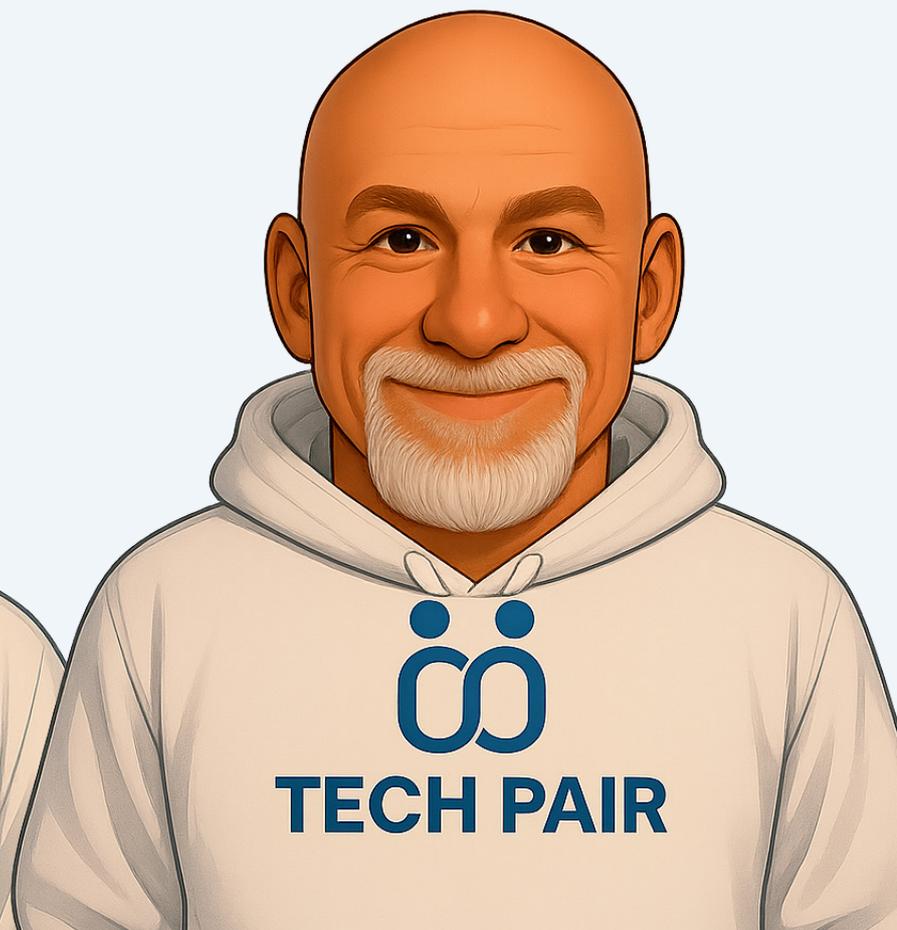


**TECH PAIR**

RECRUITMENT IS CHANGING. WE KEEP IT HUMAN.

# Salary Guide 2026



# Tech & Change Recruitment done right

At Tech Pair, we believe great hiring starts with understanding people, not processes. We're founder-led and hands-on. Every conversation, shortlist and placement is managed directly by us: Michael and Stuart. No handovers. No juniors. Just deep expertise and a genuine passion for connecting people and opportunities – technical know-how with a human touch. **This is recruitment as we think it should be: thoughtful, consistent and built on real relationships.**

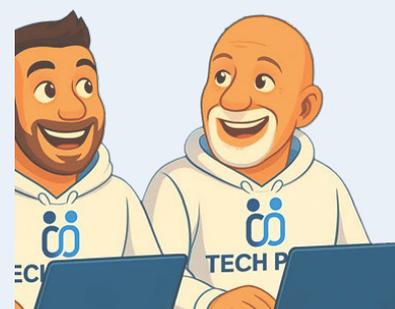
## SERVICES AT A GLANCE

<p><b>PERMANENT RECRUITMENT</b> Strategic hires, culture-aligned.</p> 	<p><b>CONTRACT &amp; INTERIM</b> Vetted resource, rapid start, compliant onboarding.</p> 
<p><b>RPO</b> Embedded founders, full end-to-end management of recruitment campaigns.</p> 	<p><b>MANAGED SERVICES</b> Outcome-led, milestone-driven delivery.</p> 

