



North Sea
Transition
Authority

Director of Digital and Data

Candidate Information Pack | 2026

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Welcome from the Chief Executive

Hear directly from Stuart as he shares his thoughts on the role and the opportunity ahead: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ijQJMLojRE>

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Digital and Data at the North Sea Transition Authority. I hope this pack gives you a clear sense of both the opportunity and the ambition behind it.

The UK's North Sea energy industry has been a remarkable success story, powering homes, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs, and contributing significantly to the economy for more than sixty years. Today, we are entering an exciting new chapter as we help enable the energy transition through the integration of carbon capture, hydrogen, offshore wind, and the continued stewardship of oil and gas resources.

The NSTA has always evolved to meet changing national priorities, and we are now at a pivotal moment. Government policy sets a clear direction for the future of the basin, balancing energy security, investment, skilled employment, and the transition to lower-carbon energy sources. As an organisation, we are committed to playing a leading role in that journey.

Digital and data are central to our success. This role oversees one of the UK's most valuable energy data assets, encompassing almost two petabytes of nationally significant subsurface and offshore energy data. Beyond stewardship of this critical information, the role is responsible for the digital ecosystem that enables our regulatory functions, while leading a portfolio of enhancements and new digital capabilities that will strengthen efficiency, user experience and organisational performance. By making this information accessible and useful, we can support investment, accelerate innovation, strengthen energy security, and help create long-term economic value for the UK.

We are seeking a strategic and outcomes-focused leader who can connect digital, data, and emerging technologies to our wider mission. As a member of the Executive Leadership Team, reporting directly to me, the successful candidate will help shape our future direction, build strong relationships across the organisation, and develop a clear roadmap for the years ahead.

We are seeking a strategic and outcomes-focused leader who can connect digital, data, and emerging

technologies to our wider mission. As a member of the Leadership Team, reporting directly to me, the successful candidate will help shape our future direction, build strong relationships across the organisation, and develop a clear roadmap for the years ahead.

Most importantly, I am looking for an inclusive leader with sound judgement, curiosity, and humility. Technical credibility is important, but so too are empathy, collaboration, and the ability to bring people together behind a shared vision. The individual who thrives here will combine strategic thinking with pragmatism, listening carefully while inspiring confidence and progress.

The North Sea has played a major role in the world's energy story for decades, and its leadership in the energy transition is only just beginning. This is a rare opportunity to contribute to a mission of national importance, helping to shape the world's first successful energy transition while supporting energy security, investment and skilled jobs for generations to come. Serving that mission is a genuine privilege, and one that my colleagues and I feel keenly every day.

Thank you again for your interest in the NSTA. I very much look forward to learning more about you, and about what you could bring to the next chapter of our story.

Best wishes,



Stuart Payne
Chief Executive, NSTA



About the North Sea Transition Authority

The NSTA regulates the oil and gas, offshore hydrogen and carbon storage industries. We work closely with central government and with industry through the “tripartite” model to support energy security, drive emissions reduction and accelerate the energy transition. We must balance priorities including energy security, decarbonisation, economic growth, investment attraction and environmental responsibility. As such, we need leaders capable of operating effectively in a highly visible environment where commercial, regulatory, political and societal interests converge.

The NSTA has a vital role in driving the North Sea energy transition, realising the significant potential of the UK Continental Shelf as a critical energy and carbon abatement resource. We steward all oil and gas and carbon storage activity, hold industry to account on reducing emissions and work as an enabling regulator including, as appropriate, with the supply chain.

This is an exciting time to join the NSTA. The government has signalled its intention to legislate for an expanded NSTA role, including enhanced powers and wider responsibilities.

This includes three new overarching objectives for our work:

- 1) To maximise societal economic value of offshore activities
- 2) Assist the Secretary of State in meeting the net zero target and carbon budgets
- 3) To enhance the long-term benefits of the transition to clean energy technologies in the UKCS by considering workers, communities and supply chains.

