Python Developer – International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)

Bristol (City centre),
Start date: September–October 2016 (negotiable)

JOB OVERVIEW
Globally, over US$130 billion is spent on official development assistance (ODA) alone every year. In addition, tens of billions from NGOs, foundations, private giving, poverty-focused remittances and other sources are added to the resources developing country governments themselves devote to reducing poverty. However, information on exactly how these substantial resources are allocated and whether they reach the poorest people is often difficult for many people to access and understand.

Development Initiatives works to enable people to access and use information about aid and other poverty reduction resources. We believe that supporting efforts to hold governments, donors and service providers to account, and improving the availability of information to support intelligent planning, will increase the effectiveness of aid, and so accelerate poverty reduction. Our vision is that this information should be easily available to people across developing and developed countries. It should be presented in an easy to understand, comparable, and accessible format, in ways that are relevant to users’ unique perspectives.

That is why we have been instrumental in establishing and managing the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), currently serving as technical lead on the IATI Secretariat. IATI is a high-profile, global open data standard, allowing detailed information on who is spending what, where and with what results to be shared in a common digital format (an XML ‘data standard’ – think a set of allowed fields and values to describe aid in a common format). This is an exciting time for IATI: with almost 500 publishers, it is reaching critical mass in providing detailed and timely open data on financial flows coming from a wide range of aid and development actors – from major world governments and international bodies to small NGOs working in the field (and lots more in between). Over half a million aid and development activities are published to our data standard, allowing timely and pertinent information to be shared.

We’ve come a long way in the past 5 years, and now we’re looking to expand the team. We’re looking for a talented Developer to help us manage and write code that supports publishers and users of IATI data.

ABOUT THE ROLE
If you want a job that uses your tech skills to make the world a better place - this is something for you! We’re at a pivotal time and building the technology that will help IATI become even more successful. Expect lots of interesting conceptual and technical challenges – for example how to keep track and efficiently run statistics on the millions of data points that make up IATI data, many being updated and hosted individually by our publishers. The role has opportunity to lead projects as part of a multi-skilled team.

We’ve got some exciting projects for the coming months – including a new website, as well as an interface to enable users to access all IATI and third party tools more easily. There’s also work ongoing to overhaul and integrate our existing systems, so that we can achieve greater impact through our use of technology.

Day-to-day, your work will involve:

- Working as part of a team to build new and improve existing open source software;
- Improving the quality of that software;
• Adding new features or creating new products;
• Communicating with users of our software, understanding and prioritising their needs;
• Helping others understand IATI data through the products we maintain and support;
• Working with technical experts from governments, foundations, NGOs and developing country agencies to improve the range of tools and data available to end users;
• Participating fully in the IATI Technical Advisory Group (TAG), including in technical working groups on APIs, data standards and other topics;
• Tracking, analysing, fixing and reporting software bugs and issues;
• Monitoring usage of IATI software by users;
• Participating in technical discussions and work to improve the IATI Standard.

All our code is open-source and hosted on GitHub: https://github.com/iati

All in all, this is an exciting opportunity to make a real difference to the transparency and accountability of international aid and development, and play an important role in a leading international open data initiative. In addition to your tech skills, your contributions to team discussions will help shape the future of this prestigious open data standard.

This job is based at the Bristol office of Development Initiatives – a UK-based international development organisation who are a key member of the IATI Secretariat, maintaining the IATI data standard and delivering tools to use the data. IATI also supports DI’s wider role to enable people to access and use information about aid and other poverty reduction resources. We believe that supporting efforts to hold governments, donors and service providers to account, and improving the availability of information to support intelligent planning, will increase the effectiveness of aid, and so accelerate poverty reduction.

WHO WE’RE LOOKING FOR
We are looking for someone who is passionate about supporting the potential of open data to provide a platform for greater accountability and citizen empowerment in the world of aid and development.

You should be comfortable working with XML and Python. You will be able to work to deadlines and contribute to software projects large and small. You will have experience of working in development teams and be comfortable with version control, deployment of web applications, and ideally upgrade cycles.

Overall, you will be a good communicator, able to explain complex issues to a variety of audiences and to problem solve as a group member. You must be flexible and willing to learn on the job, working at the forefront of one of the highest profile global open data initiatives.

Skills we're looking for
Essential:
• Good knowledge of Python
• Understanding of XML
• Web application development
• An understanding of design and UX
• Experience of version control systems – we use Git and Github
• Working collaboratively on software projects
• Able to understand business problems and design solutions to solve them
• Great teamwork and communication skills
Desirable – understanding and/or experience of any of these would also be an advantage:

- Experience with open data projects and/or standards
- Use of SQL, plus experience/understanding of ORMs – e.g. SQLAlchemy, Peewee
- Working with public web APIs and/or creation of RESTful APIs
- Python deployment tools – SaltStack, Chef or Puppet
- Contribution of code to open source communities
- Ability to administer/configure Linux/Apache
- Experience with large datasets
- Experience working in an ‘agile’ work environment
- Experience and/or understanding of unit testing – we use pytest
- Communicating with software users about bugs, upgrades, changes to code, etc.
- Understanding of software development cycles and models
- Experience of, or demonstrable interest in International Development
- The post holder may be required to undertake occasional travel.

WHAT WE OFFER

- Competitive salary of £25,000 to £35,000, based on experience
- Fixed term contract to 31 August 2018
- Great work-life balance:
  - 35 hours per week
  - 25 days’ annual leave, plus bank holidays
  - Flexible hours system
  - Work from home policy
- Company pension scheme (after 3 months service) with 5% employer contribution
- Opportunities for occasional international travel to attend IATI meetups and conferences
- Personal development budget to buy books/training
- Choice of high-spec PC/Mac/Linux laptop

Other benefits:

- Office based 5 minutes from Temple Meads train station and 10 minutes from Bristol city centre
- Work in a nice, light, youthful office surrounded by people passionate about the use of data to make a positive difference to the world
- Casual office dress code
- Up to 5 paid days each year to volunteer with any UK-based charity (of your choice) that works to address poverty.
- Free fresh fruit, delivered to the office twice a week

Employee Assistance Programme, Cycle to Work Scheme, enhanced maternity/paternity leave, childcare vouchers.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Your CV (no more than 3 sides of A4) and covering letter, detailing your skills and experience and how they relate to the job description, should be emailed to: HR@devinit.org quoting ‘IATI Developer’ in the email subject line.

Also, feel free to get in contact if you have any questions or want further information – just email HR@devinit.org.

Your letter should also include your available start date.
Closing date: Tuesday 20 September 2016, 5pm (UK time)

Interviews: w/c 26 September 2016 (in Bristol)

OTHER INFORMATION
We are unable to offer sponsorship for a work permit/visa application. Therefore, only applicants who have the right to work in the UK will be considered and evidence of this will be requested at interview stage.

We will be unable to acknowledge receipt of your application and if you do not hear from us by 23 September 2016, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful.

Development Initiatives is an equal opportunities employer and, in line with our policies, we aim to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.