## BUILT FOR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We don't spread thin across dozens of roles: we go deep, not wide. We aim to build exclusive relationships, because it delivers lasting value and greater quality:

- Acting as an extension of your business
- High-trust partnerships
- Sharper messaging
- Better candidate journeys



## Methodology

### 1 8 steps to dramatically accelerate time to hire and raise quality of hire:

**Interview the Hiring Manager** Understand role, culture, skills, and success factors.

**2 Targeted headhunt & shortlist** Headhunt only candidates who match your exact needs.

**3 Share your Hiring Manager video** 24-hour expiry video + spec shared for upfront buy-in.

**4 Share "Red Hot" candidate videos with you** 2nd call confirms excitement. Motivated = **Red Hot**. Others self-select out.

**5 Final interviews** You only meet candidates who are motivated, pre-qualified and properly briefed.

**6 Offer stage** Managing expectations and motivation to secure acceptance.

**7 Onboarding** Hands-on support through start date.

**8 Post placement check-ins** Ensure retention, culture fit, and long-term value.

**Video-First Outreach** We use structured, personalised video to showcase your roles, culture, and team. Candidates don't just read a spec — they hear directly from you. This drives faster engagement and stronger buy-in, especially for hard-to-fill tech roles.

### Guiding principles

- **Consistency of message:** ensuring every word is on brand.
- **Candidate confidence:** no mixed messages or duplication.
- **Speed and focus:** one team, one goal, zero toe-stepping.
- **Proper representation:** acting like an extension of your team.

### Why it works

<b>Quality</b>	How: Meet only pre-qualified <b>Red Hot</b> candidates Result: <i>On average 2 CVs = 1 hire.</i>
<b>Speed</b>	How: <b>Upfront buy-in via video</b> Result: <i>Time-to-shortlist in under 7 days</i>
<b>Engagement</b>	How: <b>Video-first approach</b> Result: <i>3x candidate response vs. cold outreach</i>
<b>Retention</b>	How: <b>Post-placement check-ins</b> Result: <i>90%+ retention at 12 months</i>

## What Hiring Managers and Candidates Need to Know

The Scotland technology and change market in 2026 is more selective, but not easier. Budgets are tighter and hiring processes are more cautious however, strong candidates in specialist areas are still scarce and the best people are still being hired quickly. This means success comes down to clarity: roles with clear delivery outcomes, realistic pay bands, and decisive hiring processes outperform everything else.

## Where the market is paying premiums in Scotland

If you are hiring (or positioning yourself as a candidate), these are the areas where Scotland continues to show the strongest salary and day rate demand:

- Cloud & Platform Modernisation (AWS/Azure, Kubernetes, migration delivery, FinOps)
- Data Engineering & Analytics Enablement (cloud data platforms, governance, BI modernisation)
- Cyber Security & Resilience (security engineering, security architecture, incident readiness)
- Transformation Delivery (Programme, Delivery, Change, BA)
- Product & Digital Enablement (Product, Service Design, UX in mature environments)

If your role sits inside one of these areas, salary expectations will remain strong even in a cautious market. If it doesn't, hiring managers will face more competition from candidates and salary bands will flatten.

## The hybrid reality in Scotland (and how it affects salary)

Hybrid is now the default expectation, but Scotland has moved away from "remote-first" for many employers.

What we are consistently seeing:

- 1–2 days per week onsite is becoming the baseline
- 3 days onsite is common in public sector and regulated environments
- Fully remote roles exist, but often come with more competition and tighter salary control

**Hiring manager takeaway:** If you require on-site presence but advertise the role as flexible, you will lose candidates late-stage.

