Judicial Dig Data Challenge

What is the problem?

Despite nearly twenty years of efforts to improve the efficiency, transparency, and professionalism of Kosovo's judicial system, many citizens, lawyers, businesses, and civil society organizations (CSOs) participating in or monitoring court proceedings experience a judicial process that is frequently slow, uneven, and opaque. Information related to judicial processes is difficult to access and obtain. As a result, citizens are often unaware and uncertain of what to expect during the proceedings, what type of outcomes could they receive, and they often find it difficult to obtain information about their court case. Lack of readily available information about court proceedings, including case status, to whom was the case assigned, what actions have been taken by the court, and the anticipated next actions, causes citizens to experience uncertainty and distrust in the justice system. Moreover, most of the information available to the public comes from CSOs and news articles that portray the judiciary in a negative light, and ignore achievements and progress. Furthermore, judicial institutions themselves are in the early stages of developing and implementing communication strategies to inform the public of their work. Thus, information coming from the judiciary is often slow, incomplete, and inefficient. Finally, whether the user is a citizen trying to understand their case, court personnel trying to assess their overall performance, or civil society and academic researchers who would like to understand, analyze, and suggest reforms in the judicial system, the available judicial data is published in nonuser-friendly formats and is challenging to understand.

Although the judicial system has improved its efficiency, by reducing its backlog over 50% and increasing case resolution time, it still faces systemic challenges that prevent it from delivering timely and fair justice to all citizens. Citizens often feel trapped and desperate due to prolonged court proceedings in family, property and business cases--and sometimes potentially endangered as they await restraining orders or other actions from judicial institutions. Additionally, inconsistent rulings on legal issues in business, administrative, civil, and criminal cases increase legal uncertainty for plaintiffs, defendants, family members, judges, lawyers and businesses. Businesses, lawyers, and citizens often complain of inconsistent applications of the law creating an unpredictable legal environment. These deficiencies stall economic growth, prevent victims from accessing timely justice and obtaining protection, and allow impunity to continue unchecked. Kosovo's citizens, lawyers, judges, and other legal personnel need access to information on how the legal actions they are taking (or considering) are or may progress through the legal system, and how and when hearings, rulings, and other actions will occur so they can make informed choices about what and how many cases to take, what legal recourse to pursue, whether they should look for alternatives, when and how to escalate miscarriages of justice and

oversight, and how to use the existing data in the face of persistent underperformance and inequity, to advocate for reform.

The Call

Millennium Foundation Kosovo calls on open data movers, shakers and opinion-makers, start-ups, civil society, the private sector, academia, journalists, designers, technology innovators, and creative problem solvers to submit proposals that use open data to support Kosovo's citizens and legal professionals in making empowered, informed choices about the status of their current or future cases in the legal system and to use data to advocate for increased efficiency, transparency, and equity in the judicial system.

MFK intends to make up to four awards to innovations that fall into one of three categories:

- **Innovation:** Innovations that propose new, creative, data-driven ways of empowering citizens and/or legal professionals to understand, access and utilize Kosovo's legal system, make appropriate choices, and get connected to appropriate service providers. Innovations may help judges, lawyers, academics and CSOs access and utilize judicial data and decisions to improve understanding around the nature of judicial proceedings (type of case or charges filed, case duration, decisions and sentences), empowering citizens to make informed choices about their legal recourse, including whether continuing the case through the judicial system or exploring alternatives (such as mediation, arbitration or court settlement, accepting a plea agreement, or dropping the case) is a better decision for their clients, themselves and/or their families, seeking help in situations that are urgent, stressful, corrupt, or dangerous (such as domestic violence, bankruptcy, criminal conspiracies, or abuse), supporting judicial personnel in consistently applying the law, and/or inspire academic research.
- **Court Performance:** Data-driven analytical innovations that help citizens better understand the functioning of the judiciary, the effectiveness and efficiency of courts, and tools to analyze and support allocating resources to meet institutional needs. Innovations should improve users' knowledge, understanding and expectations resulting with respect to legal proceedings.
- **Advocacy:** Innovations that analyze court performance, budgets, and decisions and connect Kosovo's citizens involved in current, future, or past judicial proceedings to appropriate organizations and opportunities for advocacy to address data-driven needs and gaps in court performance, transparency, resourcing, impunity, public trust, civil rights, and public safety, especially for women and underrepresented groups.

