

## Sprint 1: Client Background Research

### *SUMMARY:*

**iConsultancy** is a hands-on learning program at UMD's College of Information that connects students with real-world projects in UX/UI design, data analytics, and information management. Working with businesses, government agencies, and community organizations, students take on real challenges while gaining practical experience, all under the guidance of faculty. The program is led by TJ Rainsford and supported by UMD's administration, which helps integrate it into the curriculum. Right now, iConsultancy needs a dedicated website to better showcase past projects, attract new partners, make it easier for organizations to get involved, and improve the overall user experience.

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### *What do they do?*

- iConsultancy Website: <https://ischool.umd.edu/partners/iconsultancy/>
- **iConsultancy** is an experiential learning initiative within UMD's College of Information
- They partner with public and private organizations to address real-world information challenges by engaging undergraduate and graduate students in capstone projects
- The services that they offer include UX/UI design and data analytics and reporting
- This program is led by TJ Rainsford

### *Who are their stakeholders?*

- Their stakeholders include the organizations that they partner with—industry, government, and communities
- Undergraduate and graduate students who work on these projects and executing client's goals and objectives
- Faculty at UMD who oversee and guide students through their project and work
- University administration which supports the iConsultancy and its integration into the INFO curriculum

### *What is their mission or business strategy?*

- iConsultancy partners with organizations to tackle real-world information challenges while giving students hands-on experience
- Their goal is to bridge classroom learning with practical applications in areas like UX/UI design, data science, and information management
- By working on these projects, students gain valuable skills, and organizations receive useful insights and solutions

### *What is their particular problem/need?*

- To enhance its online presence by:

- showcasing previous capstone projects
- facilitating inquiries and partnership requests
- providing better user experience
- improving accessibility and functionality
- playing a greater role in the **client recruitment** and **onboarding process**, among other potential functions

#### *Additional information*

- They operate in the higher education and consulting market
- University-Based Consulting Programs exist at many universities where students work on real-world projects for businesses and organizations
  - Examples include:
    - Northeastern University's Co-op Program—students alternate between coursework and full-time, paid professional positions
    - University at Albany's Internship Initiative—requires students to gain work experience before graduation, with on-campus opportunities and stipends for unpaid roles