Northern Ireland Assembly



Applications and Development Lead – AG6

£44,039 - £45,318 (plus £10,445 salary supplement p.a.)

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later than **12 noon (UK time) on 4 December 2026**

Please retain a copy of this booklet for your reference throughout the selection process.

Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the position of Applications and Development Lead AG6 in the Northern Ireland Assembly (the Assembly).

The Assembly operates in a dynamic political and parliamentary environment, and as a newly appointed Applications and Development Lead, you will be provided with an excellent opportunity to make an important and valued contribution to the work of the Assembly at Parliament Buildings.

Working at the Assembly offers a rewarding career. This is an exciting opportunity to join a high-profile organisation with a dedicated and inclusive team.

In turn, we offer a competitive salary and an excellent pension provision where you contribute 5.65% of salary, and the Assembly Commission will contribute a further 34.25%. We offer an annual leave allocation of 25 days, increasing by one day per year up to a maximum of 30 days. In addition, we offer 12 days of public and privilege holidays. We also offer a range of other employee benefits listed on the Recruitment website.

Please read the information provided in the candidate information booklet carefully and if you would like to find out more about the post before making an application, please contact Paddy McAllister at Paddy.McAllister@niassembly.gov.uk or telephone 02890 520364.



Gareth McGrath, Director of Parliamentary Services

About Us

The Assembly is at the heart of political and public life as the democratically elected parliament that represents the interests of Northern Ireland and its people.

Established as a key element of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the Assembly comprises 90 Members and has three main functions - making legislation, scrutinising the work of the Executive and representing constituents. It is the prime source of authority in respect of all devolved responsibilities.

In accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the staff, services and facilities which are needed to support the work of the Assembly are provided by the Assembly Commission, a corporate body comprising the Speaker and five Members. The day-to-day running of the Assembly is delegated to the Clerk/Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The Assembly Commission therefore provides the infrastructure (including Parliament Buildings), facilities and staff to allow the Assembly and its Committees to meet and to encourage public awareness of, and engagement with, the parliamentary process. It also pays the salaries of Members and reimburses the expenses which enable them to undertake their duties both at the Assembly and in their constituency offices.

The Assembly Commission is a high-achieving and professional organisation providing impartial support to the Assembly and its Members. The Assembly Commission is independent of the Executive and the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The Assembly Commission has approximately 400 staff and an annual budget of approximately £70m. Our organisational structure is illustrated on the Northern Ireland Assembly Recruitment website.

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About the Role

The Applications and Development Lead will lead and manage the team responsible for designing, developing, maintaining, and enhancing the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's internally developed and bespoke business-critical applications, including systems that support parliamentary and organisational processes.

The postholder will provide technical guidance across the software development lifecycle, using Agile development practices and modern technologies to deliver secure, reliable, and effective applications that meet organisational and user needs.

The postholder will lead the planning, design, development, and implementation of new and enhanced applications and provide technical direction, quality assurance, and support to the development team. The role will also lead the continued modernisation of the Assembly Commission's application estate, including the improvement or replacement of legacy systems and the transition to modern cloud-based technologies.

The Person

You will be an experienced software development professional who combines strong technical expertise with the ability to lead and develop a team. You will have experience of providing technical direction, solving complex problems, and guiding the development of secure, reliable applications that meet user needs. You will take a practical approach to improving existing systems and assessing how new technologies could benefit the Assembly Commission.

You will be able to give colleagues clear direction, coach and support their development, and encourage knowledge sharing and continuous learning. You will create a collaborative and inclusive team environment in which people understand their responsibilities, contribute ideas, and take ownership of their work. You will also have experience of guiding the team through changes in technology and ways of working.

You will communicate effectively with technical and non-technical colleagues, listening to users, explaining complex issues clearly and building constructive working relationships. You will exercise sound judgement when balancing development priorities, available resources, and the need to maintain business-critical services. You will take responsibility for your decisions and commitments, recognising the importance of dependable applications in supporting the work of the Assembly.

