In a nutshell

We helped The National Lottery Community Fund be on the front foot at the time of crisis and equip staff to deliver funding swiftly and efficiently.

“But finding the right partner and investing in the right technologies, we’ve completely transformed the organisation’s way of working, and delivered savings from investment.”

Irfan Faruki, Deputy Director of IT at The National Lottery Community Fund

Why it works well

- Complete technology transformation
- Improved operational efficiency
- Developed in-house technical skills
- Allowed for remote working

The full story

At the beginning...

The National Lottery Community Fund is responsible for distributing National Lottery funding to help people do extraordinary things in communities across the UK.

The organisation had been using old technologies and wanted to consolidate its IT systems, via a cloud-based approach, to better enable flexible, remote working and support its people to distribute funding quickly.

Matthew Green, Director of Technology and Data at the Fund, led the project. “Our focus was on people, place and skills,” he explains. “We wanted to redefine our technology and infrastructure so we could digitally enable everyone in the organisation to deliver funding where it was most needed as quickly as possible.”
The middle bit...

Our consultancy team worked with The National Lottery Community Fund to help transform the way it used technology.

This involved gaining a clear understanding of how the Fund was using its technology and what it was going to need in the future. Our team helped reduce the Fund's dependency on hardware and implement a cloud-based approach to allow for greater flexibility, secure access, and improved resilience across all locations.

Then, we ensured the entire team had a portable device with the latest software to allow them to work from anywhere easily. And finally, we worked to support the training of the Fund's in-house IT team to ensure the new technologies would be well managed and maintained without the ongoing need of a third party providers.

Matthew Green says, “iomart’s consultants have been our trusted partner every step of the way, through strategy, planning and delivery. They brought a vital skillset to the table and worked with our technical and frontline colleagues throughout the transformation and helped us to achieve best practice through everything we do.”

In the end...

While the benefits of the transformation had already begun to be realised, the value of the investment became acutely apparent as the Covid-19 crisis began. The Fund was more than ready to cope and by the time the Government announced the first lockdown, the Fund’s 850 employees had already been working from home for a week (spoiler alert, it continued for a little longer than that).

Fund colleagues have been able to collaborate online, sending and receiving over 4 million emails and holding almost 1000 calls and meetings using Microsoft Teams every day. Now that is a lot!

“The Fund has distributed over £500 million of National Lottery and funding from Government since lockdown began in March 2020, which would have been incredibly challenging to do with our old systems,” Matthew Green explains.

“Thanks to the partnership with iomart, we have enabled our colleagues to get vital funds to the communities that need them. Grant-making cannot stop in a crisis and that isn’t just about cash in and out, it is about our people and our systems being able to work in a way that support action but also enhances our learning of work in the field in a fast-changing context.”

Several years ago, the Fund’s staff were predominantly based in physical offices. Today, they are digitally-enabled, and based within the communities they support. Funding staff now have everything they need to work effectively and the Technology team have gained skills, knowledge and experience in modern technologies for the benefit of the Fund and the communities it supports across the UK. Pretty cool, right?

Irfan Faruki, Deputy Director of IT at The National Lottery Community Fund, says, “By finding the right partner and investing in the right technologies, we’ve completely transformed the organisation’s way of working, and delivered savings from investment. We can now respond to rapidly changing demand and rapidly changing opportunities in the fields that we work.”

“We're no longer hampered by our technology, we're enabled by it,” says Matthew Green. “I'm incredibly proud of the members of the Technology and Data team at The National Lottery Community Fund, who are no longer simply the fixers of broken things; they are the strategic technology architects for the organisation.”