These changes will significantly influence the future shape, priorities and operating model of the NSTA. We are therefore actively reviewing how we focus our resources, translate strategy into delivery (enabled by digital and data) and remain effective in today’s dynamic political, regulatory and economic environment.

The successful candidate will join at a formative point, with the opportunity to work alongside the Chief Executive, Board and Leadership Team to shape how the NSTA organises itself and delivers its expanded responsibilities.





About the North Sea Transition Authority

Why join the NSTA?

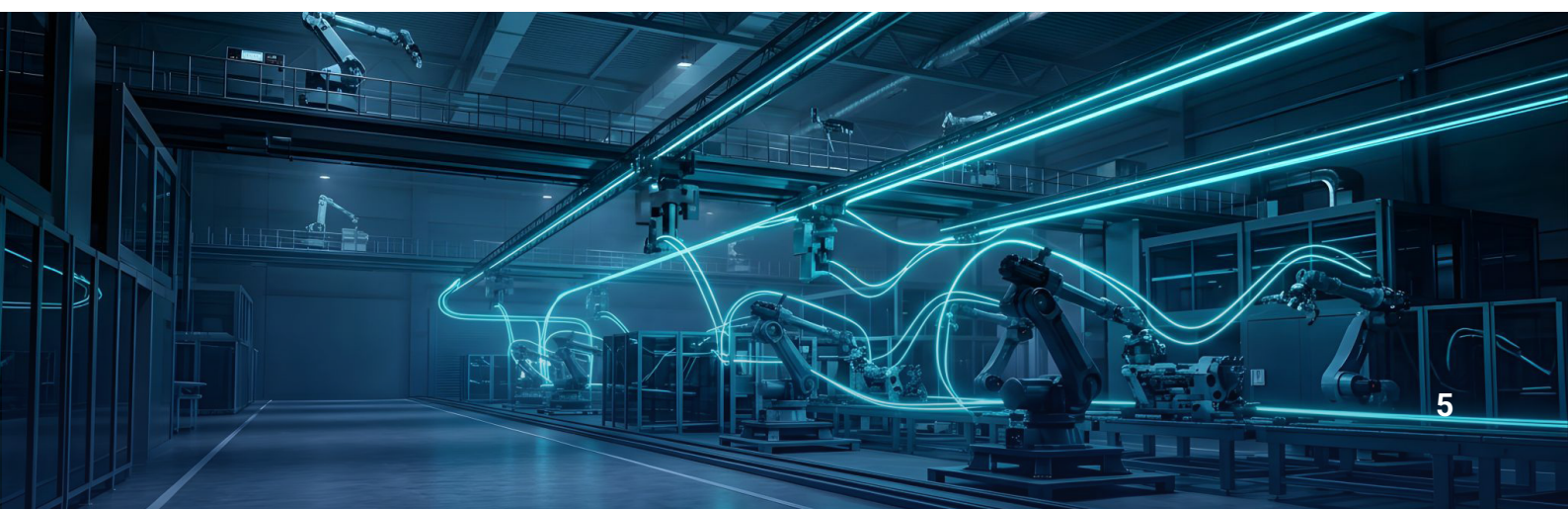
This is an opportunity to take on a nationally significant leadership role at the intersection of energy security, economic growth, decarbonisation and the future of the UK Continental Shelf.

The successful candidate will work closely with the Chief Executive, senior colleagues and stakeholders across government and industry, and will be able to see the tangible impact of their leadership. They will help shape the NSTA's future capability and translate an ambitious digital and data agenda into practical delivery.

The attraction lies not simply in leading digital and data services but in stewarding almost two petabytes of nationally significant energy data, and in using that asset to support investment, accelerate innovation and strengthen energy security. Few digital and data roles in the UK connect so directly to national outcomes.

This is also an opportunity to lead a respected, highly skilled directorate at the point where its mandate is set and the authority exists to act. The Board has approved the Data and Digital Strategy and a Cyber Security Strategy, so the incoming Director inherits a clear direction and the scope to integrate, modernise and industrialise an established estate rather than build from scratch.

Alongside the mission, we are a specialist organisation supported by a culture that supports a genuine commitment to being a great place to work, and a Leadership Team that expects challenge as well as collaboration.





