that synthesise user inputs over time, surfacing patterns such as the most commonly identified integrity and performance risks by geography, sector, or stakeholder group.
- **Provide a content management system** that enables CoST staff to add, update, retire, and manage platform content without ongoing developer dependency.
- **Support multilingual access**, starting with English and Spanish, with architecture that accommodates additional languages as the platform scales.

### 3. Target Users

The platform serves four primary user groups, each approaching anti-corruption resources from a distinct perspective. The information architecture and guided navigation must account for these different entry points.

User Group	Primary Interest	Platform Value Proposition
<b>Investors</b>	Assessing corruption risk exposure in infrastructure portfolios prior to the investment decision	Data-driven risk profiles by country and infrastructure sector, combining risk profiles with infrastructure data to gauge exposure
<b>Public and Private Sector Clients</b>	Identifying and managing corruption risks at each stage of the infrastructure delivery cycle	Stage-specific risk mapping with actionable mitigation strategies and precedent examples
<b>Contractors and specialist consultants</b>	Adopting international good practice for integrity in infrastructure procurement and delivery	Curated standards, compliance templates, and benchmarking tools
<b>Civil Society</b>	Public monitoring of infrastructure spending and procurement integrity	Monitoring frameworks, red flag indicators to identify key risks, and access to published data

The guided intake mechanism (Section 5, Phase 1) will use stakeholder group identification as one of its initial routing parameters, ensuring that each user group is directed toward the resources and data most relevant to their needs.

### 4. Platform Vision

The IACT platform is envisioned as two complementary components operating within a single user experience:

#### 4.1 Curated Knowledge Hub

A searchable, structured collection of anti-corruption resources organised into the following categories:

- **Risk Mapping:** A structured database of corruption risks and corresponding mitigation strategies, searchable by infrastructure stage, risk type, geography, and

stakeholder perspective. Users can navigate directly or be guided through the chatbot intake. See annex for an example of the working draft risk map.

- **Resource Library:** Curated tools, standards, templates, guidance notes, and worked examples, categorised as distinct resource subtypes to support filtering and discovery.
- **Case Study Library:** Documented cases of corruption risks identified and addressed in real infrastructure contexts, providing practical precedent for practitioners.
- **Training Materials:** Educational resources including structured curricula and reference materials developed by CoST and partner organisations, supporting e-learning and capacity building across all user groups.
- **CoST Independent Review Reports:** A compilation of reports, manuals, guidance notes, videos and data independently prepared by technical experts, assessing transparency, integrity and performance issues across 700+ infrastructure projects.

## 4.2 Intelligent Intake and Aggregated Intelligence

A defining feature of the platform is the guided intake mechanism: an interactive chatbot or structured questionnaire that engages users at their point of entry. The intake collects key parameters including stakeholder group, geographic focus, and priority risks, then routes the user to the most relevant section of the platform.

Critically, the data collected through this intake process creates a secondary intelligence layer. As users interact with the platform, their inputs are aggregated to produce heat maps showing the distribution and frequency of identified risks by geography, sector, and stakeholder group. This transforms the platform from a static resource library into a learning system whose analytical value increases with use. Over time, these aggregated patterns provide CoST and its stakeholders with market intelligence on where corruption risks are most concentrated and what mitigation approaches are most sought after.

## 5. Scope of Work

The scope of work is structured in four phases, reflecting a software development lifecycle approach. This phased structure serves three purposes: it ensures demonstrable progress at defined intervals for stakeholder reporting; it manages budget exposure by linking payments to verified deliverables; and it allows learning from each phase to inform the next, reducing the risk of building a platform that does not meet user needs.

The consultant is expected to deliver across all phases. However, CoST reserves the right to review progress and scope at each phase boundary and to adjust subsequent phases based on findings, stakeholder feedback, and available budget.

