

Position Specification

Government Digital Service
Chief Executive Officer

Foreword from the Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service

Thank you for your interest in the role of CEO, Government Digital Service.



The Government is transforming at pace. It is our ambition to make UK Government digital services the best in the world, exceeding the benchmark set globally by the best public or private sector standards.

The coronavirus pandemic has provided new impetus and opportunity to this endeavour. Every decision relies upon the highest quality data and analysis. Every solution will benefit from technical expertise. Right now, the combined efforts of our Digital Data and Technology (DDaT)

profession is integral to the national response, protecting our economy and saving lives.

Delivering this change will require a major transformational effort: to update or replace numerous legacy technologies, accelerate the move to scalable cloud-based technologies, define the policies and interfaces needed to unlock the potential of the vast Government data sets, and embrace the latest technologies to pioneer ever-more convenient ways to deliver services to citizens, with ever greater efficiency.

The Government Digital Service (GDS) will be central to this effort. For almost a decade, GDS has transformed Government through the design and delivery of common components, platforms and services that have improved millions of citizens' everyday experience of Government and set the standard for the world. Now we need to go again - but even better.

It is within that context that I am pleased to invite applications for the role of CEO GDS. The CEO will combine technical excellence and proven delivery experience to set the vision and implementation strategy for GDS. They will consolidate and build upon the service offering to develop GDS's reputation as the world's foremost user-centred Government digital product specialist. This is a critical role at the very centre of Government, reporting to the newly created Government Chief Digital Officer. Together they will accelerate the digital transformation and innovation strategies for all of Government, making UK digital services the envy of governments and private sector organisations across the world.

For an experienced leader, there is no working environment more exciting, more challenging, or more rewarding than Government, and perhaps no more important time for public service. We have the opportunity to improve the lives of millions of people. If this appeals to you, and you think you have what it will take, please do get in touch.

Alex Chisholm

Introduction to the Government Digital Service (GDS)

GDS is situated at the heart of the Cabinet Office, overseeing digital transformation and innovation strategies for all of Government. It is responsible for growing technical talent across the Civil Service and representing Her Majesty's Government's (HMG) DDaT Profession to industry and other Government stakeholders worldwide. Since its creation in 2011, GDS has worked with departments and local authorities to help in the delivery of services that meet the needs of users, save money, and improve the efficiency of the public sector. GDS provides the functional leadership for Government on DDaT, reaching across a community of more than 18,000 professionals tasked with delivering complex and transformational digital initiatives.

GDS maintains and improves a wide range of cross-Government platforms and tools, including GOV.UK, GOV.UK Pay, GOVWifi, Digital Marketplace, GDS Academy and many others. In the last year, GDS supported 2,055 services across 570 organisations to send around 500 million emails, text messages and letters through GOV.UK Notify. GOV.UK Pay supported 285 services taking a total of three million payments with a combined value of £175 million and GovWifi had 502,000 registered users in over 1,000 locations.

GDS's core responsibilities include:

- providing best practice guidance and advice for consistent, coherent, high quality services
- setting and enforcing standards for digital services
- building and supporting common platforms, services, components and tools
- helping Government choose the right technology, favouring shorter, more flexible relationships with a wider variety of suppliers
- leading the Digital, Data and Technology profession for Government
- supporting increased use of emerging technologies by the public sector

The potential to shape society's future is enormous and GDS's purpose is to ensure the profession is equipped and inspired to deliver real, meaningful change for users; to do the work of digital transformation that makes Government work better for everyone.

Candidate Profile

The Chief Executive Officer of the Government Digital Service is a Director General level post, and will be responsible for vision and strategy and overseeing the design and delivery of common components, platforms and services that will transform the operation and improve millions of citizens' everyday experience of Government. These include the GOV.UK communication portal, identity, validation, payment and other current and future services that are most effectively delivered centrally across Government.

The CEO will also be responsible for the continued operation of the Vulnerable People Services, a key part of the Government's Shielding Programme in response to COVID-19.

The CEO will report to the newly established Government Chief Digital Officer (GCDO). The GCDO is a Permanent Secretary level-post situated at the Cabinet Office, responsible for shaping and assuring delivery of the digital transformation and innovation strategies for all of Government, and leading HMG's 18,000 strong Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) function, which the CEO will support.

