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How platforms and workers can make the most of data portability

Practical lessons from the Jobtech Alliance and GigCV on how workers can carry their verified reputation data across platforms, and why that strengthens platforms too.

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Introduction

Reputation data is the oil of jobtech platforms. Reflecting a worker's performance and experiences from previous transactions, it is a key trust mechanism in the platform economy. The better and more comprehensive the reviews, the more trust a potential client has in the worker.

This “oil” is often viewed in the wrong light. If oil is so valuable, you'd rather keep it to yourself. But what if you start to view reputation data not as ordinary oil, but as a “lubricant”? Workers will see how platform work can be part of building a portfolio in the labour market; platforms will see how they can improve their value proposition to workers; and policymakers and funders will see how platform work can contribute to labour market mobility.

In this learning study, we share practical lessons learnt through a collaboration between GigCV and the Jobtech Alliance. We delve into **how data portability can add the most value for workers, jobtech platforms, policymakers and funders.**

Why trust mechanisms matter

Jobtech platforms lower the barrier to accessing work for millions of workers.

Trust mechanisms form part of the process of establishing a transaction, designed to give both the worker and the client certainty that the work will be carried out properly.

After all, clients generally have no experience of how the workers operate. Trust mechanisms eliminate uncertainty and, with it, the sense of risk.

Platforms use various types of mechanisms to ensure this trust. For example, platform companies verify matters such as identity, the documents required to carry out the transaction securely, and qualifications to provide a certain degree of assurance that the worker can meet the client's expectations.

An important part of these trust mechanisms is data on previously completed gigs, better known as reputation profiles or reviews. After completing a transaction, the client is asked to rate the worker via the familiar 5-star system and, in many cases, to provide written reviews as well. In addition, other performance-related data is stored, such as the number of gigs completed, attendance rate, skills used, client names and more.

This data, which is often collated in a reputation profile and reduces the risk for new clients, helps workers secure more work and, in some cases, better pay. The more important trust is to perform the work, the more important a good reputation score is.

What data portability unlocks

Reputation data can usually only be used within a single platform. This can cause problems for both the worker and the platform.

- **For workers,** a good reputation profile on a platform creates a lock-in. They are encouraged to work only via that platform, since building a new reputation on another platform requires an investment. After all, the worker has to start from scratch again, which in practice often means that, to begin with, they offer gigs for less money in order to compete with those who do already have a rating on the platform.
- **For platforms,** this lock-in can also become a problem. When there is a group of workers with a strong reputation profile, this reduces the chances of new workers

joining the platform securing gigs. After all, workers with many reviews are chosen more quickly, leading to an accumulation of ratings for these so-called ‘superstar’ workers, which makes it increasingly difficult for newbies to secure their first gigs.

That is why the Jobtech Alliance partnered with [GigCV](#), a non-profit data portability service supported by various APIs. As part of this partnership, we workshopped with founders, integrated the API into a single platform, and opened dialogue with other stakeholders. Below is what we learned.

One proposed solution comes from policymakers: requiring platform companies to let workers move their data freely within and beyond the jobtech market.

Portability is part of a wider regulatory direction of travel, in which authorities increasingly view platforms as gateways to workers and their rights. [Article 20 of the European Platform Work Directive](#), for example, requires platforms to give workers and their representatives a channel to communicate with each other, whilst the EU’s [DAC7 rules](#) require platforms to share workers’ income data with tax administrations to improve enforcement.

Each new obligation adds compliance cost, which is cheaper to meet through shared infrastructure than through bespoke builds. Centralised, publicly funded services with mandatory APIs are [one plausible answer](#), and a possible starting point for something like a “passport for workers” in the labour market. This matters for African platforms because data protection regimes modelled on European law (GDPR) have already been adopted across much of the continent, anchored by the [AU’s Malabo Convention](#), and as [digital ID systems](#) that are rolled out in a growing number of markets. Platforms that design for portability now will be ahead, rather than retrofitting later.