### 5.1 Phase 1: Information Architecture and Content Design

**Indicative duration:** 6 to 8 weeks

This phase establishes the conceptual and structural foundation of the platform. It is the most intellectually demanding phase and will require close collaboration between the consultant(s), CoST's content leads (who bring subject matter expertise on anti-corruption tools and risk mapping which is now substantially complete), and CoST's technical team.

## Deliverables

- **Content Taxonomy:** A complete classification system for all platform content, defining the hierarchy of resource types, subtypes, metadata tags, and relationships between items. This taxonomy must account for the four resource categories (risk mapping, resource library, case library, training materials), the CoST independent reviews, and the cross-referencing between curated resources and real data.
- **User Journey Maps:** Documented navigation flows for each of the four target user groups, showing how each enters the platform, what the guided intake presents, and where they are directed based on their inputs. These journeys must cover both the chatbot-guided path and direct navigation for experienced users.
- **Guided Intake Design:** Functional specification for the chatbot or structured questionnaire, including the question sequence, decision logic, parameter capture (stakeholder group, geography, priority risks), and the data schema for storing responses to feed the heat map analytics.
- **Content Management Workflows:** Documented processes for how non-technical CoST staff will add new resources, update existing content, retire outdated materials, and manage the content lifecycle without developer involvement.
- **Wireframes and Clickable Prototypes:** Visual representations of all key platforms pages and interactions, progressing from static wireframes to interactive clickable prototypes. These must be testable with representative users before development begins.

## 5.2 Phase 2: Platform Development and Build

**Indicative duration:** 10 to 14 weeks

This phase translates the architecture from Phase 1 into a functional platform. CoST does not prescribe specific technologies. The consultant is expected to propose a technology stack based on the requirements established in Phase 1, justified by fitness for purpose, long-term maintainability, hosting cost efficiency, and the team's capacity to manage the platform post-handover.

## Deliverables

- **Technology Recommendation:** A documented assessment of technology options with a recommended stack, including rationale, hosting requirements, estimated annual operating costs, and comparison of at least two viable alternatives.
- **Domain and Hosting Strategy:** Recommendation on whether the platform operates as a subdomain of the existing CoST website, a standalone domain, or an integrated section, with technical justification considering SEO, branding, maintenance overhead, user journey and existing infrastructure (including the [Infrastructure Transparency Index website](#) and [main website](#)).
- **Functional Platform (Basic):** A working platform implementing the core content taxonomy, resource library, case library, searchable risk mapping, infographics and basic guided navigation. This is the September 2026 deliverable: a functional and demonstrable product that allows for advanced features (analytics, chatbot, heat maps) to be integrated at a later date.

- **Content Management System:** Fully configured CMS enabling CoST staff to manage content according to the workflows defined in Phase 1. The system must support multilingual content (English and Spanish at minimum), role-based access, and content versioning.
- **Brand Implementation:** Full application of CoST brand guidelines including colours, typography, imagery standards, and tone of voice across all platform pages. The consultant will work with CoST's communications team to ensure brand compliance.
- **Accessibility and Responsiveness:** The platform must meet WCAG 2.1 AA standards and render correctly across desktop, tablet, and mobile devices.

### 5.3 Phase 3: Launch, Support, and Iteration

**Indicative duration:** 4 to 6 weeks post-launch

This phase covers the transition from development to live operation, including issue resolution and the establishment of ongoing support arrangements.

#### Deliverables

- **Launch Deployment of IACT:** Live deployment with all Phase 2 deliverables operational, including DNS configuration, SSL certification, and performance optimisation.
- **Bug Resolution and Refinement:** A defined window for addressing bugs, user-reported issues, and minor refinements. The consultant must provide a clear process for reporting, triaging, and resolving issues within agreed response times.
- **Staff Training:** Hands-on training for CoST staff responsible for content management, covering all CMS functions, content workflows, troubleshooting, and escalation procedures.
- **Technical Documentation:** Complete documentation of the platform architecture, codebase, deployment procedures, CMS configuration, and maintenance requirements, sufficient for a different technical team to assume maintenance if needed.
- **Hosting and Maintenance Review:** A documented assessment of annual hosting costs, performance benchmarks, uptime requirements, and recommended maintenance schedule.

