Peace Corps Volunteer-Openings API Review

# Summary

At this the 2/13/2015 – 2/14/2015 ID Hackathon, our team worked with the Peace Corps Volunteer-Openings API Review. Throughout this process, we devised a list of problems and suggestions for improvement for current API. These are detailed below.

Note on metadata: for the purpose of this review, metadata pertains to the various types of data associated with each job opening.

# Issues

## Compound Searches with Keyword

Single searches with a single keyword query worked fine. However, searches that used multiple keywords connected by the “&” operator to narrow down or broaden searches simply did not work. Essentially, the last keyword was the only element searched and all other keywords were ignored.

## Insufficient Metadata

It would be useful to have more elements to facilitate the process of narrowing down and associating various job openings. A tentative list of suggestions are included in section 3.1.

## No Pictures of Job Openings

The lack of pictures in the database seriously limited our ability to develop a web app using it. Simply put, it made developing a human connection to the different openings almost impossible. People are not nearly as inspired by a wall of text as they are with pictures of the real world.

# Ideas

## Suggested Metadata Terms

### Pictures

There should be a set of pictures associated with each job opportunity. Ideally these would be taken from the actual site; failing that, they could be a set of stock photos. This could either form a system for storing Peace Corps photos for certain locations or could be a separate database that would be linked in to the Volunteer-Openings API.

Each picture should contain a title, a caption, and the actual picture as sub-elements.

### Urban vs Rural

Whether or not an opportunity is located in an urban or rural setting should be tracked. The only way to search for this currently is to look for keywords in the opportunity description; this is not accurate and not ideal.

### Climate

There is no easy way to search for a list of opportunities in a certain climate. The only way to do it currently involves searching by country/region and making assumptions regarding that countries climate.

### Better health requirements

Currently, health requirements are stored as text in the category “country medical considerations”. This seriously limits searching to exclude opportunities by a certain medical or dietary requirement. We would suggest storing these as a list rather than a block of text to improve usability.

## Include Legacy Openings in Set

We believe that there would be value in including past, legacy job openings in the database. This would allow people to search not only where current openings are, but also where the peace corps has sent people in the past.

While this feature is not immediately useful for placing prospective Peace Corps volunteers in locations, it would be useful for recruiting new volunteers and spreading awareness about the Peace Corps and the opportunities that it represents. If combined with a high quality pictures, this revised APIs could be used by developers to create new applications for outreach purposes.

# Final Products

## Developers

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Please feel free to contact us!

## Github Repository

<https://github.com/kallen07/idhack>