GigCV’s approach

Platforms are generally willing to share data, but building and maintaining that capability rarely makes the cut on an already stretched development roadmap. Third-party “reputation data wallets” have also largely failed, weighed down by complexity and cost, with no clear business case to justify the investment.

In 2021, platform researcher [Martijn Arets](#) convened platforms, policymakers, trade union leaders, and researchers to find a workable path forward. The result was [GigCV](#), built in collaboration with six platforms and a technical partner.

GigCV lets workers download their platform data as a digital CV in PDF format in a single click, selecting only the reviews they find relevant. Recipients, employers or clients, can verify a document's authenticity directly on the website. The underlying technology is centrally developed and hosted, so platforms need only a one-off integration of the API into their systems; after that, no further attention is required.



Martijn Arets
Platform researcher,
GigCV convener

To date, GigCV's reach across participating platforms:

6

platforms have adopted
GigCV

100,000+

workers given access to their
data

~35,000

digital CVs downloaded

Participating platforms also contribute to ongoing research, generating insights that extend beyond the service itself.

We learned that workers are eager to take their data with them when given the option; they are interested in both transferring it to another platform and exporting it as a digital CV. In practice, it tends to be the most engaged workers who download their CVs, and they keep using the platform afterwards.

Making this data available does not drive workers away.

Platforms had noticed that workers previously resorted to screenshotting their reputation profiles for job interviews, a reminder that workers will use their data regardless, with or without platform support. Those that do facilitate portability have found it useful as a recruitment tool, and workers locate the functionality on their own without any active marketing.

The broader takeaway is that data portability is entirely feasible and need not be complex.



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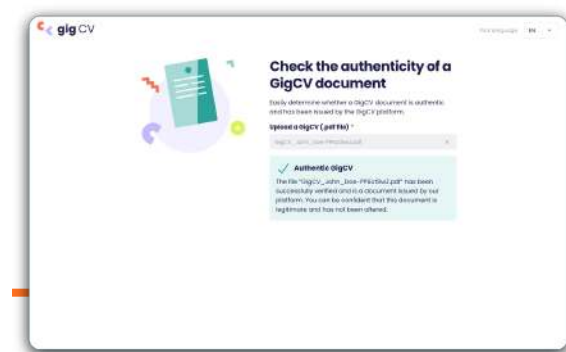
Michelle Johnson

michelle.johnson@gmail.co

★★★★★ Based on 16 reviews

It fits naturally with the enabling role jobtech platforms already play.

Approaching portability as a strategic question (“How does this improve the value I offer workers?”) leads to a different, more productive conversation than treating it purely as a compliance or data protection issue.



The GigCV authenticity checker: recipients verify a downloaded CV directly on the website.

How data portability can work in practice in Africa

We took the data portability question straight to founders, first at the [Africa Jobtech Summit in 2025](#), then through one-on-one conversations across the network.

While most platforms see the value, few are implementing it.

The reasons are practical, not ideological. Some platforms **do not have enough completed gigs** by workers to make sharing meaningful. Others are still finding product-market fit and too much is in flux to commit. Some have the will but not the bandwidth. A few simply ran out of road within the project window to get from conversation to integration.

None of these trajectories are arguments against data portability. They represent arguments for starting the conversation earlier, before a product is “ready,” before a roadmap is locked, before architectural choices are already baked in.

One platform did integrate during the research period. Several others have put it on their roadmap. And the conversations themselves surfaced perspectives from across the labour market that we find worth sharing in full.

