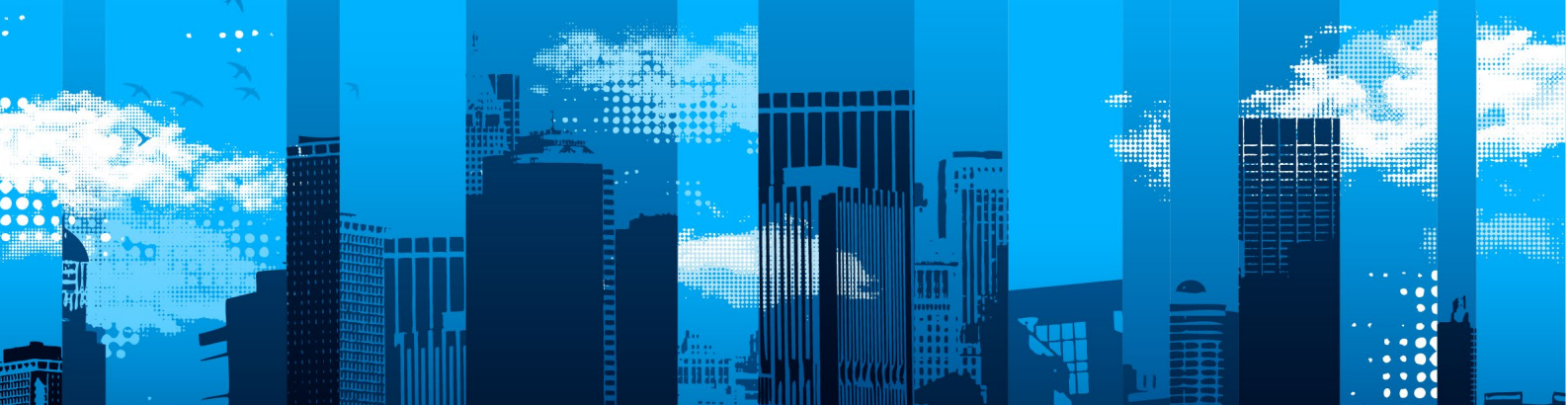


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# Chief Scientific and Technology Adviser



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## INTRODUCTION

The Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service has asked SIB to engage a Chief Scientific and Technology Adviser to the Northern Ireland Civil Service by means of secondment.

SIB has engaged Saxton Bampfylde to assist with this work, mindful of their track record in supporting other parts of UK government in the recruitment of similar roles.

## QUERIES

For an informal and confidential discussion about any aspect of this role, or the recruitment process, please contact Rhys O'Connell-Davies at Saxton Bampfylde - **rhys.davies@saxbam.com** - who will assist you with any questions you might have about the role or the recruitment process.

## FOREWORD FROM JAYNE BRADY, HEAD OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE

Northern Ireland is plotting an ambitious course for a decade of renewal and revitalisation. At the centre of this is our determination to capitalise on the rapidly emerging opportunities in a dynamic and ever-changing world driven by science, technology, R&D and innovation. We already have demonstrable excellence in key niche areas of science, technology and innovation, capabilities that set us apart in the United Kingdom, on the island of Ireland, in the context of the European Union, and across the globe.

That is why the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is seeking to appoint a Chief Scientific and Technology Adviser (CSTA) who has the drive, the capability, and the vision to help forge this region's strategy for future prosperity, economic growth, and social advancement.

Creating the CSTA is a major development for the NICS. It is a conscious statement of intent for accelerating the Northern Ireland economy and enhancing wider societal development. It will be the first time that Northern Ireland has had a Chief Scientific & Technology Adviser to oversee the extensive science and technology network across government and the wider public sector. It will be the first concerted and sustained effort in Northern Ireland's history to holistically coordinate and advise on policy & strategy development to capitalise on our science & technology capabilities.

However, it is notable that, despite not having had such a central coordination and focal point as a CSTA, Northern Ireland has still positioned itself organically as a UK & international leader in key technologies and high tech markets. These include: agritech; AI; cybersecurity; advanced engineering; software; life & health sciences; financial technologies; net zero technologies, and more. So, the CSTA will have the opportunity to join and add value to an already thriving science and technology ecosystem. The CSTA will have a unique and high-profile chance to shape & invigorate large swathes of the Northern Ireland economy, to help translate scientific, engineering & technology excellence into higher value jobs, real economic growth, and positive social development.

