

# Position Specification

Cabinet Office  
Government Chief Digital Officer

## Foreword from the Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service

Thank you for your interest in the role of Government Chief Digital Officer (GCDO).



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 are 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 and businesses, with ever greater efficiency.

Central to this effort will be the creation of a world-class central technology function, building on but also enhancing the prior work of the Government Digital Service to provide the leadership for the Government's overall DDaT profession and support the essential work of Government Departments and related bodies and agencies.

It is within that context that I am pleased to invite applications for the newly established role of GCDO to lead this new function. This is a critical role at the very centre of Government and reporting directly to me as Chief Operating Officer of the Civil Service. You will be responsible for shaping the digital transformation and innovation strategies for all of Government, growing the technical talent of more than 18,000 DDaT professionals across the Civil Service, and representing HMG's DDaT profession to industry and other Government stakeholders worldwide.

For a deeply 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**

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## Background

The UK Civil Service faces some of its greatest challenges in a generation. As the country manages the coronavirus pandemic and prepares for EU Exit, we look ahead to the opportunities to innovate and build afresh. Digital technologies and data will be key to this, both at the centre and across Departments and in agencies.

The Government Chief Digital Officer (GCDO) will be responsible for harnessing these unprecedented opportunities, strengthening UK Government delivery in the years to come, and inspiring thousands of Digital Data and Technology (DDaT) professionals across the Civil Service to ensure that all the work of the DDaT function is delivered to the highest standard. DDaT activities are central to all large-scale transformation activity and the main focus for innovation; this role will therefore also be the convenor and coordinator of transformation and innovation activity across the whole of HMG.

## Candidate Profile

### The position of Government Chief Digital Officer (GCDO)

To lead on DDaT issues across Government, you will need to have an established profile, with a strong track record for delivery in digital business.

The GCDO will be the professional head of HMG's 18,000 strong DDaT community. They will be responsible for shaping and delivering HMG's innovation and transformation strategies to overhaul Government's legacy IT systems, strengthen our cyber security, improve capability, and ensure Government can better leverage data and emerging technologies to design and deliver citizen-centric services that enhance HMG's reputation as the world's most digitally-advanced Government.

The post-holder will be Permanent Secretary level and work closely with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office and report to the Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service, Alex Chisholm.

The main responsibilities of the role are:

- Oversight of the Government Digital Service's product function, owning critical common services such as the gov.uk communication portal, identity validation, payment and other current and future digital services which are most effectively delivered centrally across Government.
- Creating and leading a central planning, budgeting and monitoring team and process to ensure that more than £5bn of Government investment in technology is being allocated effectively and to monitor and audit the performance of Departments against their technology commitments.
- Developing and enforcing the technical standards needed to ensure efficient delivery of systems. This will include the creation of appropriate frameworks around technology choices, security and privacy requirements, the design of data standards, and APIs to ensure effective interoperability both within and between different Government Departments.
- Providing the professional leadership of the DDaT function including creating the relevant job descriptions and career paths, developing training modules, setting expectations around remuneration and ensuring an effective transfer of talent between Departments for both effective delivery and professional development.
- Identifying opportunities for cost savings in technology procurement through negotiating of central procurement contracts or, where effective, direct procurement of equipment and services across Government.

- Representing the DDaT function on behalf of HMG, including promoting its work publicly at Parliamentary Select Committees and other high-profile events, including internationally.

### **Person specification**

We are seeking an inspiring and talented senior leader with a proven track record in digital transformation. The successful candidate will demonstrate the essential criteria below.

- Proven experience as a senior and respected leader within large, technologically advanced environments, with a track record of leading both digital and technology agendas.
- An ability to build effective and trusted relationships with senior stakeholders, including CEOs, Ministers and Permanent Secretaries.
- Exceptional communication skills and high personal impact; an ability to adapt communication styles to suit both technical and non-technical audiences, to make the complex clear, and adapt communications to provide simple and accessible explanations and advice to non-specialists.
- Sound judgement to make effective decisions with speed and conviction, use creativity and innovation to find new solutions to problems, and strive for continuous improvement.
- A track record of working with others to deliver common goals and objectives, coupled with an ability to build deep collaborative partnerships across Whitehall, with arm's length bodies and third-party organisations.
- An accomplished leader: confident, inclusive and compassionate, with a proven ability to engage, build and manage high performing, diverse leadership teams; and the ability to enthuse and lead others through change.
- A commitment to public service, and the energy, integrity and resilience to operate under high levels of scrutiny and sustained pressure.

