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Lead Technical Architect

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Apply before 11:55 pm on Wednesday 5th March 2025



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Reference number

384211

Salary

£54,470 - £67,090

National: £54,470 - £61,000 London: £59,900 - £67,090 plus additional skills supplement paid up to £24,543.

This post offers successful candidates the opportunity to be considered for an additional Government Digital and Data Profession Capability framework skills supplement. The level of the awarded supplement is determined following a separate skills assessment process, the outcome of which has no impact on the decision to make a job offer. This digital capability supplement ranges from £0 to £24,543 and you may be awarded a pay supplement within this range based on results of your additional skills assessment. For details of our pay on appointment policy, please see below under the heading [Salary](#) .

A [Civil Service Pension](#) with an employer contribution of 28.97%

Job grade

Grade 7

Contract type

Permanent

Business area

DEFRA - COO - Digital, Data and Technology Security

Type of role

Architecture and Data

Digital

Information Technology

Working pattern

Flexible working, Full-time, Job share, Part-time

Number of jobs available

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Location

Our main Defra DDTS hubs are in York, Warrington, Newcastle, Reading and Bristol, however the successful candidate may be contractually based at any Defra office.

Please be aware that space within the London office is restricted and it may not be possible to be based in this location.

About the job

Job summary

Defra, the UK government department, is responsible for safeguarding the natural environment, supporting the food and farming industry, and sustaining a thriving rural economy.

The department's broad remit impacts daily life, from the food we eat to the air we breathe and the water we drink. Within Defra, the Digital, Data and Technology Services (DDTS) team is the trusted digital partner, comprising around 1,200 colleagues. DDTS aims to make interactions with Defra easier and faster, driving innovation and pushing boundaries to create a great place for living and a green, healthy future for all.

Find out more about DDTS

[Defra digital, data and technology blog](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Defra Jobs](#)

Job description

In this role you will navigate through multiple projects and programs, crafting and refining roadmaps, principles, and standards. Your collaboration with delivery teams will breathe life into these frameworks, ensuring that the infrastructure meets the needs of comprehensive solutions encompassing business, information, application, and technology aspects.

In Defra you will play a hands-on role in bringing designs to fruition, delivering business outcomes, and resolving conflicts in multi-initiative scenarios. Your broad and holistic architectural thinking will be crucial in ensuring the delivery of end-to-end technical architectures and designs based on specific needs and requirements.

This role is vital for meeting business and IT needs by managing technical project aspects and providing guidance. This position will collaborate with technical and non-technical stakeholders to comprehend technical specifications and ensure that selected solutions adhere to DDaT and enterprise architectural principles, government security standards, and best practices.

In this role you will have an opportunity to continuously grow and develop yourself through exposure to training in the latest emerging technologies and reprising some older, bridging the gap that is not always perceived.

For a clearer understanding of the role's requirements, we have created an extended job description, which outlines the required skills and responsibilities needed. This can be found at the bottom of this advert. Please note you will only be assessed against the essential responsibilities, skills and experience listed in the advert.

Please note this post requires Security Check (SC) clearance. While applicants without SC clearance are welcome to apply, they must be eligible to obtain it. To be eligible for SC clearance, all applicants are required to have been a UK resident for a minimum of 5 years. If this

requirement is not met, the individual will not be able to progress their application further.

Person specification

Responsibilities

Participate in and support proof of concept (POC) initiatives to explore and validate new ideas and technologies.

Lead the technical vision and execution of complex IT solutions, ensuring they align with our business goals and technological roadmap.

Evaluate, recommend, and introduce new technologies to optimise the IT infrastructure.

Identify implied technical requirements from user-centric work and stories.

Help supplier(s) in translating business requirements into clear and concise technical specifications.

Identify common needs and gaps proactively, influencing technology roadmaps and necessary components.

Foster a mindset of continual improvement by seeking out and implementing best practices and innovative solutions.

Skills and experience

Extensive knowledge of working with different suppliers, both in creating parts of solutions and in checking the work of others to ensure consistent designs that support a complete service.

Proven ability to lead teams and departments in the design, implementation, administration, and support of infrastructure solutions and services.

Maintains a focus on the entire lifecycle, including design, development, delivery, and operation. Ensures that a set of IT products, suppliers, and vendors come together to deliver a cohesive IT service.

Strong understanding of security principles and practices, including risk assessment, threat modelling, vulnerability management, and incident response. Experience in implementing security measures to protect data, applications, and infrastructure from cyber threats.

Experience in supporting large-scale deployments of Windows devices in a multi-supplier environment.

Proficient in both designing and operating virtual device platforms, at enterprise scale.

Expertise in managing migrations of varying scales, from end-user computing to hosting platforms, involving different operating systems.

Expertise in using PowerShell for automating tasks, managing configurations, and deploying applications. This includes writing and debugging scripts to streamline processes and improve efficiency.

Knowledge of software licensing models and compliance requirements

Specialist Insight and Skills

Identity Management: Expertise in managing and securing user identities, including the use of Entra ID (formerly Azure Active Directory) and configuring and managing Azure AD to ensure proper access controls, authentication mechanisms, and integration with other Microsoft services.