About the North Sea Transition Authority

Location and working at the NSTA

The role can be based in either Aberdeen or London. Aberdeen is the NSTA's head office and places the Director close to the organisation, its people and many of the industries and stakeholders central to the NSTA's work; London provides ready access to central government, other regulators and national data and technology networks. Whichever base is agreed, the successful candidate will be expected to build a visible presence and strong relationships across both offices and regular travel within the UK will be required.

Any relocation will be at the candidate's own cost.

The NSTA aims to create a diverse team of talented, committed individuals where employees are supported to develop their capability in a dynamic, busy organisation while promoting a positive work-life balance.

Employee wellbeing is high on the NSTA's agenda, and we strive to promote a socially friendly, welcoming work atmosphere. Supporting and strengthening the NSTA as a great place to work is an explicit part of this role.

The NSTA's hybrid working includes an expectation for staff to spend a minimum of 40% of their time in the office. This applies equally to an Aberdeen or London-based appointment.



The NSTA is recruiting a new Director of Digital and Data. The postholder will provide strategic leadership for the organisation's digital and data functions, ensuring the NSTA has the robust, secure and modern foundations required to deliver its regulatory responsibilities today and adapt to future challenges.

The NSTA has transformed the collection, storage, analysis and publication of UKCS data across the oil and gas, carbon storage and wider energy transition landscape. As the volume, complexity and value of this data continues to grow, so too does the importance of maintaining resilient digital infrastructure, trusted data services and effective governance.

As the Director of Digital and Data, you will lead the delivery of the NSTA's Digital and Data strategy, aligning technology innovation with organisational priorities whilst ensuring our platforms, services and data assets remain secure, scalable and user focused.

At the heart of this role is responsibility for the NSTA's digital, data and technology estate, ensuring the organisation has the systems, governance, security and operational capabilities needed to deliver critical services today and meet future demands. This includes leadership, maintenance and continuous improvement of the National Data Repository

and UK Energy Portal, Data Compliance, Digital Services (including GIS applications, Data Warehouse and BI reporting capabilities) and Corporate IT Services. The NSTA holds almost two petabytes of data of significant strategic and commercial value to the UK, making stewardship of this nationally important asset a core responsibility.

The role also provides executive leadership for cyber security and digital transformation, with accountability for cyber strategy, risk management, security operations, resilience, compliance and incident response. Working closely with internal teams and external partners, you will ensure the NSTA's digital and data estate remains secure, resilient and fit for future business, regulatory and technological demands, while delivering modern, user-focused services that support the organisation and industry.

In addition, you will lead the delivery of a significant portfolio of digital projects to upgrade many of the applications and services used by the NSTA and industry. You will be responsible for ensuring these programmes are delivered successfully, providing strong governance, effective stakeholder engagement and delivery within agreed budgets and timescales whilst securing lasting benefits for users and the wider offshore energy sector.



The successful candidate will champion NSTA values and behaviours to build a culture of innovation and learning, driving the adoption of new technologies whilst continuing to build the digital capability across the organisation through visible leadership, practical interventions, high-quality support and cultural change. Above all, you will lead, innovate and develop a high-performing, cross-functional team, fostering an inclusive environment that encourages creative problem-solving.

As a member of the NSTA Leadership Team, the Director of Digital and Data will play a key role in shaping organisational strategy and

delivery. Reporting directly to the Chief Executive, the postholder will be the NSTA's senior digital and data leader within the organisation, in our dealings with central government, over government agencies and industry. The successful candidate will be an ambassador not only for the priorities within the Digital and Data Strategy, but for the NSTA as a whole.

As we work with government to respond to the North Sea Future Plan, we are reviewing potential further activities that may be overseen by this role, all of which will be discussed with the successful candidate.