Competitors may opt to enter multiple categories or tackle multiple topics, but it is better to focus and address one or two of themes well than to try to generally address all of the topics. While MFK intends to make at least one award per category, it reserves the right to make multiple awards in one category depending on proposal quality.

The Incentive

MFK will award up to four grants (total of 200,000 Euros available in funding) to implement a proposal that addresses the aforementioned objectives. In addition to the award, grantees will also receive:

- **Mentoring:** Winners will work with mentors from MFK, the judicial sector, and relevant institutions to help them adapt and grow their solution to more successfully meet citizen needs.
- **Networking and professional matchmaking:** Introductions to relevant experts and stakeholders.
- **Profile-raising activities:** MFK will promote your winning innovation and celebrate your results.

The Challenge Structure and Timeline

- **Challenge Announcement and Judicial Data Workshop**

To help applicants understand stakeholder priorities, understand and interpret the data available, and formulate a submission, MFK is hosting an interactive judicial data workshop. The Judicial Data Applicant Workshop is an opportunity to:

- Familiarize yourself with some of the existing judicial sector open data.
- Learn about the value and aims of open data.
- Learn how to interpret open data and the methodological differences in different judicial datasets.
- Explore the relationship between criminal or civil charges, case duration, decisions, and resourcing in different geographies and sectors.
- Get to know the opportunities and constraints faced by policymakers, KJC and KPC staff as you advocate for change.
- Meet the Challenge sponsors and Champions.
- Ask and get questions answered about the challenge process, criteria, and goals.
- Meet and potentially partner with other competitors.

While attending the Dig Data Applicant Workshop is not mandatory, we believe it will be useful in developing a more competitive solution. We will also record the workshop and post it on our website for competitors to reference.

- **Challenge Announcement 27 September 2021**

The challenge is taking place 27th of September through 4th of November.

- **Call for Applications – 27 September 2021[1] – 4 November 2021.**

Applicants can find application forms and other materials needed to apply on
http://millenniumkosovo.org/digdata

We recommend applicants read the **FAQs**, **Eligibility and Judging Criteria** before entering the Challenge.

Prospective competitors can send queries via email to digdata@millenniumkosovo.org. All questions will be answered on a rolling basis and posted on https://millenniumkosovo.org/digdata/faq/. Submissions received after **Thursday, 4th of November 2021. 16:00 CET** may not be considered.

- **Expert Judging, Interviews, and Matching**

The review process will follow these steps:
1. Eligibility: All applications will first be screened according to the aforementioned Eligibility Criteria.
2. Initial review: All eligible applications will be reviewed by a panel of independent, expert judges and select Millennium Foundation Kosovo staff.
3. Concurrent review: Millennium Challenge Corporation staff and their affiliates will review shortlisted for their concurrence. Select KJC and KPC staff will be invited to review shortlisted applications during a set period of time for their concurrence; the review will be optional and not required.
4. Optional matching: If a partnership is proposed, KJC and KPC staff will review the top proposals to verify whether a productive working relationship during the implementation phase is possible.
5. Interviews: Finalist applicants capable of a productive working relationship will be invited to an interview lasting no more than two hours. Qualifying applicants will be asked to present their solution, respond to questions from the judging panel. Questions will address any lingering doubts in the technical, data, budget, or operational approach.

6. Selection: Apparent awardees will be selected based on their interview performance. Apparent awardees will enter the grant negotiation phase with Millennium Foundation Kosovo staff.