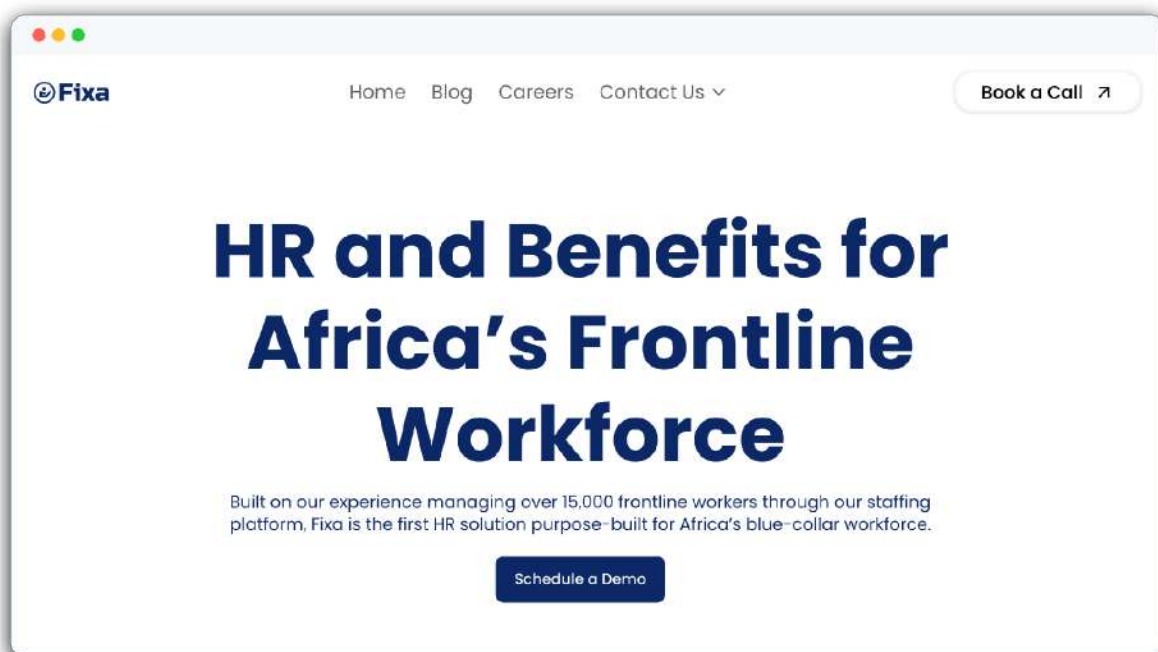
PLATFORM CASE STUDY

Fixa: employment records as the core

RWANDA



Fixa launched in Rwanda as a tech-enabled staffing company, supplying temporary workers into construction. The core business was to connect workers to shifts, manage attendance, run payroll. But every shift logged and every wage processed was building something that barely exists across Africa's informal economy: verified employment data.



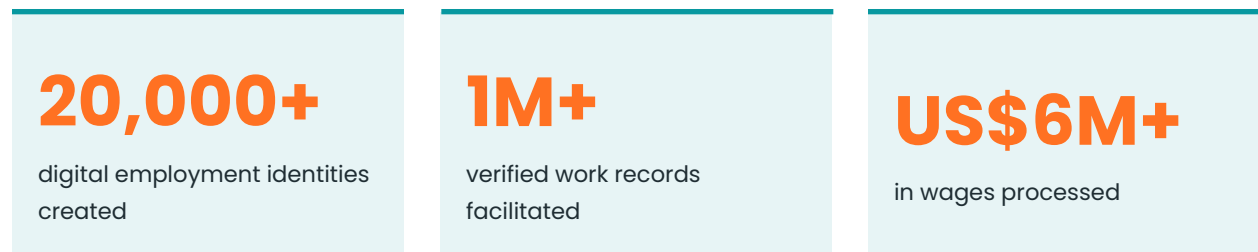
For a plumber, for example, this means a verified plumbing CV, accessible even through USSD: a portable, trusted record of their work.

Initially, Fixa was solving an operational problem for employers: messy attendance, manual payroll, no visibility over a large frontline workforce, and the employment records accumulated as a by-product. The data was a consequence of the business working, not

a feature bolted on top. Fixa spent several years running the software on its own operations before selling it to anyone else.