Microsoft 365: Proficient in using the Microsoft portals for managing Microsoft 365 services, including user accounts, licenses, and service settings.

Intune: Expertise in using Intune for device management including deployment, monitoring, and maintenance to ensure optimal performance and security.

Device Management: Enhanced experience of managing devices across an organization.

Microsoft Defender: Proficient in use of Microsoft Defender for endpoint security, threat detection, and response.

For a clearer understanding of the role's requirements, we have created an extended job description, which outlines the required skills and responsibilities needed. This can be found at the bottom of this advert. Please note you will only be assessed against the essential responsibilities, skills and experience listed in the advert.

Selection process

The Civil Service marks each element of the selection process on a merit basis. You can visit the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk) for further information on the Civil Service rating scale.

Ensure you have tailored your CV and your Personal Statement to the 'responsibilities' and 'skills and experience' section of the job advert by providing examples on how you are suitable for the role. You may find the [STAR method](#) helpful when writing your personal statement.

For further information on STAR, you can check out our [hints and tips](#) document.

Application

As part of the application process, you will be assessed on your [experience](#) and will be asked to complete:

A CV

A 250- word Personal Statement on the Behaviour '**Leadership**'

A 750-word Personal Statement: Referring to the '**Specialist Insight and Skills**' sections of the job advert, please demonstrate how you are suitable for the role by providing relevant examples.

Further details around what this will entail are listed on the application form.

Please ensure you demonstrate clearly, within your Personal Statement, how you meet these requirements as the information you provide will form a key part when the panel is scoring your application.

Sift

Sift will begin shortly after the advert closes.

Should there be a large number of applications, an initial sift will be conducted using your personal statement.

Candidates who pass the initial sift may be progressed to a full sift, or progressed straight to assessment or interview.

Interview

If successful at sift stage, you will be invited to interview where you will be assessed on **Strengths, as well as Technical Skills and the Behaviours listed below.**

Your interview will either be conducted face to face or by video. You will be notified of the location if you are selected for interview.

A presentation or additional exercise may also be assessed.

The technical skills are aligned with the Government Digital and Data Profession Capability framework for the Lead Technical Architect profession. To find out more about them, please visit the website.

Sift and Interview dates are to be confirmed. Please note that these may be subject to change.

For further information on Success Profiles, please use the links below and watch our videos on Defra Jobs.

Behaviours

Technical

Experience

Strengths

Behaviours

We'll assess you against these behaviours during the selection process:

Leadership

Communicating and Influencing

We only ask for evidence of these behaviours on your application form:

Leadership

Technical skills

We'll assess you against these technical skills during the selection process:

Architect for the whole context practitioner

Architecture communication (Communicating between the technical and non-technical) expert

Community collaboration practitioner

Making architectural decisions practitioner

Strategy design practitioner

Technical design throughout the life cycle - expert

Benefits

Alongside your salary of £54,470, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs contributes £15,779 towards you being a member of the Civil Service Defined Benefit Pension scheme. [Find out what benefits a Civil Service Pension provides.](#)

25 days leave (rising to 30 days over 5 years) plus bank holidays

A Civil Service pension with an average employer contribution of **28.97%**

A day off per year for the King's birthday

Access to a range of retail discounts (these include supermarket, tech, gym, holiday, phone and more)

Flexible working options such as condensed hours, part-time and flexi time

3 paid volunteering days per year

Funding for professional membership of a recognised professional body

Learning and development tailored to your role and budget for training or qualifications

A culture encouraging inclusion and diversity

Cycle to work scheme

Health cash plan to help you manage health costs for a reduced monthly fee

Access to the Employee Assistance Programme open 24 hours, 7 days a week, that provides support to you during any times of stress or difficulty

Free access to Headspace for wellbeing

Season ticket loan for public transport

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

The Civil Service is committed to attract, retain and invest in talent wherever it is found. To learn more please see the [Civil Service People Plan](#) and the [Civil Service D&I Strategy](#)

Check out the video below from Jane McGeagh, Chief Operating Officer on why DOTS is a great place to work.

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Things you need to know

Selection process details

This vacancy is using [Success Profiles \(opens in a new window\)](#), and will assess your Behaviours, Strengths, Experience and Technical skills.

For further information on the selection process for this role, please refer to the person specification section of the job advert.

Near miss

Candidates who are judged to be a near miss at interview may be considered for other positions in Defra which may be at a lower grade, but have a potential skills match.

Reserve list

A reserve list may be held for a period of 12 months from which further appointments can be made.

Salary

New entrants to the Civil Service are expected to start on the minimum of the pay band. The internal rules apply to existing Civil Servants, i.e. level transfers move on current salary or the pay range minimum, transfers on promotion move to new pay range minimum or receive 10% increase. Either case is determined by whichever is the highest.

Location

As part of the pre-employment process for this post, successful candidate(s) will be able to agree a contractual workplace from those locations listed in this advert. The agreed contractual workplace is then the substantive and permanent place of work for the successful candidate(s)

Where the location is National the successful appointee should discuss and agree an appropriate contractual location in line with both Defra's location policy and site capacity, prior to proceeding with pre-employment processes.

