

Inviting diversity when hiring for data jobs

Elena Hensinger-Schien, 15.06.2023, PyData Bristol

Today



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Why strive for diverse teams



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What can put off or invite
candidates to apply



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Practical tips and experience



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Practical tips and experience

Resources for inclusive work environments and events



About me

Lead Data Scientist at FutureLearn



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Previously at Elvie (FemTech) and Gritty Talent (DE&I in TV industry)



Student mentor and STEM outreach contributor

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Student mentor and STEM outreach contributor

On a learning journey on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I)

Interviewing, re-writing job descriptions, being interviewed

Diversity and why we want diverse teams



Is the data community diverse?

Kaggle's State of Machine Learning and Data Science 2021

Over 25,000 data scientists and ML engineers submitted responses

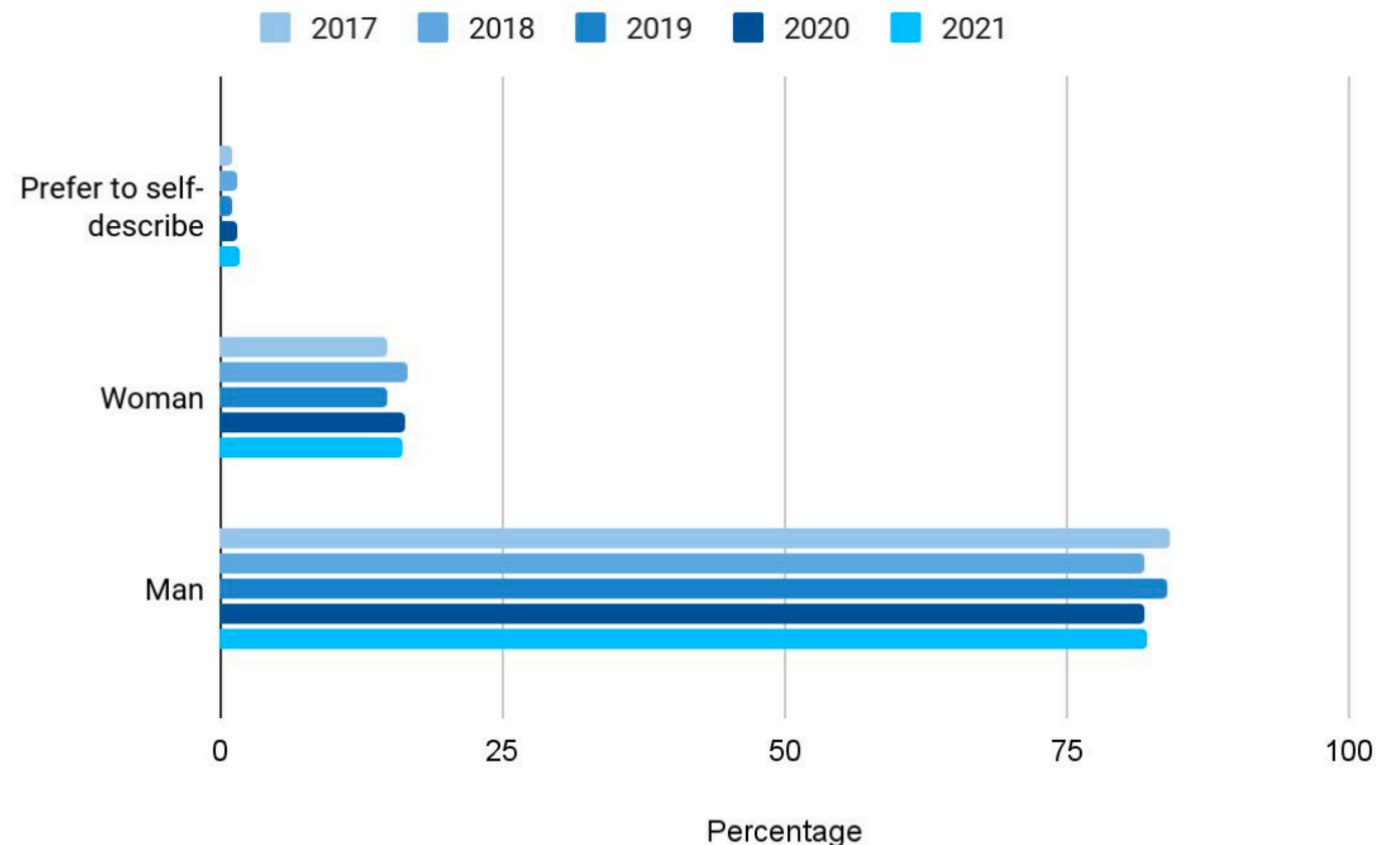
Kaggle's State of Machine Learning and Data Science 2021

Over 25,000 data scientists and ML engineers submitted responses

‘Data science is still suffering from a large gender gap in the workplace, as 82% of users identify as men.’

