DRAFT Conversation Guide - Industry Partners

# Research Questions

* What types of VA data might be beneficial to you?
* What is the process by which you currently access VA data?
* How would access to VA data positively impact you? What about Veterans?
* How willing would you be to integrate with VA APIs?
* What types of resources, materials and engagement do you need from the VA to integrate with VA APIs?
* How can we best communicate the availability of APIs to you?
* What factors could hinder the success of VA API integration/adoption?
  + Data accuracy
  + API availability
  + Outreach strategy
  + Compliance risk that we aren’t aware of
* How does your org make decisions about API partnerships?

# Targeted Users

* USAJobs (Rachel, USDS connection)
* Indeed (Lindsay - email sent, 5/9/18)

Participant Criteria

* C-Suite level (CTO, CEO)
* Developer
* Platform end-user (maybe VSO, if possible)

# Script

## Welcome and Opening Remarks (5 minutes)

[When the participant is ready, the moderator will begin the session with the following introduction.]

Thank you for joining us today. As we talked about before, the VA is considering providing VA data in the form of APIs. We’re working with the VA to explore this option and talk to potential users of this API to better understand how the VA could implement an API solution that satisfies the needs of consumers of VA data.

Are you familiar with APIs? (Application Programming Interfaces)

*An API, or Application Programming Interface, is a flexible way to give and receive information by allowing software systems to communicate with each other. In this case, the VA could provide a set of tools for providing appeals data that gives your developers all the building blocks necessary to automate collection of appeals data directly from VA’s system to your own.*

Before we begin, I’d like to make a few things clear and explain how the session will work:

* There are no right or wrong answers — and I won’t be offended by any opinions you express.
* [NAME] will be taking notes. We have to share what we learn from you with the rest of our team.
* This conversation will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour.
* Your participation in this discussion is voluntary. You may stop at any time. Your name will not be shared outside of this research team.
* If it’s ok with you, we’d like to record this conversation today. Recording our discussion will help us capture everything you say accurately.
* Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. We are here to learn from you. We really want to hear what you think. No idea or opinion is incorrect.

Do you have any questions at this stage?

[The moderator will begin audio recording.]

## Warm-up Questions (5 minutes)

* Can you begin by telling me a little bit about the mission of your organization and your role?
* What’s important to you about your job?

## Baseline Questions

* On a scale from 1-10, how willing would your organization be to work with the VA? (1 = not willing at all, 10 = very willing)
  + Can you explain why you picked that score?
* On a scale from 1-10, how willing would your organization be to integrate with a VA API?
  + Can you explain why you picked that score?
* On a scale from 1-10, how much of a potential impact could integrating with VA or Veteran data have on your organization’s goals?
  + Can you explain why you picked that score?
  + In an ideal world, what would that impact look like?
* Before our team reached out to you, were you previously aware that the VA is publishing APIs?
* Were you previously aware of any VA data initiatives?
* **(If applicable)** On a scale from 1-10, how has your previous experience been working with the VA?
  + Can you tell me a little bit about the interaction(s)?
  + What communication channels did you use?
  + What was successful or not sucessful about those interactions?
* What veteran focused activities or initiatives do you engage in currently? What type of impact do they have on your organization, mission and veterans?

## Willingness, communication channels and outreach (inform)

* Have you ever worked with the VA before? (IRL, VA data, initiatives)
  + If yes, can you tell me a little bit about the interaction(s)?
  + What communication channels did you use?
  + What was successful or not successful about those interactions?
* What other types of activities might you be interested in pursuing with the VA/Veterans?
* How would you imagine a partnership for API integration between your organization and the VA to operate?
* Are there types of VA or Veteran data that would align well within the integration of your services?
  + How might you imagine that data being impactful on your work?
* What would convince you that a partnership with the VA to integrate with their APIs is impactful to your company and customers?
* What would a successful partnership with the VA look like?
  + What would a successful VA API integration look like?
  + How would you measure the success of that work?
* Are there reasons your organization might not be interested in working with the VA?
  + Or integrating with VA APIs?

**Users with on-going or previous VA partnerships**

* How do you find out about information about the VA? (initiatives, data, troubleshooting)
* Where do you go if you have issues or questions about VA data, and initiatives?
* Describe your current process of getting the VA data you need for your job or your organization.
  + What are the major pain points in this process?
  + Could you imagine a more ideal way to get this data?

## VA API Integration Decision-making

* Has your organization ever integrated or tried to integrate with an API?
  + Can you describe that experience?
  + How did you find out about the API?
  + How did you work with the API provider? How did they reach out to you?
  + What types of marketing materials and tools did the organization provide throughout the process?
  + What types of factors guided your decision to integrate with that API?
  + When determining whether to integrate with that API, what were some of the questions you had for the API provider? What did they provide to answer those questions?
  + What were the major successes and pitfalls of that experience?
  + What could the API provider have done differently?
* How long does it take to make a decision about API integration? When are these types of decisions typically made?
* Are there reasons why your organization might not to want to integrate with an API? What about a VA API?
* Is it important for your organization that other leaders in your field have adopted that API? Who do you look for as a key stakeholder/leader in the field?

## Technical Integration (developer)

* During the technical integration, what type of materials and information do you need?
  + How would you expect to get these materials and information?
* In your experience, what kinds of tools and learning resources do you think are the most useful when integrating a new API?
  + (Video? Webinar? Example projects? PDF?)
* What type of support (technical, organizational, partner) do you need to implement an API?
* When integrating with an API, what were some of the questions you had for the API provider? What did they provide to answer those questions?
* In the past, how long has it taken to integrate with a new API on the technical side?