



# Partnering with the LIT Lab

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## Comparing the Options

You can build a self-help portal on your own (DIY), do it with us (DIWU), or hire someone to do it for you (DIFY). Here is how we think about those options and the pros and cons of each.



## Ready to Talk?

Email the LIT Lab  
[litlab@suffolk.edu](mailto:litlab@suffolk.edu)



### Do It Yourself

Build a self-help portal yourself using software like HotDocs, Tyler Guide & File, Docassemble, or A2J Author.

#### 👍 Pros

You can just get started, as long as you have the necessary skills.

Doing it yourself usually costs less money up front.

#### 👎 Cons

Doing it yourself usually takes more time due to the learning curve.

Tech support, customization, and additional features cost extra time or money.



### Do It With Us

Build a self-help portal using open-source software, with help from the LIT Lab and the Document Assembly Line community.

#### 👍 Pros

Save time over DIY.

Save money over DIFY.

Faster start-up time, since you'll have help.

Get a return on your investment: technical skills, a self-help portal you control, and open-source software that is free forever.

Free, open-source e-filing service provider.

Aligned incentives. We are mission-driven, not profit-driven.

#### 👎 Cons

You still have to commit time and money to the project.



### Do It For You

Pay a vendor to build a portal for you, which could mean interview building, custom software development, or more.

#### 👍 Pros

Lowest time commitment.

Order exactly what you want, up to and including custom portal software.

#### 👎 Cons

Significantly more expensive.

Plan for additional costs. Maintenance, updates, and new features will cost more.

Non-aligned incentives and vendor lock-in mean you won't control your portal.