### 5.4 Phase 4: Advanced features

**Indicative duration:** 6 to 8 weeks

This phase integrates the platform's analytical capabilities and activating the aggregated intelligence features. While listed as Phase 4, this component is central to the platform's long-term value proposition and should be planned for from Phase 1 onward, even if implementation occurs later.

#### Deliverables

- **Heat Map Visualisations:** Interactive heat maps displaying aggregated risk intelligence derived from user interactions with the guided intake mechanism, filterable by geography, stakeholder group, risk category, and time period.

- **Chatbot Enhancement:** Refinement of the guided intake mechanism based on usage data collected during Phases 2 and 3, improving routing accuracy and expanding the question set based on observed user patterns.

There is the potential for a fifth phase focused on data analytics that has yet to be defined. This will be discussed with the successful consultant. Any agreement on a fifth phase will also be subject to the performance of the consultant in the initial phases.

## 6. Indicative Timeline

The following timeline is indicative and subject to adjustment. The critical external constraint is a functional platform by September 2026 for stakeholder and funder reporting.

Phase	Duration	Target Start	Key Milestone
<b>Phase 1: Architecture</b>	4 to 6 weeks	May 2026	Approved wireframes and prototypes
<b>Phase 2: Build</b>	10 to 14 weeks	June 2026	Functional basic platform
<b>Phase 3: Launch</b>	4 to 6 weeks	September 2026	Live platform, staff trained
<b>Phase 4: Advanced features</b>	6 to 8 weeks	November 2026	Heat maps and chatbot features operational

Phase 1 deliverables form the foundation for all subsequent work. Compression of Phase 1 timelines without corresponding scope adjustment will increase risk in later phases.

## 7. Budget

The indicative budget envelope for the full scope of work across all four phases is USD 40,000 to USD 50,000. Budget allocation by phase will be confirmed following proposal evaluation, but the following indicative distribution is provided for guidance:

Phase	Indicative %	Payment Trigger
<b>Phase 1: Architecture</b>	20%	Approved wireframes and prototypes
<b>Phase 2: Build</b>	40%	Functional platform delivered
<b>Phase 3: Launch</b>	25%	Launch and training completion
<b>Phase 4: Advanced features</b>	15%	Heat maps and chatbot features operational

Payments will be linked to the successful delivery and acceptance of phase-specific deliverables. Proposals must include a detailed cost breakdown by phase. Consultants are encouraged to source from global markets. Proposals should include all costs including any taxes, travel (if applicable), and third-party licensing.

## 8. Required Competencies

### 8.1 Essential

- Proven experience designing and building content-rich web platforms with structured taxonomies, search functionality, and CMS integration.
- Demonstrated capacity in user experience (UX) design, including wireframing, prototyping, and user journey mapping.
- Experience implementing chatbot or guided navigation interfaces with ability to capture user inputs for downstream analytics.
- Strong portfolio of responsive, accessible (WCAG 2.1 AA) web platforms.
- Experience building multilingual platforms with content management support for multiple languages.
- Ability to articulate technology choices with clear rationale and to propose rather than prescribe solutions.
- Demonstrated experience with phased delivery models and milestone-based payment structures.

### 8.2 Desirable

- Experience working with international development organisations, transparency initiatives, or governance programmes.
- Familiarity with open data standards. Familiarity with the Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) or OC4IDS will be an advantage.
- Experience integrating data visualisation and dashboard tools into web platforms.
- Understanding of anti-corruption frameworks, risk assessment methodologies, or integrity tools in infrastructure.
- Experience with data interoperability, API development, and integration with external data repositories.