Ref Number	NSTA
Job Title	Director of Digital and Data
Directorate	Corporate
Location	Aberdeen or London
Grade	SCS
Salary	£147,122
Travel to Other Locations with UK	Travel within the UK
Appointment Type	Permanent
Appointment Term	Full time
Level of Security Clearance	SC

Digital & data leadership

- Strategic leadership of the entire range of digital and data services
- Drive and deliver the NSTA Digital and Data Strategy, evolving the organisation's digital, data and information capabilities to support trusted regulation, improved decision-making, AI adoption and future regulatory services, whilst ensuring the appropriate legislative frameworks and guidance remain in place for industry data.
- Ensure functions lead and deliver efficient strategic and modern support to organisational delivery including all corporate IT provision to the organisation
- Chair the Information Services Steering Committee within the NSTA
- Chair the Security Advisory Board (SAB) within the NSTA
- Chair the Digital, Data and IT (DDaT) Governance Board within the NSTA
- Ensure the highest levels of assurance regarding the NSTA's cyber security
- Empower, motivate and develop direct reports and the wider directorate.
- Lead the evolution of enterprise digital and information services, ensuring products and platforms continue to meet changing business, industry and regulatory needs.
- Establish robust information and data governance frameworks that improve the quality, accessibility, stewardship and responsible use of information across the organisation.
- Accountable for approx. 30 staff
- Ensure monitoring and measuring compliance is in place of licence-holders (and other parties subject to the relevant Acts) with legislation and regulations regarding the retention and reporting of information and samples.

Leadership & organisational contribution

- Work collaboratively as a key member of the Leadership Team in their work to execute the organisation's strategic priorities, shape delivery and maintain the NSTA as a great place to work.
- Be principal source of advice, guidance, assurance and challenge to the Board and Leadership on all digital and data activities, opportunities and threats
- Play an active role in the NSTA's ongoing transformation, enable continuous performance improvement, and ensure a clear focus on clarity of purpose, communication and engagement.
- Role model the NSTA behaviours and values.

Person specification

Competence 1: innovation, initiative and agility (director level)

Creates and promotes a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and agility across the organisation. Leads strategic change by challenging established approaches, identifying opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and driving the adoption of innovative delivery models, including digital and shared service solutions. Promote agile ways of working, enabling the organisation to respond quickly and effectively to changing priorities and emerging challenges.

Competence 2: leading and communicating

Inclusive, engaging and values-based leader, who is able to collaborate and engage colleagues and stakeholders, deliver a vision, particularly during periods of change, whilst also showing evidence of listening, adapting and being open to change. As a strategic thinker, be able to set a clear direction and vision whilst managing and engaging with people with honesty and integrity. Effectively lead and manage teams through periods of change as the organisation evolves whilst building strong, multidisciplinary teams and fosters collaboration across functions to deliver high-quality outcomes.

Competence 3: delivery

Provides strategic leadership to drive the successful delivery of organisational outcomes across the Directorate. Establishes clear priorities, informed by data, evidence and business insight, enabling resources to be directed towards activities that deliver the greatest value and impact. Leads the effective use of digital capabilities, data and information to monitor progress, manage risk and support informed decision-making. Creates a culture of accountability, collaboration and continuous improvement, empowering teams to deliver high-quality. Maintains overall accountability for Directorate delivery against strategic objectives.

Competence 4: planning, performing and achieving

Provide strategic leadership to deliver key organisational transformation objectives, ensuring effective planning, prioritisation, resource allocation, cost efficiency and agile delivery. Set clear direction and maintain focus on outcomes, enabling teams to successfully deliver against organisational priorities in a dynamic environment. Drive performance through effective leadership, informed decision-making and a structured approach to achieving sustainable organisational outcomes.



Person specification

Specialist skills, qualifications, experience, licences, memberships or language

Essential:

- Proven track record of senior leadership in digital transformation, data strategy, or technology delivery.
- Strong understanding of cloud infrastructure, data governance frameworks, and modern analytics tools.
- Experience of leading experts from highly skilled functions, driving performance without micromanaging activity.
- Experience in maintaining and improving services by managing risks to ensure own area and partners deliver against defined outcomes.

- Experience of successfully managing complex stakeholder relationships.

