

Appendix B: User Manual

1. Introduction

- **Purpose:**
This manual provides instructions for installing, deploying, and using the Service Marketplace Application (SMP).
- **Audience:**
End-users (Seekers and Providers), System Administrators, and Developers.

2. System Requirements

- **Operating System:** Windows 10/11, macOS, or any modern Linux distribution.
- **Software Dependencies:**
 - Docker and Docker Compose installed.
 - Node.js (v18+) and npm/yarn (for local dev mode, optional).
 - Modern web browser (Chrome, Firefox, Edge).
 - Stable internet connection (for Clerk authentication and external APIs).

3. Installation and Deployment

3.1 Using Docker (Recommended)

1. Clone the project repository:

bash

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```
git clone <repository-url>
```

```
cd <project-folder>
```

2. Build and run services:

bash

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```
docker-compose up --build
```

3. Docker will:

- Build and start the **backend** server at `http://localhost:5000`
- Start **MongoDB** at `mongodb://localhost:27017`
- (Optional) Connect separately to your **Next.js frontend** (if running separately).

4. Verify:

- Visit the frontend (`http://localhost:3000`) in your browser.
- Backend API should be reachable via Postman at `http://localhost:5000`.

3.2 Manual Local Development (Advanced)

Only if **NOT** using Docker:

- Install backend dependencies:

`bash`

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`cd backend`

`npm install`

`npm run dev`

- Install frontend dependencies:

`bash`

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`cd frontend`

`npm install`

`npm run dev`

- Make sure MongoDB is running locally, and `.env` files are properly configured.

4. Application Structure

Layer	Technology	Purpose
Frontend	Next.js	Web app for seekers/providers
Backend	Express.js	API services, business logic

Authentication	Clerk	User auth, sessions
Database	MongoDB	Data persistence
Real-Time	Socket.IO	Live bidding updates

5. User Roles and Core Features

5.1 Seeker Role

- **Register/Login:** Create an account or log in with Clerk.
- **Post a Job:**
 - Fill job title, description, budget, location via map.
 - Submit job for bidding.
- **View Bids:**
 - See incoming bids on your posted jobs in real-time.
- **Accept a Bid:**
 - Choose a provider for the job.
- **Mark Job as Completed:**
 - After the job is done, mark it completed.

5.2 Provider Role

- **Register/Login:** Create an account or log in with Clerk.
- **Browse Available Jobs:**
 - View job postings filtered by category/location.
- **Place a Bid:**
 - Submit a bid with offered price and message.
- **Track Bids:**
 - See updates if your bid is accepted/rejected.

6. How to Use the Application

6.1 Registering an Account

- Click **Sign Up**.
- Choose **Seeker** or **Provider** during signup.
- Complete your profile with location info.

6.2 Logging In

- Navigate to the login page.
- Enter credentials or use OAuth (Google, Email).

6.3 Posting a New Job (Seeker)

- Click **New Job** in dashboard.
- Fill in required fields.
- Use the map to select job location.

6.4 Placing a Bid (Provider)

- View available jobs from the **Job Listings** page.
- Click on a job.
- Enter bid details and submit.

6.5 Managing Jobs and Bids

- View real-time bid updates in the dashboard.
- Accept or reject bids.
- Mark jobs as complete when work is finished.

7. Troubleshooting

Issue	Solution
Cannot connect to backend	Ensure Docker containers are running; check localhost:5000
Authentication issues	Check Clerk setup; browser console logs

MongoDB connection errors	Verify Docker MongoDB container is healthy
Map not loading	Ensure valid Google Maps API key is used

8. Contact Support

- For technical support, please contact:
 - Developer Email: 201800122@ub.ac.bw

Section B.1: Getting Started

Registration Process

1. Visit the Service Marketplace Platform website
2. Click on the "Sign Up" button
3. Choose your preferred registration method:
 - Email and password
 - Google account
 - GitHub account
4. Complete the registration form with:
 - First name
 - Last name
 - Email address
 - Phone number
 - User type (Seeker or Provider)
5. Verify your email address
6. Complete your profile setup

Login Process

1. Visit the Service Marketplace Platform website
2. Click on the "Sign In" button
3. Choose your preferred login method:
 - Email and password
 - Google account
 - GitHub account
4. Enter your credentials
5. You will be redirected to your dashboard based on your user role

Navigating the Dashboard

For Seekers:

- View your posted jobs
- Track job status
- Manage bids
- View provider profiles
- Access job history

For Providers:

- Browse available jobs
- View your active jobs
- Track job status
- Manage your bids
- Access job history

Section B.2: For Service Seekers

Posting a New Job

1. From your dashboard, click "Post New Job"
2. Fill in the job details:
 - Job title
 - Description
 - Category
 - Budget
3. Set the job location:
 - Use the map interface to select the exact location
 - Or enter the address manually
4. Add any specific requirements or attributes
5. Review the job details
6. Click "Post Job"

Viewing Bids on a Posted Job

1. Go to your dashboard
2. Click on the job you want to view bids for
3. Navigate to the "Bids" tab
4. View all submitted bids including:
 - Provider details
 - Bid amount
 - Provider rating
 - Message from provider

Accepting a Bid

1. View the bids on your job
2. Review the provider's profile and rating
3. Click "Accept" on the bid you want to accept
4. Confirm your acceptance
5. The job status will change to "In Progress"

Verifying Job Completion

1. When the provider marks the job as complete
2. You will receive a notification
3. Review the completed work
4. If satisfied, click "Confirm Completion"
5. The job status will change to "Completed"

Rating and Reviewing a Provider

1. After job completion, you'll be prompted to rate the provider

2. Rate the provider (1-5 stars)
3. Write a review of your experience
4. Submit your rating and review

Cancelling a Job

1. Go to your dashboard
2. Find the job you want to cancel
3. Click on the job to view details
4. Click "Cancel Job"
5. Provide a reason for cancellation
6. Confirm the cancellation

Section B.3: For Service Providers

Browsing and Searching for Jobs

1. From your dashboard, click "Find Jobs"
2. Use filters to narrow down jobs:
 - Category
 - Budget range
 - Location
 - Job status
3. Sort jobs by:
 - Newest first
 - Budget (high to low)
 - Distance
4. Click on a job to view details

Viewing Job Details

1. Click on a job from the browse page
2. View comprehensive job information:
 - Job description
 - Budget
 - Location (with map)
 - Seeker details
 - Job requirements
3. Check the job status
4. View existing bids (if any)

Placing a Bid on a Job

1. View the job details
2. Click "Place Bid"
3. Enter your bid amount
4. Add a message to the seeker
5. Review your bid
6. Click "Submit Bid"

Marking a Job as Completed

1. Go to your active jobs
2. Find the job you want to mark as complete
3. Click "Mark as Complete"

4. Add any completion notes
5. Submit the completion request
6. Wait for seeker confirmation

Rating and Reviewing a Seeker

1. After job completion, you'll be prompted to rate the seeker
2. Rate the seeker (1-5 stars)
3. Write a review of your experience
4. Submit your rating and review

Managing Bids

1. View your active bids from the dashboard
2. Track bid status:
 - Pending
 - Accepted
 - Rejected
3. Update or withdraw bids if needed
4. View bid history

Important Notes

- Always communicate professionally with other users
- Keep your profile information up to date
- Respond promptly to messages and notifications
- Follow the platform's terms of service
- Report any issues or concerns to support