**Candidate takeaway:** If you are flexible on location/hybrid expectations, you widen your opportunity pool significantly and improve your leverage

## **Contractor market (Outside IR35): still active, but judged harder**

Outside IR35 contracting remains strong in Scotland, but clients are far more selective about what they are paying for. The highest demand contract areas remain:

- Cloud migrations
- Cyber programmes
- Data platform build-outs
- ERP / CRM implementations
- Public sector digital delivery programmes

**Hiring manager takeaway:** Contractors are being hired fastest when the engagement is clearly framed around outcomes, deliverables and risk not “general support”.

**Candidate takeaway:** Outside IR35 day rates are strongest when you can position yourself as an outcome owner: delivery responsibility, stakeholder management, governance, and measurable impact.

## **The most common reason Scottish roles fail to hire**

The biggest blocker in Scotland is not lack of candidates it’s misalignment between scope and reward.

- senior-level accountability packaged as a mid-level salary
- unclear mandate and decision rights
- job descriptions written as a shopping list, not a mission

**Hiring manager takeaway:** If you want senior talent, define the delivery mandate clearly and pay at the top end of the band.

**Candidate takeaway:** If a role lacks clarity on scope, budget, decision authority or stakeholder ownership, treat it as a risk indicator regardless of salary.

## **Tech Pair View: Scotland is a “clarity market”**

Scotland remains one of the UK’s strongest markets for technology and change talent but it rewards organisations that hire well: clear scope, realistic salary bands, and a decisive process. In 2026 the winners are not the employers who offer the highest salary; they are the employers who make the role make sense.

At Tech Pair we operate as an extension of your business. We are founder-led and hands-on every conversation, short-list and placement is managed directly by Michael and Stuart with no handovers and no junior resourcing.

In a market as relationship-driven as Scotland we believe recruitment is not just about filling vacancies it is about protecting your reputation. Our process is designed to ensure your organisation is represented consistently, professionally and on-brand at every stage. This includes structured hiring manager briefing, targeted head-hunting (not volume advertising) and a video-first candidate engagement approach that creates upfront buy-in and reduces late-stage drop-outs.

The result is simple: fewer CV's, better short lists, faster hiring decisions and a candidate journey that strengthens your employer brand in the market rather than diluting it.

## Scotland 2026 Salary Bands (Tech Pair coverage)

Permanent salaries reflect base salary only and exclude bonus, pension, car allowance and equity. Contractor rates assume defined deliverables and an Outside IR35 engagement model.

Percentiles explained: The 25th percentile represents the lower end of the market for that role (typically less experience or narrower scope). The 50th percentile represents the market midpoint. The 75th percentile represents the upper end, usually reflecting higher impact, scarce skillsets, or greater delivery accountability.

P25 is 25th percentile | P50 is 50th percentile | P75 is 75th percentile | All contract rates are outside IR35

### Analytics, Data & AI

Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
AI Specialist	£65k	£80k	£95k	£600
BI Developer / Analyst	£45k	£60k	£75k	£475
Data Analyst	£35k	£45k	£55k	£360
Data Architect	£80k	£95k	£115k	£750
Data Engineer	£55k	£70k	£85k	£438
Data Governance / MDM	£60k	£75k	£95k	£600
Data Scientist	£60k	£75k	£90k	£600
Insight Analyst	£40k	£50k	£60k	£410
Machine Learning Engineer	£70k	£85k	£105k	£650
Reporting Analyst	£38k	£48k	£58k	£385