Today, workers can access, download, and print their verified work history, including attendance records, ratings, and completed jobs. They take it with them to their next opportunity, inside or outside Fixa's ecosystem. Workers can move not just from platform to platform, but across sectors. For example, from construction to mining, carrying a verified track record that speaks for them in every new context. They can use that record to transition from temporary or gig work into other forms of employment, creating a sustainable livelihood pathway.

By the time the Jobtech Alliance engaged with Fixa to provide venture support in 2026, the platform had reached:



Once a worker has a verified earnings history, they have something worth carrying. Fixa's own impact survey found that over 95% of workers were accessing earned wages for the first time in their lives. Credit, insurance and savings products are the next layer, but only once the data exists and the trust is established. The businesses that try to sell financial services before they've built that foundation rarely succeed.

Around 30% of Fixa's workers today are women, far higher than one would expect in construction.

The intent is that the same infrastructure will apply in agriculture, manufacturing and hospitality, where women make up a much larger share of the workforce. For women who move between employers or step away for caregiving, a portable employment identity that travels with them is the difference between work staying transactional and becoming cumulative.

PLATFORM CASE STUDY

Tunga: the “single source of truth”

PAN-AFRICA



[Tunga](#) connects digital talent from across Africa with organisations worldwide, handling recruitment, onboarding and mentoring for software developers and other digital specialists. They were the one platform that completed a GigCV integration during the research period.



The experience revealed something important: data portability only delivers when the conditions are right.



Carlton Sserunkuma

IT Lead, Tunga

Tunga decided to use GigCV for two reasons: the belief that developers should own their work history and be able to take it with them, rather than having it locked inside one platform, and the practical appeal of a quick, easy data export. The technical implementation went well, with a straightforward integration.

In practice, however, uptake has been limited. Most developers already have their own CV and mainly use it to fill out their Tunga profile, without treating that profile as their primary CV going forward. As a result, it isn't actively kept up to date, and that kind of currency is exactly what a portability solution like GigCV needs in order to deliver real value.

Data portability only really delivers once a platform functions as the primary, actively maintained record of someone's work history, and there's a concrete moment where moving that data actually matters. Those conditions aren't yet in place for Tunga, but the underlying principle, that a developer's work history belongs to them, is one the company still believes in.