The main responsibilities of the CEO will be to:

- create and implement a vision and strategy for the delivery of common components, products and platforms that meet departments' diverse needs and citizens' growing expectations;
- assure and oversee the implementation of technical strategies that will deliver robust, scalable and elegant products that will transform Government services;
- promote the adoption of existing GDS products and services across Government and the wider public sector and work with peers in departments to identify opportunities for new innovations;
- oversee the GDS budget;
- identify and manage strategic risks relating to the suite of products and services GDS owns and operates and where appropriate, escalate these to senior stakeholders, including senior officials and Ministerial teams;
- chair the GDS Executive Board, manage and oversee performance, delivery, risk, budget and people;
- grow and mentor diverse, cross-functional teams and product communities within the GDS;
- support the new GCDO in their leadership of the DDaT function across Government, including development of capability and professional standards;
- manage complex relationships with a wide range of internal (including the Civil Service CDIO community) and external stakeholders, including partners and vendors and
- act as a corporate leader, both as part of the GCDO's senior team, and as part of the Cabinet Office Senior Leadership Group.

Person Specification

We are seeking an inspiring and talented senior leader with a proven track record in digital transformation and service delivery. You will be passionate about technology and tackling some of society's hardest problems through the application of innovative products and technologies.

Candidates should demonstrate evidence of the following essential criteria in their application.

Experience

- deep experience of leading teams that develop, deliver and run digital products to scale in complex private or public sector organisations;
- significant software development and infrastructure architecture experience in designing large scale digital services around user needs;
- a demonstrable track record of leading and inspiring cross functional teams, attracting top talent, building engagement and leading change effectively in a complex context; and
- experience of leading or contributing to major programmes of complex, organisation-wide change, delivered at pace.

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

- a clear understanding of new and emerging technologies and the opportunities they provide to improve the delivery of public services in the UK;
- a champion of user-centred design, with a deep understanding of user behaviour;
- expertise in multiple technologies across software engineering, security, data interchange and data management; and
- a strong understanding of the practical application of agile development methods and leading delivery teams in an Agile, Lean and/or a Continuous Delivery environment.

The Civil Service is committed to equality for all and welcomes applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds.

Recruitment overview

Recruitment into the Civil Service is governed by the Civil Service Commission’s Recruitment Principles. The Civil Service Commission regulates recruitment into the Civil Service, ensuring that appointments are made on merit after fair and open competition.

The Civil Service Commission has two primary functions:

- Providing assurance that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the [Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles](#). For the most senior posts in the Civil Service, the Commission discharges its responsibilities directly by overseeing the recruitment process and by a Commissioner chairing the selection panel.
- Hearing and determining appeals made by civil servants under the Civil Service Code, which sets out the Civil Service values – Impartiality, Objectivity, Integrity and Honesty - and forms part of the relationship between civil servants and their employer.

More detailed information can be found on the [Civil Service Commission website](#).

Applications will be sifted against the criteria set out above by a panel chaired by a Civil Service Commissioner. Russell Reynolds Associates (RRA) has been appointed to support this recruitment.

The appointment panel will consist of:

- Isabel Doverty, Civil Service Commissioner (Chair)
- Alex Chisholm, Civil Service Chief Operating Officer and Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Office
- Susannah Storey, Director General for Digital and Media Policy in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- Jacqueline De Rojas, President techUK

Indicative Timetable:

Closing date for applications	23 October, 12.00 noon
<i>Long List Meeting – Appointment Panel</i>	28 October
First round interviews with RRA	Week 2 and 9 November
<i>Short List Meeting – Appointment Panel</i>	18 November
<i>Assessments and Stakeholder Conversations</i>	Week 23 and 30 November
Panel Interviews with finalist candidates	8 December

How to apply

Please submit materials by email to Responses@RussellReynolds.com.

The closing date for applications is **12.00 noon on Friday 23rd October 2020**.