This is even more exciting right now as Northern Ireland is working out the most strategically effective deployment of £1.8 billion worth of new investment in key infrastructure through the "City & Region Deals". This marks a once in a generation opportunity to steer Northern Ireland to a high technology based, socially inclusive economic future of real prosperity and sustainable growth, with business, government, and academia in full partnership. As such, right now is a pivotal time for the identification and prioritisation of the key niche areas of science & technology which offer best economic advantage for the region. The CSTA will have a high degree of influence in this, reporting directly to the Head of the NI Civil Service, and advising on policy development across government departments, agencies and with universities, colleges and the wider business community.

The CSTA will be based at the heart of NI government in The Executive Office. They will also have the direct support of every NI government department and all of the relevant agencies. They will also have proactive support from Ulster University, Queen's University, the Open University in Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland and "Catalyst: the Northern Ireland Science Park", all of which will be represented in the CSTA's research and project development team. The CSTA will also work with and have direct support from the industry-led foresight & horizon scanning panel "Matrix: the Northern Ireland Science-Industry Panel" which steers science & technology focused economic policy development with the Department for the Economy.

The CSTA will have the unique opportunity to build a cross-government advisory network, drawing in all the talents already available in science, technology & engineering which are embedded in the Northern Ireland government system. With that network the CSTA will guide the coordination of a regional strategy to put science and technology at the heart of policy development. The CSTA will also represent Northern Ireland on the national and international stage and build a strong and effective network of leaders across all sectors to ensure that Northern Ireland's capabilities are well known and effectively marketed and exploited.

This is a vision for a new science led economic dispensation in Northern Ireland. It will be driven by excellence, but benefit everyone, it will aim to put Northern Ireland among the elite, but will not promote elitism, it will champion science, technology, and innovation as the lifeblood of future economic and social policy development, but it will benefit every citizen and provide opportunities for all.

Central to that vision will be the Chief Scientific & Technology Adviser. If that sounds like you, if it reflects your skills, your talents and your values, then we want you to apply for this unique, groundbreaking opportunity.

**JAYNE BRADY**

**Head of the NI Civil Service**

## CONTEXT

### The Organisation

- The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) supports the Assembly, the Executive and the institutions of government. We work to develop and implement government policies and help deliver services to the public.
- As one of NI's largest employers, we employ over 23,000 staff across a wide range of disciplines and aspects of government that touch on everyone's day to day lives, managing a total annual budget in excess of £20 billion.
- We have **nine departments** (which range from around 300 to over 7000 staff in post) which support the NI Executive and Ministers by developing and implementing government policies and legislation and delivering key public services in areas such as health, social development, justice, education, regeneration, environment, culture, agriculture, economic development, employment and transport. In addition, the Public Prosecution Service is staffed by civil servants and is a **non-Ministerial department**.
- More information can be found on the website [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)
- As a Senior Civil Servant, you will provide clear and engaged leadership, vision and drive and act collaboratively to deliver Civil Service corporate aims and departmental objectives.

### The Executive Office (TEO)

The role of the public sector has never been more important in shaping and driving societal change, and not merely responding to it. Innovation, science and technology are at the centre of driving that change and also in supporting us to respond and navigate most effectively to the changing environment. It is therefore critical that as an organisation, we are proactive in recognising this new dynamic and the opportunities it provides.

The Civil Service is developing its role and mission in supporting the Executive in that context. The pandemic has fundamentally changed our society, but there are longer term drivers. Climate change, Green Growth and the move towards a net zero carbon economy will be the strongest driver for economic change since the industrial revolution. Every aspect of our lives will be impacted and the way we live, work, and consume public services will be transformed. The Civil Service will transform as part of that change and The Executive Office will be at the centre of that process.

The Executive Office's role is developing as a central policy making and coordinating centre: making sense of our society's most complex and challenging issues and securing agile delivery. Our responsibility for leading on the development of a Programme for Government is being refreshed in light of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Boards evolution of the Civil Service role and mission in support of the Executive. We also lead on a range of specific, emergent policy issues that require cross departmental co-ordination.