## 9. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight	Assessment Basis
Technical approach and methodology	30%	Proposal narrative
Relevant experience and portfolio	25%	Portfolio and references
Team composition and capacity	15%	CVs and team structure
Value for money	20%	Financial proposal
Phased delivery and risk management	10%	Proposal narrative

Proposals that prescribe a technology stack without demonstrating understanding of the platform's information architecture requirements will be assessed as less competitive, regardless of technical sophistication.

---

## 10. Submission Requirements

---

Interested consultants should submit the following:

- **Technical Proposal** (maximum 10 pages) outlining the proposed approach, methodology, team composition, and relevant experience. The proposal should address each phase and explain how the consultant will manage the collaborative relationship with CoST's content and technical leads.
- **Financial Proposal** with detailed cost breakdown by phase, including day rates, estimated level of effort per deliverable, and any third-party costs. Presented separately from the technical proposal.
- **Portfolio** of at least three comparable projects with brief descriptions and live URLs where possible. At least one project should demonstrate CMS-based content management and at least one should demonstrate data visualisation capabilities.
- **Two references** from clients for whom similar work has been delivered in the past three years.

**Submissions** should be emailed to [cost.recruitment@infrastructuretransparency.org](mailto:cost.recruitment@infrastructuretransparency.org) by 12 noon BST Monday 18 May 2026.

**Queries:** Queries should be emailed to [cost.recruitment@infrastructuretransparency.org](mailto:cost.recruitment@infrastructuretransparency.org). CoST will compile and share responses to substantive queries via its website.

---

## 11. Intellectual Property and Data

---

All deliverables produced under this engagement, including designs, code, documentation, and prototypes, shall be the property of CoST. The consultant may retain the right to reference the work in their portfolio, subject to CoST's approval.

The consultant must not use proprietary tools or libraries that would create vendor lock-in or restrict CoST's ability to maintain, modify, or transfer the platform to a different provider in future. Where third-party tools or plugins are proposed, the consultant must disclose licensing terms and any recurring costs.

All published infrastructure data accessible through the platform is made available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY-4.0) licensing. The consultant must ensure that data display and attribution comply with this licensing framework.

---

## 12. Management and Reporting

---

The consultant will report to CoST's designated project lead and will work in close collaboration with:

- **Content leads:** Responsible for anti-corruption content, risk mapping structure, and resource curation.
- **Technical lead:** Responsible for data architecture, OC4IDS compliance, and datastore integration.
- **Communications team:** Responsible for branding, multilingual content, and public-facing presentation.

Progress will be reviewed at each phase boundary through a structured review meeting. The consultant is expected to provide fortnightly written progress updates during active development phases (Phases 2 and 4) and to be available for weekly coordination calls as needed.

Phase transitions require formal sign-off from CoST's project lead. The consultant may not proceed to the next phase without written approval that the current phase's deliverables have been accepted.