Core Responsibilities

The main duties and responsibilities of the post are to:

Team leadership and management

- Lead, manage and develop the software development team, providing clear direction, setting individual and team objectives, supporting delivery of agreed priorities, and reviewing performance.
- Plan and allocate the team's work using Agile practices and the Assembly Commission's work management and IT Service Desk systems, monitoring progress, and addressing delivery issues.
- Coach and support developers, promote knowledge sharing and identify learning and development needs to maintain and strengthen the team's technical capability.
- Support the IS Office, senior management team, with capacity and resource planning, providing assessments of workloads, resource requirements, and progress.
- Lead and support the software development team through the transition from legacy, on-premises systems to modern cloud-based applications and services, developing the skills and working practices needed to support the Assembly Commission's digital transformation.
- Ensure the team's priorities and delivery plans support the Assembly Commission's Digital, AI and Cyber Strategy and corporate objectives.

Application development and support

- Work with business analysts and system stakeholders to understand and evaluate requirements, agree user and technical specifications, and translate these into user stories and development tasks.
- Lead the planning, development and implementation of new applications and enhancements using Agile practices and tools such as DevOps.
- Manage application delivery against agreed plans and objectives, monitoring progress, addressing risks, and delivery issues, and keeping stakeholders informed through review meetings and system demonstrations.
- Provide hands-on development input where required, helping the team resolve complex technical problems and deliver clean, secure, and effective code.
- Review and quality assure the team's development work, ensuring compliance with agreed software development policies, standards, and practices, including version control.
- Plan and oversee testing of application features and integrated components, including performance testing, and work with users to complete user acceptance testing and obtain sign-off.

- Manage software build and release processes, coordinating implementation with other IS colleagues to support a controlled transition into use.
- Ensure technical documentation is maintained to support the ongoing development, maintenance, and support of applications.

Technical architecture and modernisation

- Lead the design of applications and supporting services using cloud-first principles and platforms such as Microsoft Azure or Amazon Web Services (AWS), working with other IS colleagues to ensure solutions meet organisational and user needs.
- Lead the planning and delivery of the migration and modernisation of legacy applications and on-premises Microsoft SQL Server services to appropriate cloud platforms, including Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) and Platform as a Service (PaaS), maintaining security and continuity of business-critical services.
- Provide technical advice to the IS Office senior management team, on application architecture, cloud technologies, and options for modernising existing systems.
- Lead the transition and management of all datasets and maintain the data schema in accordance with best practice.
- Adopt a secure by design approach to all application support and delivery.
- Investigate and assess new software products and technologies, producing assessment reports and recommendations to inform technical decisions and improvements to applications and services.
- Support the IS Office senior management team in developing and implementing relevant IT policies, technical standards, and procedures, and in developing, implementing, and monitoring IT security measures.

Application support

- Provide first- to third-line technical support for bespoke applications, corporate digital systems and third-party software, diagnosing and resolving software problems and prioritising business-critical procedural systems to support the smooth running of Plenary and Committee business.
- Lead the ongoing maintenance of existing applications, coordinating fixes and maintenance work with the development team and other IS colleagues to maintain reliable services.
- Manage, develop, and provide technical support and advice for cloud services such as Microsoft Azure, Microsoft Teams, and SharePoint Online, ensuring they meet the business needs of Assembly Members, Party Support and Assembly Commission staff.

- Provide technical advice and training to Assembly Members, Party Support and Assembly Commission staff on bespoke business-critical applications, third-party software solutions, and software packages.
- Work with other IS colleagues to maintain effective digital services, providing specialist technical support and advice to Service Desk staff when dealing with software-related problems.
- Take responsibility for monitoring application performance, identifying unsupported software components and coordinate preventative maintenance and share with relevant team.

Stakeholder and supplier engagement

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with Assembly Members, Party Support and Assembly Commission business areas to understand their needs and support the delivery of effective applications and services.
- Explain technical issues, options, and constraints clearly to non-technical stakeholders, helping them make informed decisions and agree realistic expectations.
- Work with third-party suppliers to coordinate software development and support activities, resolve technical issues, and maintain continuity of services.
- Act as contract manager for assigned third-party software support contracts, monitoring delivery against contractual requirements and agreed service levels, addressing performance issues and escalating concerns where necessary, in line with the Assembly Commission's procurement and contract management procedures.
- Build relationships with digital colleagues in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, other public bodies, and legislatures to share knowledge and identify opportunities for collaboration.
- Provide specialist technical advice on a wide range of digitally enabled activities across the Assembly Commission and contribute digital expertise to relevant corporate and inter-parliamentary working groups.