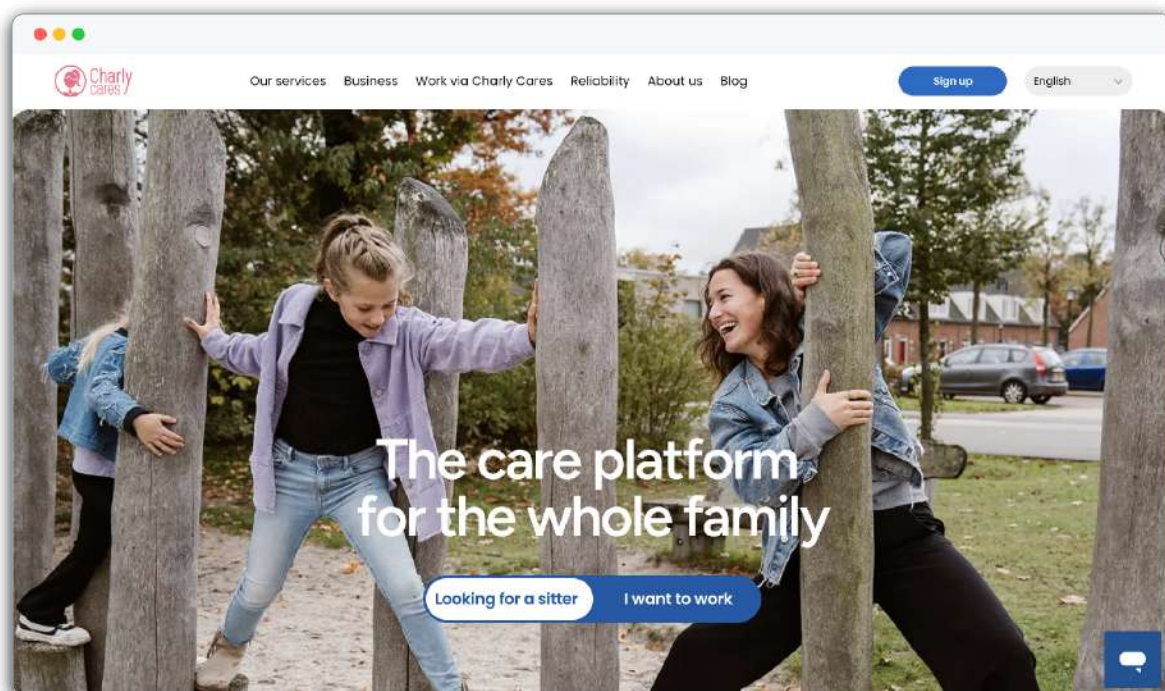
PLATFORM CASE STUDY

Charly Cares: thinking holistically

NETHERLANDS



[Charly Cares](#) is a platform connecting families with babysitters, most of whom are students. Since its integration of the GigCV API four years ago, workers on the platform have downloaded over 14,000 CVs. On the surface, a long way from construction labour in Kigali or software development in Lagos.



Xander Koenen

Founder, Charly Cares

At Charly Cares, we believe that the experience our babysitters build belongs to them. They invest their time, accumulate working hours, receive reviews, and develop valuable skills and experience. That should not remain locked away on the servers of a single platform. This is exactly why we decided to join GigCV from the start. It provides a simple way to return that experience to workers in a format they can use beyond our platform.

We also want babysitting to be recognised as genuine work experience. While many people see it as ‘just an evening of babysitting,’ it involves real responsibility and helps young people develop a wide range of transferable skills. GigCV makes that experience visible. It transforms ‘I have done some babysitting’ into verifiable work experience that workers can take with them when applying for internships, jobs, or further education, particularly in fields such as education or childcare. Most of our babysitters are students, and if GigCV helps them take the next step in their careers, even if that step is beyond Charly Cares, we consider that a success.

Supporting data portability is also consistent with our broader vision. Giving workers access to their own data and enabling them to take it with them demonstrates that we value transparency and trust. That benefits not only our babysitters but also the families who use our platform, as it reflects how we believe people and their data should be treated.

The implementation itself was relatively straightforward. Because GigCV is built around a clear standard, it integrated well with the data we were already maintaining. The feedback from workers has been consistently positive. They appreciate that their work now counts beyond Charly Cares and that they have a credible way to demonstrate their experience.

From our perspective, this should become the norm across the platform economy. We do not believe workers should be tied to a single platform, leaving behind the ratings, reviews, and experience they have worked hard to build. By embracing data portability, platforms give workers ownership over their professional history while strengthening trust in the platform ecosystem. We hope that many more platforms will adopt initiatives like GigCV in the future.