In terms of how we work, we want to become a centre of **partnership working, innovation** and **agile delivery** at the heart of government. More information on the functions and structure of The Executive Office can be found on its website at [www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk)

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGIC INVESTMENT BOARD (SIB)

SIB is a limited company owned by the devolved government of Northern Ireland. As such it is termed a Non-Departmental Public Body. SIB is accountable to the First and deputy First Minister through our sponsoring department, The Executive Office (TEO). Each year, Ministers set out their priorities for SIB and these expectations form the basis for our annual and corporate business plans.

SIB has a board appointed by Ministers. This comprises an independent non-executive chairperson and directors. The Board provides strategic direction and advice to the Chief Executive, who is SIB's Accounting Officer.

SIB has a flat organisational structure. Staff either work as part of small teams or as individuals embedded in the partner organisations they support. There are currently 142 employees.

The function of SIB is:

1. To advise the Executive in relation to the formulation and implementation of its programme of major investment projects. SIB achieves this primarily through the production of the region's Investment Strategy (ISNI). The scope of the ISNI encompasses almost every area of government including education, health, and transport; and will be the expression of the priorities of Ministers in the Executive. In doing so, the ISNI will complement the Executive's Programme for Government (PfG) and Budget. A new ISNI, covering the period up to 2050 is in development.
2. To advise bodies carrying out major investment projects on the delivery of such projects, by providing research, consultancy, advisory and other services and general assistance.
3. Establish and operate discrete units within SIB to lead work in specialist areas. These units are currently:
  - I. **The Social Value Unit** (previously known as the 'Buy Social Unit'). The Social Value Unit works across government to improve the social return on public sector procurement and investment by – for example – using social clauses in public sector contracts to deliver initiatives that promote social value and inclusion. The benefits currently include the creation of job opportunities for hard-to-reach groups, the extension of digital inclusion and the delivery of business education within deprived communities.



- II. **The Council Support Unit**, which provides support to Councils in areas including waste management, asset management, sport and leisure, regeneration, programme and project management. The unit also informs strategic planning for waste management and the Circular Economy.
- III. **The Strategic Support Unit**, which provides short-term, focussed support to partners in areas such as programme and project assessment, business case development and technical analysis.

### What can you expect as an employee of SIB?

As a member of the SIB team you will support the delivery of programmes or projects of strategic importance to central or local government and other public sector organisations in Northern Ireland. Our staff have highlighted the value they derive from their involvement in challenging initiatives that demand innovative approaches; work that makes a significant difference to communities across the region.

All SIB staff are expected to earn the trust of the organisations they support through their technical competence, reliability, judgement and discretion. Project managers will operate effectively at all levels from construction site to boardroom. Staff can expect strong levels of peer support and a collegiate culture but have high levels of autonomy and must be capable of working independently without direct supervision.

SIB staff are not civil servants. The terms and conditions of our employment, including those for pay and pensions, differ from those elsewhere in the public service. SIB staff are paid competitive, market salaries and have excellent opportunities for training and development. We take pride in our avoidance of bureaucracy, family-friendly policies and flexible working arrangements. Please visit [www.sibni.org](http://www.sibni.org) for further information on the activities of SIB, including details of our current work and profiles of our staff.

## THE CSTA ROLE

The role is envisaged as being recruited on a part-time basis, requiring a commitment of an average of 2.5 days per week over each year, with flexibility to commit to more or less than this in any given week.

The duration of the appointment will be for an initial three-year period, with a review point after the first year, the review being undertaken by and reporting to HOCS, TEO & DfE. An option to extend for a further two years, to a maximum term of five years, may be taken up by agreement of all parties involved.

The NICS is developing its role and mission in supporting the Northern Ireland Executive in a new context. The Covid 19 pandemic has fundamentally changed our society, accelerating a technological and cultural shift that was already underway, but covering more than a decade of innovation in a matter of 18 months. And there are other long-term drivers. Climate change, Green Growth, Energy Security, the likelihood of future pandemics and the move towards a net zero carbon economy will be among the most significant.

Every aspect of our lives has been and will be impacted, frequently in ways with which we are still coming to terms. So the way we live, work, and consume public services will be – *will have to be* - transformed. The NICS must also transform itself as part of that change and The Executive Office will be at the centre of that process.