General responsibilities

- Comply with all the Assembly Commission's staff policies and procedures, including Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies and procedures.
- Undertake other duties that the Assembly Commission reasonably requires of you.

Essential Criteria

Applicants for the post must, by the closing date for applications, have:

Route One

1. A Bachelor's (or higher) degree, in Computing, Computing Science, Software Engineering or other discipline relevant to Information Systems / Information Technology*.

And

- At least 1 years' experience in leading and managing an application development team.

Plus

- At least 2 years' experience in each of the following areas (a) – (c):

(a) Application development skills, including experience in modern software development tools, technologies and programming frameworks, such as C#, JavaScript, CSS and HTML.
(b) Agile development utilising modern cloud technology services and platforms such as Azure Functions and Azure App Services, and Dev Ops.
(c) Database schema design using modern cloud-based technology platforms, such as SQL Azure.

OR

Route Two

2. An HND or Foundation Degree in Computing or other discipline relevant to Information Systems / Information Technology*.

And

- At least 1 years' experience in leading and managing an application development team.

Plus

- At least 3 years' experience in each of the areas (a) – (c) listed above.

NB Only those courses with a computing content of 50% or more will be considered and applicants must give full details on the application form of how the content of the course meets this requirement.

Shortlisting Criteria

Should shortlisting be required, the following shortlisting criteria will be applied:

- Please provide an example that demonstrates your experience of leading a significant application, Modernisation or cloud migration, including your role in successfully delivering the work**.**

Assembly Commission Leadership Strengths (Leadership Strengths)



The role is a **Leader,** and the following Leadership Strengths will be assessed during the selection process: Continuous Growth, Change Leadership, Judgement, Accountability and Building Effective Networks.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The Assembly Commission is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of religious belief, political opinion, race, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or people with dependents or without. **All applications for employment will be considered on the basis of merit.**

Location

The successful applicant will be based in Parliament Buildings, Belfast. Access to a form of transport is necessary as travel to MLA Constituency Offices located throughout Northern Ireland will be required from time to time.

The Assembly Commission operates a Hybrid Working Policy and the balance between working in Parliament Buildings and working at home will depend on business and service need, currently four days per week in the office.

Completing the form

Only the information presented in the application form will be considered by the selection panel. CVs or other supplementary material will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms. Completed online forms must be submitted by **12 noon (UK time) on 4 December 2026**.

Launch the application portal and complete the application form.

Application forms submitted after the closing time and date will not be accepted.

Recruitment and Selection Framework

There are five elements within the Recruitment and Selection Framework:



The elements that will be assessed for this role are Experience, Ability, Technical, and Leadership Strengths. The selection method(s) that will be used are detailed below. Further information on the Recruitment and Selection Framework are included in the Guidance on Recruitment and Selection for Applicants.

Stages of the Selection Process

Eligibility Sift

The essential criteria reflect the experience and knowledge that an applicant must possess in order to be able to undertake the role. An eligibility sift will be carried out on the basis of the information contained in the essential criteria section of the application form. You must therefore demonstrate clearly in your form how, and to what extent, you meet the essential criteria for the post.

Shortlisting

The Selection Panel reserves the right to use shortlisting as part of the selection process for this post. Should shortlisting be used, the shortlisting criterion listed above will be applied. The Selection Panel reserves the right to set a minimum standard for the shortlisting criterion and/or to only invite those who score highest in the shortlisting criterion to the next stage of the selection process. If shortlisting is not necessary, all applicants who have demonstrated the essential criteria will proceed to the next stage of the selection process.

Interview Stage

Applicants invited to interview will be assessed using the Essential Criteria and Leadership Strengths as outlined above.

Interviews are planned for week commencing 18 January 2027

Further Interview Stage

The Selection Panel reserves the right to hold a further interview stage if deemed necessary.

