**How to Set Up API Access**

Access to the [**Spark® API**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/api_services/read_first) and our [**RESO Web API**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/reso/overview) requires an API key. Follow these steps to request an API key for data access. If you have questions about these steps, please let us know at [**api-support@fbsdata.com**](mailto:api-support@fbsdata.com).

1. [**Register as an API developer**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#register_as_dev)
2. [**Determine what kind of API key you need**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#what_role)
3. [**Check the Spark Datamart for an appropriate MLS data plan**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#check_datamart)
4. [**Enroll in a data plan**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#enroll)
5. [**Contact the MLS directly**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#contact_mls)

**1. Register as an API developer**

Register as an API developer with us using [**this form**](http://sparkplatform.com/register/developers). Doing so is free, and once your registration is activated (within 3 business days), you'll receive demo API credentials that can be used to retrieve some example data from the [**Spark API**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/api_services/read_first) and our [**RESO Web API**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/reso/overview). Please note that this test access is only intended to give you a feel for how the APIs work, not what kind of data will be available to you with a live API key.

## 2. Determine what kind of API key you need

There are two parts to this: deciding whether you need a bearer token API key or an OpenID Connect API key, and determining which role your API key should have based on your intended use.

### Do you need a bearer token API key or an OpenID Connect API key?

The vast majority of users need a bearer token API key, which has a non-expiring [**access token**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/authentication/access_token) associated with a specific Flexmls user (or a generic agent). Bearer token API keys are available via the [**Spark Datamart**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#check_datamart).

An [**OpenID Connect**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/authentication/openid_connect_authentication) API key allows multiple agents to authenticate using their Flexmls username and password, which grants the API key holder a temporary access token that can be used to make API requests as that agent. You'd only need an OpenID Connect API key if you:

* Are building an app (Spark Store apps included) you want agents to sign into with their Flexmls credentials, so you can access data specific to them.
* Want to use OpenID Connect for an SSO integration with Flexmls.

If you need an OpenID Connect API key, please contact the MLS you intend to work with to [**obtain approval for an API key of the proper role (see step 5 below)**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#contact_mls).

### What role should your API key have?

The APIs use a concept of standard [**roles**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/supporting_documentation/roles) to manage what listings and what specific data are accessible with an API key. You will most likely need an IDX, Private, or VOW API key:

* [**IDX**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/supporting_documentation/roles#idx_role): Will **any** of the data pulled with the API key be displayed publicly? If so, you'll almost certainly need an IDX API key. The most common use case is a website that displays listing information.
* [**Private**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/supporting_documentation/roles#private_role): If the data will be used by you only, or for agent/broker-only back office products, you will need a Private role API key. Private role API keys can access MLS-confidential data meant to be seen only by MLS members. No data pulled with a Private API key should ever be displayed publicly.
* [**VOW**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/supporting_documentation/roles#portal_role): A VOW role is similar but not identical to an IDX role. VOW data can be displayed to website visitors, but *only* after the user has identified themselves by creating an account and signing into the website. IDX is the standard for listings display, so if you don't know you need a VOW role, you probably don't.

**3. Check the Spark Datamart for an appropriate MLS data plan**

The [**Spark Datamart**](https://sparkplatform.com/appstore/datamart) allows registered developers to search for and sign up for data plans offered by MLSs. Different plans issue API keys with different roles and permissions. It is up to each MLS to decide what kinds of data plans to offer, and not all MLSs offer data plans.

To view the Spark Datamart:

1. Log in at [**this link**](https://sparkplatform.com/ticket), using your developer username and password.
2. Click on the "Datamart" link near the top left. You will have to enter a payment method if you have not done so already. The payment screen drops you off in the app store when you're finished entering your details, so once it does, go back to the Datamart at [**https://sparkplatform.com/appstore/datamart**](https://sparkplatform.com/appstore/datamart).
3. Search for the MLS you want data from in the top left search bar and review the available data plans.

#### An Agent or Broker's Own Data

In addition to plans for different roles (IDX, VOW, Private), you may also see plans for "A Broker or Agent's Own Data". These plans issue a Private role API key, but with the restriction that it can **only** pull data from listings for which the given Flexmls user acted as the listing or selling agent. You can enroll as a member, office, or company Flexmls user. If you sign up with an office account, all listings for which an office member acted as the listing or selling agent will be available. If you sign up with a company account, all listings for which a company member acted as the listing or selling agent will be available.

**Does the MLS you need access to offer a data plan for the kind of API key you need?**

* **If so**, [**enroll in the appropriate data plan (see step 4 below)**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#enroll).
* **If not**, you'll need to [**contact the MLS directly (see step 5 below)**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#contact_mls).

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**5. Contact the MLS directly**

If you have checked the [**Spark Datamart**](http://sparkplatform.com/docs/overview/set_up_access#check_datamart) and confirmed there are no plans that meet your needs, you'll need to contact the MLS directly to request an API key. How, whether, and to whom an MLS issues API keys is up to each MLS. With your request, be sure to include the following information:

* What you are building and how you would like to use the data
* Who will have access to the data
* The role of the API key you need
* The Flexmls username the API key should be associated with, or a request for a "generic agent" API key

If there are any questions, feel free to loop in [**api-support@fbsdata.com**](mailto:api-support@fbsdata.com). Please also email us there if an MLS approves you for an API key but does not set up the API key themselves. We can only issue API keys with an email stating approval from an authorized MLS admin.

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