<https://www.kaggle.com/kaggle-survey-2021>

Gender Identity of Data Scientists



What is diversity

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<https://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/about-edl/what-does-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-mean>

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Product Innovation, Top Talent, Business Opportunities, Better Quality of Work, Fun

<https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2021/06/24/14-important-benefits-of-a-more-diverse-leadership-team/>

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‘companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams were 25 percent more likely to have above-average profitability than companies in the fourth quartile’

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters>

Challenges for hiring and interviewing

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- No or limited training for hiring managers

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- Limited lived experience and/or opportunity for feedback

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- Limited lived experience and/or opportunity for feedback
- Start-ups: no People Team / HR Department

Changes in the hiring process

Data Scientist

Reporting to: Head of Data

Location: Bristol / hybrid / remote

THE COMPANY

THE ROLE

RESPONSIBILITIES

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

REQUIRED SKILLS

OUR VALUES AND CULTURE

Typical job description

Let's look at some sections in more detail

Experience and education

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• University Degree in Engineering, Computer Science or Applied Mathematics

- * Master's or PhD degree in data science, computer science, statistics, or a related field.
- * 5+ years of experience in data science, machine learning, and predictive modelling.

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How can you measure 'PhD in STEM 5 years ago' skills in an interview?

University Degree in Engineering, Computer Science or Applied Mathematics

* Master's or PhD degree in data science, computer science, statistics, or a related field.

* 5+ years of experience in data science, machine learning, and predictive modelling.

Experience and education - better

- Advanced understanding of Linear Algebra
 - 5+ years of working experience on Data Science projects
 - At least 5 years' experience applying data science tools in an engineering, product development or industrial environment
- have a strong understanding of data analysis, probability and statistics.
 - Experience working with biomedical data
- Significant experience in data science or analytics roles, ideally supporting a marketing function for a number of years

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Encourages career changers to apply

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Focuses on demonstrable skills, rather than formal education

- Bring in transferrable skills and knowledge from other disciplines

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Fast-paced environment

everything moves at lightning pace and is most definitely not for the faint hearted.

We expect a lot.

Fast-paced environment

Are we aiming to assess 'distance to burnout'?

Fast-paced environment

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What examples do you want people to bring to the interview?

Fast-paced environment - better

The next 12-18 months will be fast-paced – no one day will be the same. '

It's a fast-paced environment so it is important for you to make sound, reasoned decisions.

dynamic, fast-paced and collaborative environment

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Focuses on demonstrable skills

Welcomes people with non-negotiable commitments

dynamic, fast-paced and collaborative environment

State salary ranges

Save time for candidates, and for yourself!

This topic will come up anyway ;-)

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Reduces chance of (gender) pay gap

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Show awareness and encourage

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Note: We encourage you to apply for this role, even if you don't match all the requirements 100%. As long as you inherit the eagerness to learn, we are happy to be convinced that you are the right fit for us.

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And if you think you have most of what we're looking for but not every single thing, go ahead and hit **apply**. We'd still love to hear from you!

Show awareness and encourage

Socialisation can lead people to avoid applying if they:

- Do not meet qualifications (\neq skills!)
- Cannot fit 'ideal candidate' description

and hit **apply**. We'd still love to hear from you!

Describe interview process

a two-stage interview process including technical and competency assessments.

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1. Screening call (30mins video call)

An initial screening call to discuss your fit for the role.

2. Technical (1hr video call)

An in-depth discussion on your Data Science experience with a Senior/Lead Data Scientist.

3. Senior stakeholder (40min video call)

A chance to meet a member of the leadership team, discuss your experience in more detail and answer your questions about our company and the role.

4. Meet the team, culture and values (1hr video call)

Meet more of the team, usually including at least a Product Manager and one Project Manager. We will also look to assess mutual cultural fit.

Describe interview process

a two-stage interview process including technical and competency assessments.

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Candidates might need to arrange a quiet physical place or childcare

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Describe interview process

a two-stage interview process including technical and competency assessments.

1. Orientation (20-30 minutes)

Candidates might need to arrange a quiet physical place or childcare

Enables to manage anxieties and to prepare

Enables to communicate well in advance about necessary adjustments

A chance to meet a member of the leadership team, discuss your experience in more detail and answer your questions about our company and the role.

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Meet more of the team, usually including at least a Product Manager and one Project Manager. We will also look to assess mutual cultural fit.