### Annex: Draft Risk Map

Phase & Risk ID	Project Phase	Stakeholder group	Risk Title	Risk Statement	Red Flags / Indicators	Exposure (how affected)	Decision Point (trigger moment)	Mitigation Actions (stakeholder-specific)	Resource ID 1	Resource ID 2	Resource ID 3	Resource ID 4	Primary Use (Application)	Case IDs (linked examples)	Probability (1-5)	Impact (1-5)	Score (P×I)	Band	Confidence (H/M/L)
P1-R01	Project Identification	Companies	Patronage-driven project selection and budgeting	Project selection, budget and pipeline decisions are shaped by patronage or political influence rather than transparent criteria, public need, and Value for Money (VfM).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of objective decision-making criteria to drive project selection and prioritisation</li> <li>Selection criteria are bypassed, inconsistently applied, or changed without recorded justification or published criteria</li> <li>Projects enter, shift, or drop from the budget and pipeline with limited appraisal documentation and justification</li> <li>Political influence is decisive in advancing project selection and prioritisation and in bypassing approval processes, with political donations, campaign financing, and informal contributions linked to these decisions</li> <li>Appraisal evidence is weak, missing, or not used in decision-making and approval processes</li> <li>Lack of pre-feasibility/feasibility analyses to assess project viability prior to approval processes</li> </ul>	Exposure includes reputational risk; unfair competition pressures; and potential exclusion from future works.	Before early engagement and bid/no-bid decision, assess whether project identification is based on documented criteria, and pause/exit if project selection depends on informal influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance programme that includes a bid/no-bid integrity screening for sponsors, intermediaries, and partners, covering Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs) and escalation process in case of conflict</li> <li>Adequate record keeping of all engagements with officials, sponsors and intermediaries (including date, attendees, topics, commitments)</li> <li>Zero tolerance policy regarding facilitation payments and unmanaged gifts or hospitality</li> <li>Whistleblower policy for reporting and handling unethical or illegal activities within the organisation</li> <li>Request that authorities publish clear guidelines on project selection criteria and disclose project appraisal documentation if not publicly available</li> <li>Use formal public administrative mechanisms to challenge unclear selection criteria</li> </ul>	RES-002	RES-001			<p><b>RES-002:</b> Screen sponsors, partners, agents, advisers, and other counterparties linked to project pipeline and budget decisions; verify beneficial ownership, PEP, sanctions, and related-party risks, and escalate concerns or refrain from proceeding where red flags remain unresolved.</p> <p><b>RES-001:</b> Review publicly disclosed project pipeline and budget records before early engagement or bid/no-bid decisions; identify disclosure gaps, missing reasons for approval, or unexplained changes, and raise concerns about non-disclosure with an oversight body.</p>						
P1-R01	Project Identification	Investors	Patronage-driven project selection and budgeting	Project selection, budget and pipeline decisions are shaped by patronage or political influence rather than transparent criteria, public need, and Value for Money (VfM).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of objective decision-making criteria to drive project selection and prioritisation</li> <li>Selection criteria are bypassed, inconsistently applied, or changed without recorded justification or published criteria</li> <li>Projects enter, shift, or drop from the budget and pipeline with limited appraisal documentation and justification</li> <li>Political influence is decisive in advancing project selection and prioritisation and in bypassing approval processes, with political donations, campaign financing, and informal contributions linked to these decisions</li> <li>Appraisal evidence is weak, missing, or not used in decision-making and approval processes</li> <li>Lack of pre-feasibility/feasibility analyses to assess project viability prior to approval processes</li> </ul>	Exposure includes financing politically driven projects with weak appraisal and limited analysis of environmental and social viability; higher fraud risk; and impaired returns.	Before committing resources, confirm that selection and budgeting followed transparent and robust appraisal processes with credible needs and Value for Money evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require evidence of transparent appraisal, published criteria, and Value for Money and viability analysis before commitment</li> <li>Conduct governance, integrity, environmental and social due diligence on key counterparties</li> <li>Include covenants and audit rights</li> <li>Use independent technical and integrity advisers for higher-risk contexts and thematic areas such as land use, traditional local communities, cultural heritage, biodiversity and conservation</li> <li>Adoption of staged financing, milestone reporting and disclosure obligations</li> </ul>	RES-020	RES-001	RES-006		<p><b>RES-020:</b> Conduct integrity due diligence on sponsors, investees, and key counterparties linked to the investment case; screen for political exposure, related-party risks, and other integrity red flags, and use conditions, covenants, monitoring, and escalation rights to delay, condition, or decline commitment where concerns remain unresolved.</p> <p><b>RES-001:</b> Review publicly disclosed project pipeline, appraisal, and budget records before commitment; identify disclosure gaps, missing reasons for approval, or unexplained changes, and raise concerns about non-disclosure with an oversight body.</p> <p><b>RES-006:</b> Evaluate the appraisal evidence, assumptions, costs, benefits, and scenarios underpinning project selection; benchmark alternatives and require revision or escalation where value-for-money, viability, or cost estimates appear unreliable.</p>						