Desirable:

- Able to critically analyse long-term strategic objectives and develop strategies that support achievement of objectives.
- Experience in, and/or knowledge of, the sectors directly regulated by the NSTA.
- Experience in, and/or knowledge of, the UK public sector and civil service.



How to apply

When applying, please ensure that you provide the following information by **Monday 5th October at 9am**:

- An up-to-date CV (PDF format only), setting out your career history, key responsibilities and achievements.
- A supporting statement outlining your motivation for applying and demonstrating the experience, skills and impact you would bring to the role (no longer than 2)
- Contact telephone numbers as well as your personal email address.
- A completed diversity monitoring form (this will appear on screen as part of the application process).
- The preferred method of application is online at: Gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe136067
- If you are unable to apply online please email: NSTADigital@gatenbysanderson.com
- All applications will receive an automated response.

Your supporting statement

In your supporting statement, we would particularly like you to demonstrate your experience and achievements across the following areas:

Strategic digital, data and technology leadership

A successful track record of leading digital transformation, data strategy and/or technology delivery within complex organisations; setting direction at Board or Executive level and translating strategic ambition into tangible organisational outcomes.

Technology, data and resilience

Strong strategic understanding of enterprise technology, cloud infrastructure, cyber security and resilience, together with expertise in data governance, information stewardship and the effective use of data, analytics and emerging technologies.

Transformation, delivery and risk

Proven experience of leading complex technology-enabled change and portfolios, while maintaining and improving resilient services and effectively managing organisational, operational and delivery risk.

Stakeholder leadership and influence

Evidence of successfully navigating complex stakeholder environments, building trusted relationships and influencing at senior levels internally and externally to achieve organisational outcomes.

How to apply

Leadership of people and capability

A collaborative, inclusive and empowering leadership style, with experience of leading high-performing, highly skilled multidisciplinary teams and creating the conditions in which experts can thrive and deliver.

Your CV and supporting statement will be considered together against the requirements of the Job Description and Person Specification contained within this candidate pack.

Experience within regulated sectors, government or the wider public sector, and/or knowledge of the sectors directly regulated by the NSTA, would be welcomed but is not essential.

For a confidential discussion about the role, please contact our executive search partners who would be delighted to speak with you and provide further insight on the role and support with your application:

Sarah Luxford – Partner

Martyn Brereton – Senior Researcher

NSTADigital@gatenbysanderson.com



The recruitment process

Stage	Detail
1. Search and application	We identify and engage prospective candidates through our search activity. Candidates are invited to submit a CV and supporting statement.
2. Application close date	Monday 5 October at 9am.
3. Preliminary interview with GatenbySanderson	A conversation with the lead Partner to explore your experience, achievements, motivation and suitability for the role.
4. Shortlisting	Applications and preliminary interviews are reviewed with the NSTA, and the strongest candidates are selected to progress.
5. First client interview (London, in person)	Wednesday 14 October. A competency-based interview with the selection panel, focused on the key requirements of the role.
6. Final panel and stakeholder assessment	Week commencing 19 October or week commencing 26 October. A final-stage assessment involving panel members and key stakeholders, combining competency-based questions with a presentation exercise.
7. Due diligence	References and any required pre-appointment checks are completed.
8. Offer and appointment	An offer is made to the successful candidate, with support provided throughout the appointment and onboarding process.

Our commitment

Diversity, equity and inclusion

We are committed to delivering a fair, inclusive and accessible recruitment process.

Confidentiality

All applications, discussions and assessment outcomes will be treated in the strictest confidence.



Contact us

Contact for further information:

GatenbySanderson are delighted to be working with the North Sea Transition Authority.

Should you have any queries regarding the role or application process, please do reach out:

Sarah Luxford – Partner

Martyn Brereton – Senior Researcher

NSTADigital@gatenbysanderson.com

All appointments are subject to the successful completion of pre-employment enquiries.

The NSTA is committed to embedding equality and diversity into all our policies and processes.

We will aim to recruit, retain and promote staff on the basis of competence and regardless of characteristics including those listed under the Equality Act 2010. These protected characteristics are; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.





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