

# Hello Digital Fringe Events Application

**Event Title: BCC DIY Hack Day 2**

**Event Time and Date: We will work around your timetable for the month to ensure it does not clash with other events so we can guarantee attendance of key people. Preferably a Friday in October from 9am until 8pm.**

**Event Venue: Moseley Exchange**

## **Details of event:**

BCC DIY Hack Day 2 is the sequel to the BCC DIY Hack Day held Friday 25th September.

It is a collaborative project to rethink, redesign and rebuild the Birmingham City Council website following its highly publicised and debated relaunch this month. It is a positive project aimed at thinking about how local government services should best be accessed via the web, asking simple questions about what we want from our council when we use its website, and coming up with innovative and surprising solutions to those problems through crowd-sourcing, mashups, APIs, and open source, collaborative 'open innovation' (and any other Web 2.0 jargon you might care to use).

However, jargon aside, the end result are simple tools that are easy to understand: Get a text message telling you when it's recycling day for the bins; type in your postcode and get a list of local services, contacts, your MPs phone number, local planning applications near your house and so on.

In just 1 week from start to finish, BCC DIY produced a fully-functioning website that implemented many of the missing features from the new, high budget website and is a testament to the power of online communities to self-organise in a positive constructive way.

<http://bccdiy.com>

On the final day we held a "hack day" where 50 people worked collaboratively, alongside a further 100 online to produce the website we have today.

The ideas that we came up with that have not yet been implemented are nothing short of revolutionary for the way that council websites could and should work.

BCC DIY Hack Day 2 will take the baton on to explore and implement some of those ideas, as well as bringing in a wider group of citizens, experts and local government digital officers to test both sites in a "mass user-testing session", the results of which we would make freely available online for Birmingham and other councils to view.

So far, what we did on the hack day has reached as far north as Newcastle, where they're taking some of our ideas and using them in their new council website build, to the UK parliament where there's some excitement about this project, and overseas awareness of what we're doing in Birmingham means comparisons are being made between us and Philadelphia, Texas, Barcelona in conversations with people in those cities.

As far as we can tell - no one has done this before, and we want to try it again. Timing it to coincide with Hello Digital would be perfect and really tells the story about what digital innovation in this city really looks like.

**How does your event comply with the criteria?**

## **Access**

The City is attempting to simplify and make more efficient its services in a drive to cut costs over the coming years. A strand of that process will be around providing digital services.

We build on that mission and want to seek opinions from a wide cross-section of Birmingham's population as to how that should be done via the web.

We'd be doing interviews with the citizens of the city, which means we'd be interested in talking to those groups you are targeting through Hello Digital.

What more basic point of Access will we have other than paying for our Council Tax online, reporting a broken lamp-post via the web, or finding out your local councillor's email address.

### **Creativity and Enterprise**

Creativity is built into this project, as is Enterprise. As a community we have seen a gap where something needs to be done and within a space of a week rapidly plugged it. That's the spirit of Creative Enterprise and we'd like to showcase it as an example of what is happening in Birmingham's active social media community.

What's more - people who come along to the event will have the opportunity to learn new techniques and skills as a result. The feedback from the first event was that many people were going away having learnt a great deal, particularly those who weren't as web-savvy as others.

**Budget Breakdown:** The event will be zero-sum in terms of costs, with all of the speakers, designers, programmers, testers, laptops, venue, internet, refreshments etc. being donated by the respective parties.

The £500 that is available as a budget towards the event's costs would be put directly into hosting charges for the BCCDIY.com web hosting, which is currently \$80/month.

This would enable the project time to reach self-sustainability through a number of revenue streams we are experimenting with (paid-for SMS updates is one example).

### **Anticipated Audiences and Numbers:**

We expect to bring 80 people to the physical event, with the real-time audience being web-based, around the low hundreds mark.

Ongoing, and through Twitter/blogs/video hosting, we would hope to reach several thousand opinion formers from Birmingham citizens, through local government officers to government ministers, nationally and internationally. We have already made these kinds of contacts through the first event, and the second will build on those connections to influence public policy in digital media for local government.

The day will be entirely open to anyone who wishes to attend - members of the public will be particularly welcome.

### **About the organiser(s):**

Stef Lewandowski, <http://steflewandowski.com/biography> is organising the event as a personal project, with support from many of Birmingham's social media 'usual suspects'.

Stef is a current Clore Fellow researching cultural leadership, and is an entrepreneur involved in a number of innovative digital media projects in the city: Help Me Investigate and Odadeo to name two. In 2008 he won a Webby, and in 2009 he was named as the number 2 'one to watch' in the Observer's Future 500.

Stef regularly speaks in public at digital media events, has run events for a number of years through his record label Type and successfully organised the first hack day with 3 days to plan it. The collaborators we'd expect to be part of the second hack day also have experience of running and organising several events of this kind.

We do this kind of thing all the time. It's impromptu, a little rough round the edges, and the DIY ethos is about anyone being able to take control, contribute and organise, so who knows who'll actually be involved on the day.

Facilities on the day will be provided by Moseley Exchange who cover health and safety, insurance, security, and will be providing an IT support person and a Host on the day.

Please tick your status

**Sole trader / Freelance**

Private / Limited Company

(If you ticked Private / Limited Company, we would like to know your current Equal Opportunities Policy)

Charity

Other

(If you ticked Other, please state your status here \_\_\_\_\_ )

**I am applying as an individual**

Are you VAT registered?

Yes

No

**References:**

Dave Harte, Digital Birmingham

Suzie Norton, Screen West Midlands

**Organiser / Event producer:**

**Stef Lewandowski / BCCDIY**

**Contact details:**

**Address:**

**Moseley Exchange**

149-153 Alcester Road

Moseley

Birmingham

B13 8JP

**Email address: stef@stef.io**

**Contact number: 07887 646046**

## The next steps

Proposals are reviewed by the Hello Digital Fringe Events panel consisting of representatives from Digital Birmingham, 4iP, Screen West Midlands, Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council to ensure a mix of projects, which delivers well against the Hello Digital objectives. Whilst the panel will not exclude projects that are targeted at a particular audience, they will prioritise fringe events that will be open to the general public.

A response will be made in no more than five days of receipt of your proposal on Wednesday, September 30 and Tuesday, October 13.

The panel approves the application and successful applicants are contacted to inform them of branding guidelines and as this is a contracted process, a contract will be drawn up and signed by the event organiser and Birmingham City Council.