INSTITUTE FOR GOVERNMENT

Data Scientist

DS2611



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A note from the Institute's CEO

I am delighted that you are interested in applying to join us here at the Institute for Government.

As part of our team, you would have the opportunity to make a real impact in the world of government and politics, working in a fun, stimulating and challenging environment at the heart of Westminster. The Institute is always busy and our work is often fast-paced, and reactive to the events in government-as well as setting a proactive agenda on the things we most care about. We are proud to call as colleagues some of the most insightful, energetic and connected people involved in thinking about government across the UK.

Wellbeing is very important at the IfG and we have a friendly, supportive workplace culture. The IfG is committed to developing and maintaining a diverse workforce and an inclusive working environment – we recognise the benefit that having a team with a broad range of backgrounds and experience brings to our work.

I hope you'll consider applying to join our team.



Dr Hannah White OBE, CEO of the Institute for Government

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About the Institute for Government

Who we are

The Institute for Government is the UK's leading independent think tank making government work well for the people of the UK.

We work across the political spectrum and the public sector throughout the UK, pursuing changes which will improve the way government works. We provide expertise and fresh, evidence-based thinking which we share though our convening, professional development and research outputs.

How government works is one of the most important factors driving a country's social and economic performance and the health of its democracy. Our work programme focuses on the most important ways in which UK government can do better or currently falls short. We work to ensure that UK government holds power and exercises accountability at the right level, through legitimate and resilient institutions with high-quality leadership which is equipped to respond well to shocks and trends, including rapid technological change.





What we do

Our mission is to make government work well for the people of the UK through our rigorous research, expert analysis, active convening, professional support and fresh thinking.

We do this by:

- Conducting rigorous, independent research into the most important problems facing UK government, undertaking expert analysis of the evidence, and making bold and compelling recommendations for change.
- Convening enlightening conversations among people from across and beyond UK government – helping them think differently about how government can be better.
- Supporting people working in and with UK government to learn and develop professionally in order to play their roles more effectively.





Our work programme

During the first half of 2026, the Institute undertook a major review of its strategy. The review identified four priorities for our work over the next five years, which all our teams will work to deliver.

1. Effective power and accountability
Because the UK is too centralised, and responsibilities and accountabilities at different levels are often overlapping or unclear, we will prioritise work on where power is held and how accountability operates to make government work well. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- Mayoral government that works well
- A positive future for local government

2. Legitimate, resilient institutions
There is an important role for the Institute to play in examining the institutions that underpin government in the UK – from our legislatures to the civil service, to public services, asking whether they are structured and equipped to meet the challenges of today and the future. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- Institutions equipped for multi-party politics
- A public sector resilient to trends and shocks

3. High quality leadership
It is increasingly clear that many of the problems of UK government originate in, or are exacerbated by, poor leadership, and this is undermining public confidence in the ability of government to deliver. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- A pipeline of high-performance leaders
- Tackling falling trust in government leadership

4. Responding well to technological change
Understanding and responding to the risks and opportunities of rapid technological change –including but not limited to the development of AI, changes to the media ecosystem and the development of new markets and currencies – is an increasingly significant challenge for governments across world. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- Government's business model adapted to AI
- Governing well in a fragmented information ecosystem

About this role

Help make government work better for the people of the UK – join the Institute for Government.



Data plays an important part in most of the Institute's research outputs and is also used across the organisation to inform decision-making. Following our recent strategy review, we are expanding our data science capacity so that we can increase the range and ambition of the quantitative work we undertake.

In this role, you will work across a wide range of subjects and activities, carrying out research into some of the biggest problems facing government as well as helping the Institute make better use of its own data.



You will work with research teams to identify useful data sources and analytical approaches, undertake substantive analysis and produce data visualisations. Over the coming years, we expect the Institute to make greater use of alternative types of data such as textual data and to generate new datasets using innovative techniques, and you will play a key role in this.



Alongside this research work, you will help the Institute make better use of its operational data. We expect to develop more data dashboards and tools, and you will have the opportunity to contribute to this area of work.

The role will also involve exploring new applications of AI and contributing technical expertise to major AI pilots undertaken by the Institute. This could include assessing the feasibility of proposed uses, developing and testing technical approaches, and helping to turn promising ideas into practical tools or ways of working.

You will also contribute to the development of organisational standards for data visualisation, analytical code and reproducible analysis, and help colleagues apply them in practice. You will support the development and delivery of training that builds data and AI skills across the Institute.

You will encounter a wide range of data sources and technical challenges, with opportunities to learn new approaches and broaden your technical skills. Our current technology stack is as follows:

- We use **Python** for data collation, cleaning and analysis.
- We have a research database held in **Azure SQL Database**.
- We also work extensively with data held in **Excel**.
- We use **GitHub Copilot** as a coding agent, with access to a wide range of models, including the latest **Claude** models.
- We use **Git/GitHub** for version control.
- We produce most of our charts using **Datawrapper**.
- We develop internal dashboards and apps using **Streamlit**.

The Data Scientist will report to the Institute's Senior Data Scientist, forming a two-person data science function, which will work closely with teams across the organisation, including the Institute's economics function.



What you will do

You will:

- Work with research teams across the Institute, helping them identify useful data sources and analytical approaches and advising on what analysis is feasible.
- Acquire, clean, combine and structure data for analysis, including through APIs.
- Take responsibility for defined pieces of analysis within larger research projects and contribute analysis and methodological explanations to published outputs.
- Create and maintain reusable datasets and analytical code that can support future research.
- Design and produce clear, effective data visualisations for research outputs and other Institute work.
- Contribute to the development and adoption of good practice for data visualisation, analytical code, documentation and reproducible analysis.
- Help non-research teams make better use of operational data, including improving how data is structured and collected, and developing recurring reports and tools.
- Develop interactive data tools and applications for research and internal use.
- Contribute technical expertise to major AI pilots and help the Institute explore new technical uses of AI.
- Contribute to the development and delivery of data and AI training for colleagues.