Your submission should include:

- The reference number in the subject line **2008-055L**
- A **covering letter** of not more than three A4 sized pages explaining why this appointment interests you and giving evidence of how you meet the appointment criteria and competencies as detailed in the person specification.
- Your **current CV** with educational and professional qualifications and full employment history, explaining any gaps in your employment history, giving details where applicable, of budgets and numbers of people managed, highlighting relevant achievements in recent posts, together with reasons for any gaps within the last two years.
- Details of your current remuneration package.
- The names of two referees who may be contacted at short-list stage, i.e. before the final interview, describing in what capacity and over what period of time they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your consent.
- Notification of any dates you are unable to accommodate within the indicative timetable set out above. Please note that shortlisted candidates will be required to undertake a number of assessments prior to the final interviews. Your co-operation in making yourself available during this time will be much appreciated.

In addition, your application should include the following documentation:

- A completed **Diversity Questionnaire**: The Civil Service is committed to achieving a workforce that reflects the society it serves, at all levels including the most senior. Collecting this information enables us to identify whether we are recruiting from the widest possible pool of talent and check that all groups are being treated fairly throughout the process. This form will not be disclosed to anyone involved in assessing your application. If you do not wish to provide a response to a particular question, you should complete the 'prefer not to say' option.
- **Disability Confident Scheme Declaration** for people with disabilities, if applicable. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments in order to support disabled job applicants and ensure that you are not disadvantaged in the recruitment and assessment process. All monitoring data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not affect your application in any way.

Terms and conditions

Eligibility

In general, only nationals from the following countries are eligible for employment in the Civil Service: the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the Commonwealth, the EEA, Switzerland and Turkey. There are certain very limited exceptions and further guidance is available [here](#).

The successful candidate will be required to undergo an SC level security check. More guidance on what this involves can be found [here](#).

Location

The role can be based in London, Manchester and Bristol with travel to these locations and other offices as required.

Salary

External candidates should expect their salary upon appointment to be circa £168,000 per annum, with a performance pay opportunity of up to 15%.

Existing civil servants will be appointed in line with the Civil Service pay rules in place on the date of their appointment.

Contract Type

This role is being offered on a permanent basis.

Benefits of working for the Civil Service

Whatever your role, we take your career and development seriously and want to enable you to build a really successful career with the Department and wider Civil Service. It is crucial that our employees have the right skills to develop their careers and meet the challenges ahead, and you'll benefit from regular performance and development reviews to ensure this development is ongoing. As a Civil Service employee, you'll be entitled to a wide range of benefits.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Civil Service values and supports all its employees.

We have strong and pro-active staff networks, special leave policies for hospital appointments, reasonable adjustments put in place for those who need them and diversity talent programmes to help everyone, irrespective of background, to achieve their potential.

Pension

Your pension is a valuable part of your total reward package.

A competitive contributory pension scheme that you can enter as soon as you join where we will make a significant contribution to the cost of your pension, where your contributions come out of your salary before any tax is taken and where your pension will continue to provide valuable benefits for you and your family if you are too ill to continue to work or die before you retire. Visit [Civil Service Pension Scheme](#) for more details.

Generous Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Allowance

25 days' annual leave on entry, increasing on a sliding scale to 30 days after 5 years' service. This is in addition to 8 public holidays.

Staff Wellbeing

Flexible working including part-time and access to flexible working schemes allowing you to vary your working day as long as you work your total hours.

Generous paid maternity and paternity leave, which is notably more than the statutory minimum offered by many other employers.

Opportunity to use onsite facilities including fitness centres and staff canteens (where applicable).

Season Ticket and Bicycle Loan

Interest-free loans allowing you to spread the cost of an annual travel season ticket or a new bicycle.

Sick Pay

Occupational sick pay.

Conflicts of Interest

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of the Department.

If you believe that you may have a conflict of interest please contact the following before submitting your application: paul.massini@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Civil Service is committed to becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK.

We are committed to understanding, respecting and representing as broad a range of views and backgrounds as we have in UK society. We know that diverse perspectives and experiences are critical to an effective, modern Civil Service.

Our vision is to ensure the Civil Service represents modern Britain and is a truly inclusive employer – an example to other employers. We will create an organisation where diversity is not only respected and valued – but celebrated. We want to maximise the potential of everyone who chooses to work for us – regardless of background.

Our passion for diversity and equality means creating a work environment for all employees that is welcoming, respectful, engaging, and enriched with opportunities for personal and professional development. Find out more about our strategy [here](#).

Complaints

The law requires that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the [Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles](#).

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact paul.massini@cabinetoffice.gov.uk in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Department, you can contact the [Civil Service Commission](#).