Successful applicants currently employed by the hiring Defra organisation for this post may choose to remain in their current contractual location or may choose to change contractual location to one of those listed above. This should be discussed and agreed prior to proceeding with pre-employment processes.

The agreed amount of time spent at a workplace for this post will reflect the requirement for Civil Servants to spend at least 60% of their working time in an organisation workplace with the option to work the remaining time flexibly from home. Working time spent at a workplace may include time spent at other organisational locations including field-based operational locations, together with supplier, customer or partner locations. This is a non-contractual agreement which is consistent with common Civil Service expectations.

Travel costs to non-contractual workplaces will be subject to departmental travel and subsistence policies. Travel costs to contractual workplaces are the responsibility of the employee.

The successful candidate is required to carry out all their duties from a UK location, and cannot do so from an overseas location at any time.

Defra includes the core department, APHA, RPA, Cefas and VMD.

Our main Defra DDTS hubs are in York, Warrington, Newcastle, Reading and Bristol.

Please also be aware that space within the London office is restricted and it may not be possible to be based in this location.

Visa sponsorship statement

Please take note that [Defra does not hold a UK Visa & Immigration \(UKVI\) Skilled Worker Licence](#) and are unable to sponsor any individuals for skilled worker sponsorship.

Reasonable adjustment

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes.

If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, you should:

Contact Government Recruitment Service (GRS) via DefraRecruitment.GRS@CabinetOffice.gov.uk as soon as possible before the closing date to discuss your needs.

Complete the Assistance required section in the Additional requirements page of your application form to tell us what changes or help you might need further on in the recruitment process. For instance, you may need wheelchair access at interview, or if you're deaf, a language service professional.

Accessibility

If you are experiencing accessibility problems with any attachments on this advert, please contact the email address in the 'contact point for applicants' section.

Criminal Record Check

If successful and transferring from another government department, a criminal record check maybe carried out.

In order to process applications without delay, we will be sending a Criminal Record Check to Disclosure and Barring Service on your behalf. However, we recognise in exceptional circumstance some candidates will want to send their completed forms direct. If you will be doing this, please advise Government Recruitment Service of your intention by emailing Pre-Employment.Checks@cabinetoffice.gov.uk stating the job reference number in the subject heading.

Internal fraud database check

Applicants who are successful at interview will be, as part of pre-employment screening subject to a check on the internal fraud database (IFD). This check will provide information about employees who have been dismissed for fraud or dishonesty offences. This check also applies to employees who resign or otherwise leave before being dismissed for fraud or dishonesty had their employment continued. Any applicant s details held on the IFD will be refused employment.

A candidate is not eligible to apply for a role within the Civil Service if the application is made within a 5 year period following a dismissal for carrying out internal fraud against government.

NSV

For further information on National Security Vetting please visit the following page <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/demystifying-vetting>

Childcare Vouchers

Any move to Defra from another employer will mean you can no longer access childcare vouchers. You may however be eligible for other government schemes, including Tax Free Childcare. Determine your eligibility on the Childcare Choices website.

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an interview or assessment.

Security

Successful candidates must undergo a criminal record check.

Successful candidates must meet the security requirements before they can be appointed. The level of security needed is [security check \(opens in a new window\)](#).

[See our vetting charter \(opens in a new window\)](#).

People working with government assets must complete [baseline personnel security standard \(opens in new window\)](#) checks.

Nationality requirements

This job is broadly open to the following groups:

UK nationals

nationals of the Republic of Ireland

nationals of Commonwealth countries who have the right to work in the UK

nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities with settled or pre-settled status under the [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\) \(opens in a new window\)](#)

nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities who have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

individuals with limited leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain who were eligible to apply for EUSS on or before 31 December 2020

Turkish nationals, and certain family members of Turkish nationals, who have accrued the right to work in the Civil Service

[Further information on nationality requirements \(opens in a new window\)](#)

Working for the Civil Service

The [Civil Service Code \(opens in a new window\)](#) sets out the standards of behaviour expected of civil servants.

We recruit by merit on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's [recruitment principles \(opens in a new window\)](#).

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities. As such, we run a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

The Civil Service also offers a Redeployment Interview Scheme to civil servants who are at risk of redundancy, and who meet the minimum requirements for the advertised vacancy.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Civil Service is committed to attract, retain and invest in talent wherever it is found. To learn more please see the [Civil Service People Plan \(opens in a new window\)](#) and the [Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Apply and further information

This vacancy is part of the [Great Place to Work for Veterans \(opens in a new window\)](#) initiative.

Once this job has closed, the job advert will no longer be available. You may want to save a copy for your records.

Contact point for applicants

Job contact :

Name : [DDTS Recruitment Hub](#)

Email : DDTSonPayrollRecruitment@defra.gov.uk

Recruitment team

Email : defrarecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Further information

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles and you wish to make a complaint, in the first instance, you should contact Government Recruitment Services via email: defrarecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Department, you can contact the Civil Service Commission: [here](#)

