Appointment of

Chief Technology Officer, Financial Ombudsman Service

February 2024

Financial Ombudsman Service

An introduction from the Chief Executive

I'm delighted that you are interested in joining the Financial Ombudsman Service (the Ombudsman). Beyond the formal job description, I want to offer you insight into our service, our journey thus far, and our future plans.

In October 2022, I took the helm of the Financial Ombudsman Service during a period of economic uncertainty and profound change, both internally and externally. What drew me to this role was the tangible impact the Ombudsman has on people's lives every day. In the past year, we handled around 166,714 formal complaints across a spectrum of financial products and services, ranging from loans, mortgages, and insurance to cases of fraud and scams.

Our mission is straightforward: to assist customers in resolving financial disputes quickly, informally, and on fair terms. Since assuming this role, I've been continually impressed by the dedication of my team to this mission and the high quality of their work.

We're currently transforming our service to resolve cases faster. I'm proud to report that at the same time as improving our quality, we've significantly reduced our case resolution times, reducing the median time from almost six and a half months in 2021/22 to less than five months in 2022/23, and finally to less than three and a half months at the end of 2023.

We're seeking a pivotal CTO to lead our IT strategy and operations at the Ombudsman. Reporting directly to me, you'll collaborate with the executive team to shape our future service goals. Your role involves guiding the IT team, driving technology initiatives, and fostering a customer-centric culture. As a member of the Executive Committee, you'll inspire others and ensure excellence in public service delivery.

Best wishes,
Abby Thomas

Financial Ombudsman Service

About us

At the Financial Ombudsman Service, we make decisions on a range of complex and difficult issues.

Every year we resolve thousands of disputes between consumers or small businesses and their financial service providers.

We are a free and impartial service that aims to resolve customer complaints in an efficient and effective way, whilst sharing our insight with key stakeholders like the financial services sector and bodies such as the FCA and HMT.

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The Purpose of the Role

The Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at the Financial Ombudsman Service is responsible for defining and delivering an ambitious technology strategy aligned to the organisation's strategy and strategic priorities.

As a member of the Executive team, the CTO is a high-profile role, accountable to the CEO and Board. The CTO will work alongside Executive colleagues to shape priorities, putting customer experience at the centre.

Working with a high-performing internal team and key external partners, the CTO will be focused on delivering IT and organisational-wide change, as well as providing direction for the ongoing development of a secure and stable infrastructure and the optimisation of applications, where required.

As an organisation thousands of people rely on, and with responsibility for a wealth of data, the CTO at the Financial Ombudsman Service will shape a strategy which puts effective architecture, security and processes at its heart. The CTO will be responsible for ensuring the strategy is underpinned by delivery plans, effective supplier management and robust governance. They will ensure our technology plans and priorities deliver value for money.

An expert in the field, the CTO will have experience leading technology workstreams of key digital and data transformations, as well as Cloud migration and management. The CTO will be responsible for embedding and developing workplace technology and collaboration tools at the Financial Ombudsman, alongside the safe eradication of legacy systems.

Where responsible for the procurement, on-boarding and management of key strategic suppliers, the CTO will ensure our partners are aligned to our vision and priorities to deliver both complex change programmes and excellent day-to-day services.

The CTO will build and develop an effective technology team, with the key skills needed to support day-to-day services and change programmes, now and in the future. The CTO will inspire and motivate others to deliver high-quality tools and services which enable our people and help our customers.

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Celebrating our Values

Playing our PART

Purpose Ambition Respect Trust

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Your accountabilities

- Developing a technology strategy that aligns with the Financial Ombudsman Service's strategy and strategic priorities.
- Developing and delivering clear, achievable delivery plans aligned to the strategy.
- Taking accountability for the delivery of the technology elements of business projects within the time, cost and quality parameters agreed upfront.
- Initiating the design and delivery of technology specific projects, where required.
- The ongoing development of a secure and stable infrastructure and the optimisation of applications, where required.
- Ensuring secure IT operations for all systems.
- Optimising IT spend.
- Leading the technology team, budget and spend (across Service and Delivery Management, Architecture and Solutions, Operations and Service Continuity, Applications, Infrastructure and End-User Support) to support our strategy, delivery and cost optimisation.
- Commissioning and contracting with third parties (in accordance with the guidelines covering public sector procurement) to provide additional IT support where required.
- Effective supplier management, ensuring our partners are delivering in line with our strategy, and providing value for money.
- Maintaining a good working knowledge of current technology infrastructure and industry trends, ensuring that the Financial Ombudsman is well positioned to benefit when relevant and appropriate.
- Staying up to date with industry best practices to educate and inform third parties and internal teams on the advantages of various design and implementation options to meet business and technical requirements.
- Developing a model for IT security alongside the assurance and risk management teams.

This role reports to the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Ombudsman (CEO). Direct reports include the Chief Architect, Head of Business Applications, Head of Service Delivery & Infrastructure. The CTO will be responsible for the budget.

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Key to success is being an IT professional with a focus on customer centricity. In addition, to be successful in the role, the CTO will:

- Proactively collaborate with their peers to ensure the IT scope addresses the needs of the Ombudsman, without driving incremental cost.
- Be comfortable working in a matrix structure.
- Have a keen eye on the external market, being able to take relatable learnings on emerging tech / technical solutions and apply at the Ombudsman.
- Be an experienced people manager in a technology environment; able to lead and coach others through periods of change and support their team with learning and development, whilst creating and maintaining a positive team culture.
- Engage at all levels – using influencing, negotiation, presentation and facilitation skills.
- Take a collaborative and visible approach to leadership that involves valuing and supporting learning and teamwork.
- Act as a role model, leading an important team within the Enabling Functions.

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Your experience

Essential criteria

- Experience developing and implementing technology strategies.
- Deep and broad knowledge of technology solutions, including the provision of platforms for data storage and analysis, cloud migration and management with major cloud providers, digital tools and systems, integration and APIs, the use of AI to improve efficiency, as well as handling legacy systems.
- Experience managing large-scale outsourced IT services/contracts.
- Experience and track record of delivering complex Change Programmes working with in-house stakeholders and multiple suppliers.
- Experience building secure IT systems and operations.
- Developing, leading, and improving IT delivery in an operations environment.
- Strong internal and external stakeholder management skills, including the ability to influence.
- Working knowledge of public sector procurement and contract management would be advantageous.
- Project management including budgeting skills and risk mitigation.

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How to Apply

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

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **QFOSK**.

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 noon on Thursday 21 March.

GDPR personal data notice

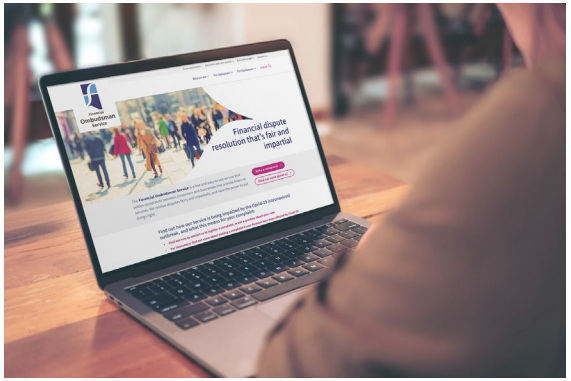
According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be 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.

Terms of Appointment

Location: London or Coventry. The IT team is based in London, so if the successful candidate is based in Coventry, they must be willing to take regular visits to the London office.

Working hours: This is a full-time position. Full time is 35 a week.

The Financial Ombudsman Service is a Disability Confident Committed Employer, and applicants with disabilities who opt in are guaranteed interviews where they meet the essential requirements of the role as set out in the job description.



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