Create assessment criteria ahead of interview

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‘Research shows that when teams agree on a set of clear criteria and use it consistently for all candidates, the hiring process is fairer and the most qualified women and men can rise to the top.’

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Writing job description and assessment criteria at the same time helps with both

Flexible working

State explicitly how many days required

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‘Only possible full-time’ - WHY?

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‘Only possible full-time’ - WHY?

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Explore: What would stand in the way to make it possible in 3 days?

Job share

Some very high-profile success examples!

Typically: 2 people, each 3 days, 1 day overlap

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'They were promoted together and ended their career as joint chief executives of the Judicial Studies Board. They were also both awarded the CBE.'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/1Wkwm9Sdbw0ttY3yc88BH3m/want-to-job-share-here-s-eight-tips-from-two-women-who-did-it-for-23-years>

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'Is CEO a two-person job?' - each does what they can do particularly well, and think through difficult decisions together <https://hbr.org/2020/09/is-ceo-a-two-person-job>

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Job sharing at senior level: A guide for individuals <https://cjtalent.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CapabilityJane-Individual-Guide-to-Job-Sharing-at-Senior-Level.pdf>

Job share

Some very high-profile success examples!

Get access to large pool of talent

Educated, dedicated colleagues and advocates for the business

Inspire and think boldly

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2. How much time do we expect people to spend on the task?

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2. How much time do we expect people to spend on the task?

They might have a full-time job, caring responsibilities, financial uncertainty, ...

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3. What is possible in 2-3 hours on a data task?

Different domain, nervousness, data cleaning, explorative analysis

Practical / take-home task

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Ap Demonstrates our company's approach to problem solving, too ;-)

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3. What is possible in 2-3 hours on a data task?

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2. Enables candidates to make necessary arrangements

Th Shows respect for each other, and displays our company culture

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Different domain, cleaning, explorative analysis

Resources

- '50 ways to fight bias' - cards and online guides
'Situation + What you can do'
<https://leanin.org/gender-bias-cards/grid/get-started>
- NumFOCUS DISCOVER Cookbook - 'a resource for organizers of conferences and events to support and encourage diversity and inclusion at those events'
'Low hanging fruits' 🍏 = 'high impact, low effort' and 'high impact, high effort' ✅
<https://discover-cookbook.numfocus.org/intro.html>

Actions

- Be an ally
<https://leanin.org/>

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For Allies

Learn how to do your part in reaching gender equality.

Allyship at Work

For managers

For men

For women

For white employees

Learn about gender bias

For mentors/mentees

Anti-racism library

Allyship at Home

Role modeling for girls

How to be a feminist dad

How to be an equal partner

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 - Women’s Tech Hub
 - Women in DevOps
 - Girl Geek Dinners - join a woman
 - Grace Hopper Celebration - US
 - Women of Silicon Roundabout - London

Your experiences

Best practices

Questions

Outstanding communication example

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Candidate Pack: [redacted]

Ahead of your interview, please could you:

- Confirm your interview time
- Inform us of any reasonable adjustments required for your interview
- Check your familiarity with the [redacted] video meeting system

Welcome and preparatory information

Congratulations on being shortlisted [redacted]

At the National Trust, data, information, knowledge and insight underpins and enables the work we do.

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Please take the opportunity of the interview process to explore whether this is the right role for you. The National Trust is a special sort of place, full of passionate people doing amazing things.

We are looking forward to meeting you and good luck in all your preparations.

Best wishes,

[redacted]

Interview accessibility

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If for any reason you experience difficulties, please use the dial-in numbers included in the meeting invite using your phone; and in the event of complete breakdown, use the following number to re-establish contact: [redacted]

For those who are invited for a second interview, that interview will be in person.

Please could you let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments for the interview process.

The interview process

1st stage - interview: Tuesday [redacted] – 45 mins by [redacted] videoconference (see below)

Interview panel

Please be prepared to answer formal interview questions covering areas set out in the job description. There will be time for you to ask questions of us.

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2nd stage – interview including presentation, and a chance to meet the Data Team (1.5 hours total) Thursday [redacted] – in person in Swindon

We will be taking a small number of candidates through to a second stage interview (with the same interview panel) and to informally meet members of the Data Team.

When we invite you to the second interview, we will give you a task/ scenario that we will ask you to work through and present back to us. Presentations should last no longer than 10 minutes.

The presentation will be followed by a further session of questions, which will dig deeper on areas discussed at the 1st round, consider the role at a more strategic level and further explore your working preferences. There will be time for you to ask questions of us.

Possible 3rd stage – interview with senior stakeholders: Friday [redacted] (to be confirmed) 40 mins by [redacted]

We may take one or more candidates through to a third stage interview [redacted] This will be confirmed ahead of time.