PLATFORM CASE STUDY

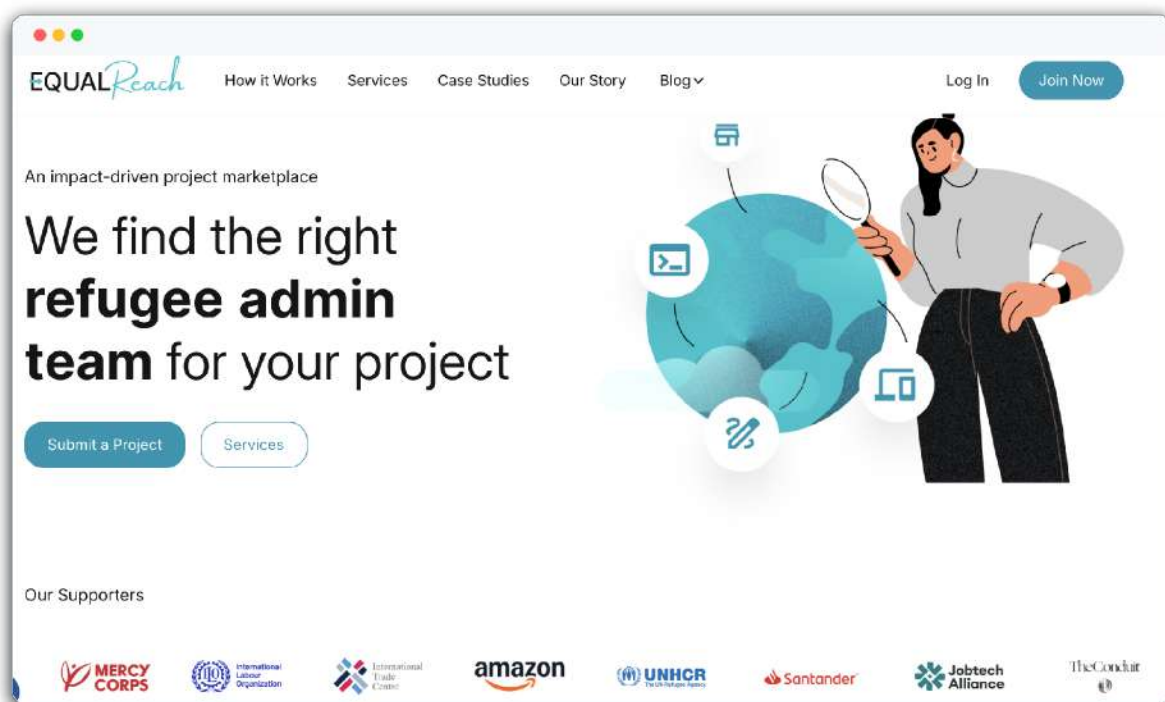
EqualReach: at roadmap stage

GLOBAL



Not every platform was ready to integrate during the research period. EqualReach, an impact-driven platform connecting organisations with specialist teams from refugee and displaced communities, has since included GigCV implementation on its roadmap. For a platform whose value proposition is built on the talent and track record of workers who are often invisible to formal labour markets, data portability is almost non-negotiable.

EqualReach is an impact-driven online freelancing marketplace connecting businesses with highly-skilled, vetted teams of displaced tech talent.



Giselle Gonzales

Founder & CEO, EqualReach

EqualReach already connects displaced talent to digital project-based work, but each team's and individual's reputation

and experience has mostly stayed within our own ecosystem. GigCV stood out to us because it allows that same project-based track record to travel with the worker, transforming completed projects into portable, independently validated proof of experience that they can own and use beyond our platform.

This is a powerful extension of our mission: creating dignified, lasting economic opportunities for displaced talent, not just a single placement. By enabling workers to build a CV based on verified work they have completed, GigCV helps reduce the trust barriers that displaced and refugee talent often face when engaging with new employers, while also giving clients confidence in the capabilities and track records of the teams they work with.

We see this as a way to ensure that the value created through each project continues to benefit workers long after the project ends. While implementation requires thoughtful decisions around engineering capacity, consent processes, and responsible data sharing, the impact for workers made it a clear priority for us. The fact that GigCV is free to access and maintained through the Jobtech Alliance was an important factor in making this commitment possible, allowing us to prioritise a solution that creates long-term value without competing with other critical product investments.

We have now committed to integrating the GigCV API into our product roadmap for early 2027. Although we have not yet conducted a formal worker survey, conversations with our Delivery Partner teams suggest strong interest in having an independent, portable record of achievements. Today, workers primarily rely on internal reviews, testimonials, and project impact reports within EqualReach. GigCV provides an opportunity to bridge the credibility gap by allowing displaced talent to demonstrate their skills and experience wherever new opportunities arise.