Disability Confident

The Assembly Commission is a Disability Confident Committed Employer and for our recruitment, we have committed to:

- ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible;
- communicating and promoting vacancies;
- offering an interview to disabled people who meet the essential criteria for the job (the Guaranteed Interview Scheme); and
- anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required.

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) supports applicants with disabilities or those with a long-term impairment or health condition, that is expected to last for at least 12 months by offering an interview to disabled people who meet the essential criteria for the job. If you are applying under GIS, it is therefore important that you include all relevant information in your application form. You should refer to the Guidance on Recruitment and Selection for Applicants for more information.

Where a Shortlisting Criteria is included, applicants applying under GIS will not be required to complete this section of the application form.

Where a job-related assessment or test forms part of the selection process, all applicants must complete and meet the minimum standard required for that assessment or test, including those applying under GIS.

Reasonable Adjustments

If you require adjustments to assist you to participate in any part of the selection process, please indicate this on the application form or contact us at recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk

Please note that you will be required to provide written confirmation of your disability from a general practitioner or an appropriate specialist when requested by the Human Resources Office. If you do not have written confirmation available at the time of submitting your application, please arrange to obtain it at the earliest opportunity so that you can provide it promptly when requested to do so**.**

You can get advice or assistance with making an application from your local Jobs and Benefits Office – contact details are available on nidirect: Find contact details for your local Jobs and Benefits Office.

Key Employee Benefits

We offer a competitive salary, excellent pension provision, and generous annual leave allowance.

We also offer a range of non-salary benefits which include hybrid working; supportive family friendly policies; flexi-time; health and wellbeing initiatives including an Employee Assistance Programme; supported learning and development; Cycle to Work Scheme; Payroll Giving; and volunteering opportunities.

The successful applicant will be given suitable training, including formal specialised courses as necessary.

View further details of our employee benefits.

Terms and Conditions of Appointment

All appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of pre-appointment checks which will include security vetting to Security Clearence (SC) level.

The successful candidate will first be required to satisfactorily complete Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) checks and, as part of this process, candidates will be required to provide documentation and information to verify:

- your identity.
- your right to work in the UK.
- *Your employment, academic and/or qualification history for the previous three years; and
- information required to complete an unspent criminal record check i.e. AccessNI basic check.

*As part of the BPSS process, applicants who have lived, worked, or studied overseas may be required to provide additional documentation to verify their employment, academic or residential history.

Following satisfactory completion of BPSS, an SC application will be initiated. To allow meaningful enquiries to be undertaken as part of the vetting process, applicants would normally be expected to have been resident in the United Kingdom for at least the previous five years. Applicants who have spent significant periods overseas may be asked to provide additional information or supporting documentation as part of the clearance process.

Each application will be considered on its own merits and a lack of UK residency for the full five-year period will not automatically exclude an applicant from obtaining security clearance.

The successful candidate will also be required to satisfactorily complete a six-

month probationary period.

The standard working week is 37 hours, (excluding meal breaks). Working hours will be dictated by the mode of operation of the Assembly and may involve work into late evenings and on occasions, at weekends and on public holidays.

The taking of annual leave may be influenced by the parliamentary timetable.

You must also be willing to undertake and successfully complete appropriate training which will be delivered by Assembly staff shortly following appointment. Refresher training will be provided as appropriate.

Equality Monitoring

Under Fair Employment legislation, we are required to monitor the community background and gender of those applying for jobs. You must therefore complete the equal opportunities monitoring section of the application form when applying for the post.

Merit List

The merit list of applicants deemed to be appointable will normally remain "live" for 18 months from the date it is signed and may be used to fill any further permanent or fixed term opportunities for the same post.

Communication during the recruitment process

The Assembly Recruitment Team will issue most communication electronically. You should therefore regularly check your email account to make sure you do not miss any important communication. Please note, sometimes the Recruitment Team emails are automatically filtered as spam by email providers.

Further Information

If you require more information on the recruitment process, please contact the Assembly Recruitment Team on 02890 521741 or email us at recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk.

Further information about the Assembly can be obtained on the Northern Ireland Assembly website.

The Candidate Information Booklet does not constitute any term or condition of employment.