Strategic scientific and technological advice needs to be available to the NI Executive and senior decision makers in a more structured and sustained way. Science and technology must be at the heart of NICS decision-making and ensure that NI is more fully connected to developments across the UK by having the expertise and capacity to participate and shape national and international programmes. The required organisational culture shift will need a sustained focus on developing the scientific and technological literacy of decision makers at the highest levels across government.

The CSTA will proactively and independently promote the value and benefits of science and technology, developing the first phase of a regional strategy to put both at the heart of policy development in general, and economic policy in particular, though not exclusively.

The CSTA will be employed by SIB but based in The Executive Office, working at 'arm's length' in an Office of Science, Technology & Innovation Policy – a TEO Unit in its own right, but independent in its ability to promote and promulgate its own agenda.

The CSTA will report directly to the Head of the NI Civil Service (HOCS) and will be the primary source of high-quality independent advice and guidance on strategic issues, opportunities and risks in science and technology for the NI Executive, Ministers, the Head of Civil Service, Civil Service Board and individual departments - excluding advising on policies solely relevant to health and agriculture, environment and rural affairs which will be dealt with separately, but collaboratively.

There are scientific advisers in place and established in both the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, with whom the CSTA will work strategically and collaboratively. While the CSTA will not have any authority to advise directly on health and agriculture, environment and rural affairs led policies, they will still have sustained close policy and strategic engagement with both CSAs in DOH & DAERA and can advise and take advice accordingly.

The CSTA will be the primary source of high-quality independent advice and guidance on strategic issues, opportunities and risks in science and technology for the NI Executive, Ministers, the Head of NI Civil Service, NI Civil Service Board and individual NI departments seeking such advice.

The CSTA's advice will help to improve the quality and use of scientific, technology & engineering evidence in developing policies in NI. CSTA will also influence the thinking and development of industry and academia and start the development of a coherent, measurable framework for science and technology in NI to improve our overall performance in these fields.

The CSTA will work with Ministers, Special Advisers, the NI Civil Service Board and NI departments to deliver key objectives and support the delivery of improved public services, leading strategic discussions across the Civil Service and the wider public sector. In fulfilling this role, CSTA will work closely with key stakeholders to drive change in how the Civil Service approaches science, technology, and data usage, to improve policy making and service delivery, participating in networks with other national scientific leaders on critical and emerging strategic issues in science and technology.

The principal roles of the CSTA will be: developing a coherent and coordinated NI Science & Technology Policy & Strategy; guiding the development of a cross-departmental & cross-agency NI science & technology advisory network (NISTAN) to ensure that the NI Civil Service is making the best of opportunities in science and technology, for improved policy making, especially for economic growth & meeting societal challenges (but not in areas reserved to health & agricultural, environmental and rural affairs policies); and, representing NI science and technology on the national and international stage.

The CSTA will actively promote the value and benefits of science and technology, helping to developing a regional strategy to put both at the heart of how we develop policy across NI government, including proposals to bring science & technology-based solutions for innovation and efficiencies into the NICS and wider public sector, and, critically, also to grow our economy.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

- Advise on and oversee the development of a coordinated Science & Technology Policy & Strategy for Northern Ireland.
- Chair a cross-departmental and cross-agency public sector Northern Ireland Science & Technology Advisory Network (NISTAN) to coordinate science & technology science policy.
- Independent Adviser on strategic issues, opportunities and risks in science and technology for the Executive and for the Civil Service Board (excluding matters related to health & agriculture, environment and rural affairs policies).
- Build a working relationship between NISTAN & the Matrix Science Industry Panel, especially to develop mutually coherent foresight and horizon scanning programmes across business, academia & government.
- Provide an independent science and technology view on relevant UK, ROI and wider international policy development, ensuring that local policy development identifies opportunities and maximises potential benefits from funding programmes.
- Leverage existing relationships and guide establishment of new ones with industry and academia to create an effective network of science and technology leaders across government, industry and academia.
- Participating in the UK Chief Scientific Advisory Network (CSAN), ensuring we are able to take part in relevant national and international programmes and that critical information and latest thinking are shared with NISTAN for wider dissemination.
- Meet with Ministers and Chief Scientific Advisers in UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, and work to increase the Devolved Administrations' science & technology collaboration & cohesion on matters of mutual interest and profile at UKG level.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates must be able to demonstrate the following:

