

Appointment of Chair to the Skills Development Scotland Digital Economy Skills Group

April 2023

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is Scotland's national skills body.

We contribute to Scotland's sustainable economic growth by supporting people and businesses to develop and apply their skills such as through our delivery of Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.

Through working with industry, with sectoral representative bodies, and with Industry Skills Leadership Groups we also seek to better understand the current and future skills demand of Scotland's employers and economy. This includes working with industry to affect the necessary change in the skills and education system.

We are seeking applications from individuals who share our drive for of a more prosperous, greener and fairer economy in alignment with Scottish Government ambitions as detailed in the [National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#).

We are passionate about our role as a leader in inclusive growth within the public sector and ensure equality and fair work principles are at the heart of everything we do.

As the DESG Chair, you'll play a key role in shaping SDS strategies in delivering a dynamic and responsive skills system.

The Digital Economy Skills Group (DESG)

The DESG is an industry led public and private sector partnership, facilitated by SDS, and established in 2014 to help address the skills needs of Scotland's digital economy employers.

It is an incredibly exciting time for the DESG as it has recently worked with SDS to publish the first [Digital Economy Skills Action Plan](#) (DESAP) which highlights Scotland's digital economy skills pressures, and also provides a framework for partners to deliver the necessary urgent and radical actions to address these challenges.

As the outgoing DESG Chair is coming to the end of their tenure we are looking to appoint a new Industry Chair who can work with SDS as we move into the implementation of DESAP.

We are particularly keen to get applicants from a wide range of backgrounds as having different experiences and points of view is seen as strength of the DESG and will be essential as we begin to mobilise the action plan. For this appointment we hope to get applicants from across Scotland, and from outside of the traditional technology sector recognising that the digital economy encompasses all of Scotland's businesses.

Role and responsibilities

- The principal role of the Chair is to ensure that the DESG provides strategic leadership to SDS on digital economy skills issues.
- The Chair will provide leadership and guidance to SDS and to the DESG to ensure that the effective implementation, monitoring and governance of the DESAP.
- The Chair will be an ambassador for DESAP and digital economy skills in Scotland by working with SDS to raise the profile of the digital economy opportunity, and by working to influence partners of the economic importance of increasing the supply of digital skills.
- The Chair is expected to be a critical friend to SDS and other senior agency representatives by providing strategic and constructive challenge.
- The Chair will work closely with SDS to agree the agenda for the DESG and will lead its bi-monthly meetings.

Skills/Experience Required

Applicants should be able to demonstrate:

- **Knowledge and passion about the digital economy skills opportunity for Scotland;** this does not require any technical knowledge, and applications are encouraged from individuals who have experience of working in non-tech SMEs and in the third sector.
- **Working with others:** the ability to engage effectively, facilitate constructive discussion and successfully influence a diverse range of stakeholders.
- **Strategic thinking and leadership:** the ability to think strategically and contribute to the development of strategies and delivery of outcomes often in challenging circumstances.
- **Equality & diversity:** awareness and appreciation of the importance of supporting equality and diversity in a public service context
- **Senior industry experience:** experience of working with individuals at a senior level in industry and confident in dealing with senior representatives from Scottish Government including Ministerial engagement.

- **Excellent communication skills: including the ability to engage sensitively** with multiple stakeholders
- **Understanding of the Scottish skills and education and public sector landscape.**

Remuneration and time commitment

This is a non-remunerated post and is expected to be of an 18-month duration.

DESG meetings will continue to be a combination of hybrid and fully online to help minimise travel costs and travel time, and to encourage applicants from across Scotland.

The minimum time commitment is leading the bi-monthly DESG meeting which are of 2-hour duration, as well as the time to support SDS in planning DESG meetings and agendas.

Next steps

To apply for this role applicants are invited to prepare no more than a two-page response detailing how they meet the skills and experience and how they will support SDS as we move into this exciting new phase of implementing the DESAP.

This should be submitted by the closing date of **14 May 2023** to Janice.Andrew@sds.co.uk

Potential applicants who would like an informal discussion about this opportunity can contact Phil.Ford@SDS.co.uk.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a phone meeting with the current Chair of the DESG, with SDS and with no more than two other industry representatives from the DESG.

Ends