The worker perspective

Data portability is not only a product question. Workers' representatives have been pushing for it for years, not always with the vocabulary of portability, but with a clear understanding of what's at stake.

Sharing data with workers has caught the attention of stakeholders such as workers' representatives. To gain an understanding of data workers' preferences and expectations regarding the ability to take their data with them, we conducted a survey

on data portability – in collaboration with Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and the Data Labelers Association in Kenya – amongst data workers who find and carry out their work via online platforms like Cloudfactory, Avala, Remotasks and Africa.ai.

Out of over 500 respondents,¹

76.1%

would choose to take their data to another platform, if possible

87.2%

expected that the experience gained through platform work would be useful elsewhere

78.2%

believed their data would remain valuable if it could be transferred

These findings suggest that the vast majority of workers perceive both their platform-generated experience and their work-related data as portable assets with value beyond the platform on which they were originally accumulated.

Many workers also see value in the data collected on platforms for use beyond the platform economy. When asked whether they would be interested in obtaining their data in the form of a reference letter, 86.8% said they would like to receive a reference letter if possible, and 83.4% expected that such a letter documenting their platform experience would help them obtain new or different work outside of the platform economy. These findings suggest strong demand for formal recognition of platform-based work experience.

In response to the open-ended question asking what the data worker expects the value of the data to be in other contexts, responses show that data workers view the data generated through gig-platform work as a tangible labour-market asset rather than an administrative record. Workers repeatedly referred to ratings, client reviews, completed projects, skills assessments, and work histories as evidence that could be used to secure better-paid jobs, attract new clients, and move more easily between platforms.

Many stressed that the current inability to transfer this information forces them to “start from zero” each time they switch platforms, despite having already built a proven track record. As one respondent noted,

“The main benefit would be not losing my history, reviews and audience. I could move without having to rebuild everything from zero.”

¹ These findings are preliminary and should be interpreted with caution. They are based on an initial analysis of the raw survey data, which have not yet been fully cleaned, checked, or validated. The reported percentages therefore provide an initial indication only and may change after further analysis.

Several workers also linked data portability to greater bargaining power and economic security, arguing that transferable reputation and performance records would reduce dependence on a single platform and allow them to diversify their income sources. Overall, the answers indicate that workers expect platform-generated data to function as a portable professional credential that can directly improve employability, earnings potential, and career mobility across the broader labour market.



Ephantus Kanyugi

Programs, Operations & Finance Lead, Data Labelers Association

One of the biggest challenges facing data workers today is that their work is largely invisible. Unlike many other professions, workers can spend years building skills, completing thousands of tasks, and maintaining excellent performance records, yet leave a platform with little or no formal evidence of what they have accomplished.

There are no standardised reference letters, portable work histories, or recognised credentials that validate their experience. As a result, when workers apply for new opportunities, whether on another platform or in the broader labour market, they are often expected to prove years of professional experience with nothing more than their own word.

This survey highlights a practical solution to that problem. The overwhelming demand for data portability and reference letters shows that workers see their work history as a valuable professional asset that should belong to them. Being able to carry verified records of completed work, skills, ratings, and experience across platforms would not only improve access to new opportunities but would also help establish data work as legitimate, recognisable employment.

Recognition is fundamental to career progression, and until the AI industry provides workers with a way to demonstrate the experience they have earned, many will continue to be excluded from better opportunities despite years of valuable contribution.

Impact investors also see data portability as an addition to the value propositions for platforms.

Starter kit for founders: implementing data portability

The following is a practical toolkit for founders looking to make the most of data portability, drawn from the lessons above.

1 Use data sharing to strengthen your value proposition

Treating data portability as compliance produces half-hearted implementation. Treat it as a strategy instead. Ask how data sharing improves your platform's value for both workers and clients.