- Recognised research leadership with demonstrable experience and expertise in a science and/or technology related discipline;
- Demonstrable track record in leading significant research or R&D programmes;
- Demonstrable track record in leading the successful commercialisation of science & technology;
- Leadership skills & experience to command respect & support across industry, government & academia;
- Well-developed communication and influencing abilities;
- Strategic mindset, with the ability to operate and think at a regional, national and international level;
- Commitment to and evidence of promoting diversity and inclusivity;
- Demonstrable skills to focus on economic, social and educational needs;
- Evidence of effective high level decision making through collaboration & persuasion;
- The ability to operate at pace, as required;
- Some experience of applying knowledge to policy development;
- Leading Horizon Scanning & Foresight;
- Improving scientific capability/practices;
- Providing, handling and quality assuring evidence systems;
- Oversight of the Interface with policy development.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The successful candidate will be seconded into the NI Civil Service from SIB.

- Employment on a basis of an average of 2.5 days a week, per annum (flexible in any given week so long as the annual average is 2.5 days per week)
- Initial Appointment of 3 years, with review point after 1 year
- Option to extend by up to a further 2 years, with agreement of all parties
- Salary £62,141 p.a. for average of 2.5 days per week (based on 50% of a full time Grade 2 salary of £124,282 p.a.)

This role will also be available on secondment.

Confirmation of appointment will be subject to satisfactory completion of a probation period of six months. Reserve candidates may be maintained for a period of up to twelve months if suitable additional roles become available.

The position will be based primarily in Belfast and may require regular travel throughout Northern Ireland, including international travel at times. The post holder will require access to a form of transport to carry out the duties of the position. The post may also require evening, weekend, and holiday work. Working remotely from home may also be required at certain times.

### **Remuneration & Other Benefits**

In addition to salary the benefits package includes:

- a defined contribution pension with 10% employer's contribution;
- 25 days annual leave plus 12 statutory days (pro rata);
- life assurance cover.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

If a candidate or their partner has any actual or potential conflict of interest with the activities of SIB or any other associated bodies, this should be declared clearly in the application or immediately should it arise post-appointment. Any indirect association of this kind through any other family member or partnership should also be disclosed.

## **Right to work**

SIB must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. Applicants must be:

- a UK or Irish national; or
- in possession of settled or pre-settled status; or
- in possession of indefinite leave to remain; or
- otherwise entitled to stay in the UK and work for SIB.

For more advice on how to demonstrate your right to work please see [Prove your right to work to an employer - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/proof-your-right-to-work)

## **Equal Opportunities Policy Statement**

Strategic Investment Board Limited is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

## **Pre-appointment Enquiries**

If you are successful, we may carry out security, health and character enquiries before a formal offer of appointment is made. A basic AccessNI disclosure will be requested to assist with the decision-making process in the event of an individual being offered this position. Please note that the fact that an applicant has a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position. Subject to satisfactory completion of the pre-appointment enquiries, you would be invited to take up the post as soon as possible. We emphasize that these enquiries would be carried out in full compliance with our equal opportunities policies.



## RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The recruitment & appointment process will begin with the submission of a covering letter accompanied by a CV. The Covering Letter (2 A4 pages max) will be expected to set out how the candidate meets the criteria set out in the Job Description for the CSTA. Candidates' CVs and Covering Letters will be assessed against their ability to deliver against the requirements set out in the Job Description.

An eligibility sift will be conducted and successful candidates will progress to an initial interview with Saxton Bampfylde. Following a short-listing process, the SIB will then conduct panel interviews. It is anticipated that face to face interviews will be conducted in Belfast. However, requests for online interviews may be considered. Travel expenses for attending interview may be considered, from point of entry to the UK to the interview venue and return.

Candidates invited for interview may be required to prepare and deliver a presentation, and/or undertake a test, as part of the selection processes. Candidates may be required to attend more than one interview.

Following interview, the successful candidate will be notified and invited to take the role of Northern Ireland's Chief Scientific & Technology Adviser for three years (review point after one year), with an option to extend that by up to a further two years (to a maximum term of five years) by agreement with all parties involved.

### **How to apply**

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the SIB on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code **APCE**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter, and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

The closing date for applications is **midday 5 December 2023**.

\*The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

### **GDPR personal data notice**

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.