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. 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.

Following panel interviews, and as in all Permanent Secretary level appointments, the candidate deemed to be appointable will be put to the Prime Minister for final selection. The successful candidate will be required to undergo Developed Vetting.

This competition will be chaired by Isabel Doerty, Civil Service Commissioner. Along with Isabel, the panel will consist of:

- Alex Chisholm, Civil Service Chief Operating Officer and Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Office
- Cat Little, Director General Public Spending, HM Treasury
- Joanna Davinson, Home Office Chief Digital, Data and Technology Officer
- Doug Gurr, UK Country Manager, Amazon and Member, Digital Economy Council

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. 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. This recruitment follows the Civil Service Recruitment Principles, which can be found at: <https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/recruitment/recruitment-principles/>
- Hearing and determining appeals made by civil servants under the Civil Service Code (Annex B) 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 at on the Civil Service Commission website:  
<http://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk>

## Indicative Timeline *(May be subject to change)*

<b>Closing date:</b>	12.00pm, Monday 21 September
<b>Long-listing:</b>	w/c 21 September
<b>RRA Interviews:</b>	w/c 28 September and 5 October
<b>Short-listing:</b>	w/c 12 October
<b>Assessments:</b>	w/c 19 and 26 October
<b>Panel Interviews:</b>	w/c 2 November

## How to apply

Please submit materials by email to [Responses@RussellReynolds.com](mailto:Responses@RussellReynolds.com). The closing date for applications is 12.00pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

Your submission should include:

- The reference number in the subject line **P2008-007L**.
- A **short 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. Please note that applications will not be accepted unless the form is returned. 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 at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationality-rules>

The successful candidate will be required to undertake developed security vetting.

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## **Tenure**

The successful candidate will hold this post for up to five years from the date of appointment. There is no presumption in favour of renewal, but renewals for a shorter period than five years may be possible where performance has been strong, following consultation with the Cabinet Secretary and at the discretion of the Prime Minister.

## **Salary**

A salary of up to £200,000 will be offered, with a performance-related bonus.

## **Location**

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

## **Pension**

Civil Service pension arrangements will apply. Full details can be found on the Civil Service Pensions website at: <https://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/>

## **Annual Leave**

There will be up to 30 days paid annual leave. In addition you will be entitled to all public holidays and to one privilege day in addition to your annual leave allowance.

## **Restrictions**

During the period of appointment there will be certain restrictions on political activities.

## **Business Appointments**

Candidates should also note that on completion of the appointment, the post holder will be subject to the Government's Business Appointments Rules, with the possibility of restrictions on future employment imposed by the Prime Minister, on the recommendation of the independent Advisory Committee on Business Appointments.

Further information about the Rules and restrictions likely to be imposed on former Permanent Secretaries can be found at the address below:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/579758/Business\\_Appointment\\_Rules\\_for\\_civil\\_servants.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/579758/Business_Appointment_Rules_for_civil_servants.pdf)

## **Conflicts of Interest**

You will be required to disclose any personal or business interests, including share holdings, which may or may be perceived to be relevant to or in conflict with working within the Civil Service. This may involve suspending or relinquishing stock market activity.

## **Equality and Diversity**

The Civil Service is committed to supporting the principle that everybody should have the same opportunities for employment, development and progression. This should be based on their ability, competence and suitability for the role.

This means that no applicant should receive less favourable treatment on grounds of their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, religion, transgender status, family or domestic

responsibilities, or working patterns. Also nobody should be disadvantaged by any specific conditions or requirements, unless it can be justified that these could affect their ability to undertake the role.

### **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, which can be found at the address below.

<https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/recruitment/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 Carol Maye ([carol.maye@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:carol.maye@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 at the address below.

<https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/recruitment/civilservicerecruitmentcomplaints/>

### **Annex A: Civil Service Leadership Statement**

The leadership statement can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/405453/CS\\_leadership\\_statement\\_3\\_1.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/405453/CS_leadership_statement_3_1.pdf)

### **Annex B: Civil Service Code**

The Civil Service Code can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code>