The balance between these activities will vary. You may work as part of a project team on larger pieces of research, while on other projects you will provide a defined piece of analysis or technical expertise.

What we are looking for

Essential

You will have:

- **Practical professional experience of data science or data analysis**, together with strong Python skills for importing, cleaning, reshaping, joining and analysing data, including data obtained through APIs
- **Experience of good software development practices**, including version control, structuring and documenting code, and working on shared codebases
- **Experience of using AI tools effectively** to support coding or other development work
- **Strong data visualisation skills** and the judgement to select and design visualisations that communicate information clearly
- **Strong analytical and problem-solving skills**, including the ability to assess data and its limitations critically and to tackle unfamiliar or open-ended problems
- **The ability to communicate complex analytical and technical information** clearly, verbally and in writing, to technical and non-technical audiences
- **A demonstrable interest in government and public policy**

Desirable

Any of the following are desirable characteristics:

- **Experience using SQL**
- **Experience of data modelling or data architecture design**
- **Strong Excel skills**
- **Experience carrying out research**
- **Experience working with government or other public sector data**
- **Experience of delivering training**



Information for applicants

Employer

Institute for Government

Location

2 Carlton Gardens, SW1Y 5AA

Who can apply

Anyone who can demonstrate they have the relevant skills and experience.

The IfG will not provide visa sponsorship for new staff. Applicants should either:

- have an entitlement to work in the UK without a visa, or
- hold a relevant visa allowing them to work in the UK without employer sponsorship.

Closing date

Applications close on **Sunday 6 December at 23:55.**

Start date

As soon as notice periods allow.

Terms

The successful candidate will join on a permanent contract subject to a three-month probationary period.

Salary

£45,000–50,000 per annum, depending on experience.

Working hours

The usual working hours of the IfG are a five-day week of 37.5 hours (09:00–17:30 with a one-hour lunch break) but you will, as the occasion requires, work outside the standard hours.

Hybrid working

Full-time staff are typically expected to work from the IfG's offices in London for at least three days a week, including Mondays, with the option to work remotely for up to two days a week.

Benefits

Contractual

- 30 days of annual leave in addition to eight days of bank and public holidays for full-time staff.
- The IfG has a pension scheme which you will be auto-enrolled into in your third month of employment. The contribution is a minimum of 5% from the employee and a fixed 10% contribution from the employer.
- Death in service life assurance of 4 x salary is given to all staff.
- 20 days sick pay in the first year and thereafter 30 days per rolling 12-month period.

Non-contractual

- Staff may take two weeks each year when the requirement to work from the office in London does not apply.
- Lunch is provided when working in the office.
- Employee Assistance Programme and online 24-7 GP is available.
- Six months maternity leave at full pay.
- Six weeks paternity leave at full pay.
- Shared parental leave – some paid, subject to circumstances.
- Cycle to work scheme.

Equal opportunities

All job applicants and employees will receive equal treatment regardless of sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, civil partnership, gender reassignment, age, disability, or religious beliefs.

The IfG collects equal opportunities monitoring information with applications. This information is anonymised and is not given to those involved in the recruitment process. It is used only for monitoring purposes and to help us better understand how we, as an employer, can ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Privacy policy

When you apply for a job with the IfG, we collect and process information (personal data) about you according to data protection law. You can find full details of our privacy policy on our website: **www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/privacy-policy**.

How to apply

The application process has four stages:
1. Initial application
2. Timed assessment
3. First interview
4. Second interview

1. Initial application

To begin your application, please follow this link: **https://app.beapplied.com/apply/nr5yf626c4**

You will be asked to submit a CV, complete a number of written questions setting out how you meet the role's requirements, and supply your personal details and confirm your eligibility for the role. There is no time limit for the written questions.

2. Timed assessment

You will be given a task that will require you to demonstrate a number of skills asked for in the person specification.

This will be a timed assessment carried out **remotely**, for which 1–2 hours will be needed. We expect to carry out these assessments during business hours on **Thursday 10** or **Friday 11 December**.

3. First interview

We expect to hold first interviews during the week commencing **Monday 14 December**, with interviews taking place **in person in our London office**. We will reimburse travel expenses for candidates in the UK but travelling from outside London.

4. Second interview

We expect to hold second interviews on **Monday 21** or **Tuesday 22 December**, with interviews taking **in person in our London office**, though will accommodate candidates' availability if this is not possible. We will reimburse travel expenses for candidates in the UK but travelling from outside London.

Use of AI in your application

It is your skills, experience and knowledge that we are looking to assess in the recruitment process.

As such, we allow candidates to make use of AI tools in certain parts of the recruitment process and in certain ways, but not in others.

Initial application

In the written questions, you can use AI to help think through a question but must write the answers yourself. You are asked to submit a CV as part of this stage and can use AI to produce your CV.

Everything you tell us must be wholly accurate and based on your real experiences. Information you provide will form the basis of questions you will be asked if you make it through to interview.

Timed assessment

You may use AI for the timed assessment.

Interviews

You may use AI to prepare for interview, but not to generate answers during them.

Any questions?

If you would like further information about this position or the selection process, then please contact us at **recruitment@instituteforgovernment.org.uk**, or visit the careers section of our website: **www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/about-us/careers/current-vacancies**.

We send out regular emails, including a weekly newsletter, about our publications and events. To receive these emails, you can subscribe on our website: **www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/newsletter**.

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