Offering workers on-demand access to their data signals that working via your platform builds long-term employability, which motivates more activity and reduces churn from workers who'd otherwise leave to protect their work history.

For clients, strong portability signals that your workers are verifiable professionals, not anonymous gig workers. If you compete on talent quality, this matters. Data sharing thus becomes a feature that reinforces why people choose you. It also strengthens the story you tell to policymakers, investors, and partners, and shifts the conversation from gigs to livelihood pathways.

2 Validate, don't assume

Many data-sharing discussions stall in conceptual debate. Platforms assume workers want this, assume it affects behaviour, assume the impact, and never test any of it. That's a strange failure for companies whose core competency is validating assumptions fast.

The platforms that have tested it found that workers do download their data, that downloaders tend to be their most valuable users, and that downloading has no negative effect on platform activity. When GigCV experienced a brief outage, workers contacted platforms to report they couldn't download, the strongest possible signal of genuine demand.

On the import side, external credentials improve client hiring intent early on, though their influence diminishes once sufficient on-platform data accumulates. Your platform will have its own specific dynamics. The only way to find them is to run the experiment. This is already how you build your product. All you need to do is apply the same discipline here.

3 Know your data

Before you can share anything, you need a clear inventory. Platforms often hold more useful data than they realise, including work history, ratings, completion rates, earnings, skills tags, client feedback, identity verification status, qualifications, among others. Not all of it is equally shareable: some is legally constrained, some is commercially sensitive, some requires consent frameworks you may not have in place yet.

You can map your data by category: for example, what workers generated through their activity; what you derived or inferred; and what third parties provided. The first category is the most clearly shareable and the most valuable to workers. Start there. Getting clarity on this inventory also has the perk of surfacing data quality issues early enough.

4 Design with data portability in mind

It is often only possible to start sharing data once, as a platform, you have found product-market fit, reached a certain critical mass of users, and built the core technologies needed to run your platform successfully. And, of course, once you have (enough) data to share.

But it is important to put data portability on the agenda at an earlier stage. The moment you start collecting data, the architectural choices you make (how you structure worker profiles, how you record ratings and outcomes, how you tag job categories and skills) determine how easy or difficult portability will be down the line. Treat data portability as a design constraint from day one, even if implementation is 18 months away.

To do so, you can answer some key questions and make decisions early on:

- What would a worker's exportable record look like?
- What fields matter?
- What would need to be standardised to be useful outside your platform?

5 Build, buy, or collaborate

To get started with data sharing, consider three main routes:

- **Build your own.** Full control, including branding and customisation. The cost is development capacity spent on a feature whose value to your organisation isn't yet proven, plus ongoing maintenance after launch.
- **Integrate a third-party service like GigCV.** Faster to implement, no ongoing maintenance burden, predictable cost. The tradeoff is less flexibility and a risk that outsourcing it reduces your strategic ownership of the feature.
- **Collaborate with other platforms on shared infrastructure.** Highest leverage if you find the right partners, with shared costs, network effects, no single company bearing the full burden. Most founders underestimate how willing competitors are to collaborate on infrastructure none of them see as a core differentiator. The risk is diffuse commitment and lost momentum over time.

A layered solution is, of course, also possible. For example, start by using a third-party service. Once this proves successful, the value is clear, and there is a need for a custom solution, you can always opt to build your own tool.

6 Don't overlook importing

Most conversations about data portability focus on export. But the ability to import data (that is, letting a worker bring their history from another platform onto yours) can be equally powerful. It lowers the barrier for experienced workers to join, gives you richer profiles from day one, and signals to workers that their investment in building a reputation elsewhere won't be wasted if they switch.

Importing requires thinking about trust and verification. How do you validate data that comes from outside your system? Standards bodies and shared infrastructure help here, but even in their absence, you can design lightweight intake processes that capture external history without requiring full interoperability from the start.