● **Implementation**

Winners will work with MFK's grants team to draft and set milestones for a results-driven work plan. Grantees will have up to 8 months to complete the work. MFK will work with the grantees to make connections with relevant judicial system stakeholders, maintain relationships, mentor the winners, and publicly celebrate their progress.

What We Are Looking For:
We are looking for tools and approaches that:

1. Furnish reliable information
2. Derived from open data, that
3. Empower the judicial system personnel, policymakers, the private sector, educators, and citizens to make data-informed decisions and to take constructive personal and civic action related to judicial data in Kosovo,
4. If needed, connect people to help and resources, and
5. Improves understanding of the challenges faced by Kosovo citizens, the judicial sector, and/or the government regarding making empowered, informed choices about the status of their current or future cases in the legal system and to use data to advocate for increased efficiency, transparency, and equity in the judicial system.

These tools and approaches might include but are not limited to mobile applications, communication campaigns, technical assistance, advocacy campaigns, case management platforms, decision trees, data visualization, digitally-enabled trusted personal networks, policies, enforcement, and incentive schemes, pilot or national projects, hardware or software solutions, computing platforms, digital communications, social networking and audio-visual material, etc.

These tools and approaches must be data-driven, applicable to Kosovo, and deliberately inclusive to women and other underserved communities.

We recommend that you pick only one or a few topics to address in your solution. We would rather you present a clear analysis and focused approach by addressing only one or a few challenge areas than try to tackle all the potential areas. We have found that proposals that try to address all the topics are often too general and unfocused to be successful.

About the data

MFK has been working with the KJC and KPC to ensure that data is available and structured so competitors can analyze the most relevant judicial system data.

These data sets are the foundation for a wide variety of potential solutions. Competitors must use open data (type of case or charges filed, case duration, decisions, and sentences, etc.) to explain why their tool or approach is needed and then incorporate open data in their solutions to empower Kosovo's citizens to:

·   understand and make informed choices about their legal proceedings, and/or

·   get connected to services, and/or

·   analyze and understand court performance, and/or

·   to use data to advocate for increased efficiency, transparency, and equity in the judicial system.

Proposals do not need to address all of the themes in this challenge. It is better to focus and address one or two of themes well than to try to generally address all of the themes.

The following types of data are available:

The following is a list of LAA data categories published online:

1. Legal Aid Agency effectiveness
2. Budget allocation and efficiency
3. Resolution of domestic violence cases

The following is a list of KPC data categories published online:

1. Effectiveness and efficiency of prosecutorial services
2. Effectiveness in handling corruption cases
3. Effectiveness in handling of domestic violence cases
4. Handling of cases against LGBT community
5. Handling of cases against journalists

The following is a list of KJC data categories published online:

1. Effectiveness of Basic Courts
2. Effectiveness of the Court of Appeal
3. Effectiveness of the Supreme Court

Eligibility Criteria

The Challenge is open to all and will accept entries that meet the following criteria:
- Entries must be submitted in English.
- Late entries will not be accepted.
- Entries must be complete and may not leave questions unanswered questions or neglect requested documentation.
- Entries must directly relate to challenge goals, funding requirements and utilize credible open data from KJC, KPC and/or other credible, vetted open data from national and international institutions. Data should not be used or submitted that does not protect personally identifiable information.
- All competitors must use Challenge grant funds to implement a solution in Kosovo. International applications are eligible as long as applicants either already have a presence in Kosovo or must demonstrate they have a Kosovar partner (supporting partnership documentation is required).
- All solutions can propose a coordination or implementation partnership with KJC or KPC.

The Challenge particularly encourages proposals from private sector firms, women, and underserved minorities.

Judging Criteria

All eligible entries will be judged against the following **criteria:**
- **Criterion 1:** Use and Analysis of Open Data
- **Criterion 2:** Actionable Information
- **Criterion 3:** Accessibility
- **Criterion 4:** Potential Impact
- **Criterion 5:** Market Potential
- **Criterion 6:** Communications and Outreach Strategy

For more detailed information on Judging Criteria, please refer to the **Information Package.**