**Cloud, Infrastructure & Security**

Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
Cloud Architect	£85k	£100k	£120k	£750
Cloud Engineer (AWS/Azure/GCP)	£55k	£70k	£85k	£550
Cybersecurity Consultant	£65k	£80k	£100k	£650
Infrastructure Engineer	£45k	£55k	£65k	£425
IT Support (1st/2nd/3rd line)	£26k	£32k	£40k	£225
Network Engineer	£45k	£55k	£70k	£450
Platform Engineer / SRE	£70k	£85k	£105k	£650
Security Engineer / Analyst	£55k	£70k	£90k	£600
SOC Analyst / InfoSec	£40k	£52k	£65k	£450
Systems Administrator	£38k	£45k	£55k	£375

**ERP, CRM & Business Systems**

Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
Application Support	£32k	£40k	£52k	£325
CRM Dev/Analyst (Salesforce/HubSpot/Dynamics)	£50k	£65k	£85k	£575
ERP Consultant (SAP/Oracle/Dynamics)	£60k	£80k	£105k	£700
Systems Analyst	£45k	£55k	£70k	£450
Systems Implementation Specialist	£50k	£65k	£85k	£575
Technical Consultant	£55k	£70k	£90k	£625

Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
Compliance Manager	£55k	£70k	£90k	£625
Data Protection Officer	£60k	£80k	£105k	£700
GDPR Consultant	£55k	£70k	£90k	£625
Information Governance	£50k	£65k	£85k	£575
IT Auditor	£50k	£65k	£85k	£575
Risk Analyst	£45k	£55k	£70k	£500
Security & Compliance Analyst	£50k	£65k	£85k	£575

IT Operations & Support

Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
Service Desk Analyst	£25k	£30k	£36k	£210
Desktop Support	£26k	£32k	£38k	£210
Field Engineer	£28k	£35k	£45k	£250
ITIL Specialist	£45k	£55k	£70k	£500
IT Asset Manager	£40k	£50k	£65k	£425
Incident / Problem Manager	£50k	£65k	£85k	£575
IT Manager	£55k	£70k	£90k	£625
1st/2nd/3rd Line Support	£26k	£32k	£40k	£225



Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
CTO / CIO / CDO	£110k	£140k	£175k	£1,150
IT / Digital Director	£110k	£140k	£175k	£1,150
Interim Leadership	£110k	£140k	£175k	£1,150
Non-Exec / Advisory*	£30k	£60k	£120k	£1,100
Product Director	£95k	£120k	£150k	£1,000
Transformation Director	£105k	£135k	£165k	£1,100
Chief Architect	£105k	£125k	£150k	£1,000
Enterprise Architect	£90k	£110k	£130k	£875
Head of Data	£90k	£110k	£135k	£950
Head of Engineering	£90k	£110k	£135k	£950

\*Non-Exec compensation varies significantly depending on days/month and equity structure. Treat as directional.

### Product, UX & Design

Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
Digital Designer	£40k	£52k	£65k	£425
UX Designer	£45k	£58k	£75k	£500
UI Designer	£40k	£52k	£65k	£425
Interaction Designer	£45k	£58k	£75k	£500
Service Designer	£50k	£65k	£85k	£550
UX Researcher	£45k	£58k	£75k	£500
Product Owner	£50k	£62k	£78k	£550
Product Manager	£55k	£70k	£85k	£600
Head of Product	£90k	£110k	£135k	£900



# Project, Change & Transformation

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Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
Agile Coach / Scrum Master	£55k	£70k	£85k	£625
Senior Business Analyst	£55k	£65k	£75k	£550
Lead / Principal Business Analyst	£65k	£75k	£90k	£650
Programme Director	£110k	£135k	£165k	£1100
Project Director	£95k	£120k	£145k	£1000
PMO Lead / Head of PMO	£65K	£80K	£95K	£700
Implementation Manager	£60K	£75K	£95K	£675
Organisational Change Manager (OCM)	£65K	£80K	£100K	£750
Business Analyst	£40k	£50k	£60k	£425
Change Manager	£55k	£70k	£85k	£600
Delivery Manager	£65k	£80k	£95k	£675
ERP Project Lead	£70k	£85k	£105k	£775
PMO Analyst / Manager	£35k	£50k	£70k	£400
Portfolio Manager	£80k	£95k	£115k	£850
Programme Manager	£75k	£90k	£110k	£775
Project Manager	£55k	£70k	£85k	£450
Transformation Lead	£80k	£95k	£115k	£850



Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
Backend Developer (.NET/Java/Node)	£45k	£60k	£80k	£500
Frontend Developer (React/Angular/Vue)	£45k	£60k	£80k	£500
Full Stack Developer	£50k	£65k	£85k	£550
Mobile Developer (iOS/Android/React Native)	£50k	£65k	£85k	£550
Embedded Software Engineer	£45k	£60k	£80k	£500
Game Developer	£40k	£55k	£75k	£450
Engineering Manager / Tech Lead	£75k	£90k	£105k	£750
DevOps Engineer	£55k	£70k	£90k	£550
Platform Engineer	£70k	£85k	£105k	£650
Software Architect	£80k	£95k	£115k	£775

### Testing & Quality Assurance

Role Title	25th	50th	75th	Outside IR35 (Day Rate Mid)
QA Analyst	£30k	£40k	£52k	£325
Test Engineer	£40k	£55k	£75k	£450
Automation Tester (Selenium/Cypress)	£45k	£60k	£80k	£500
Performance Tester	£50k	£65k	£85k	£550
UAT Tester	£30k	£40k	£52k	£325
QA Lead	£55k	£70k	£90k	£625
Test Manager	£70k	£85k	£105k	£775
Security Tester / Pen Tester	£55k	£75k	£95k	£700

# The Tech Paired Podcast

**Leadership, delivery, and real-world tech change from the people building it.**



Tech Pair isn't interested in "trend content". We built Tech Paired to surface the real decisions behind technology and change: how leaders scale teams, where transformation fails, what capability actually moves the needle, and how the market is shifting under the surface.

- For hiring managers, it's a fast way to pressure-test your thinking on team design, modern delivery, and what "good" looks like right now.
- For candidates, it's a window into how strong organisations make decisions — and what leaders value when they hire.

## Listen on:

- Apple Podcasts: <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/tech-paired-podcast/id1847184654>
- Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/7oCii3i9hAhtgSRgdSEpUg>
- Episode hub: <https://www.techpair.co.uk/tech-paired-podcast>

## Check out our latest episodes:



**#1 Federico Charosky** — CEO, Quorum Cyber | A straight-talking leadership and cyber growth story: building at pace, simplifying security with platforms (not patchwork), and what matters when you're protecting organisations at scale.



**#2 Andy Doyle** — Chief Product & AI Leader | A deep dive into scaling tech organisations without chaos: why "structure is empathy", how strong leaders create clarity, and why the best teams learn faster than they deliver.



**#3 Fraser Ferguson** — Transformation & Digital Leader | A sharp, practical discussion on what transformation leadership really looks like in Scotland: navigating complexity, aligning stakeholders, building delivery culture, and why clarity of mandate matters more than methodology.



**#4 Patty O'Callaghan** — Head of AI (Architecture & Engineering Group) at Charles River Laboratories, Google Developer Expert (AI & Cloud) | A grounded, no-hype conversation on what AI is actually changing across the SDLC — plus what engineering leaders underestimate about governance, risk, and adoption.

# A partnership with around 50 years of tech recruitment experience



**Stuart  
Alexander**  
Co-Founder

With nearly 30 years in tech recruitment, Stuart (or Zander, as most people call him) has seen just about everything. He's built and led high-performing teams, supported transformations and helped clients of all sizes hire smarter. Clients trust him because he doesn't oversell and always delivers. He's all about building long-term partnerships where respect, clarity, and consistency are the norm.

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**Michael  
Phair**  
Co-Founder

Michael isn't in recruitment for the placements – he's in it for the people. Over the last 18 years he's built a reputation for delivering with integrity, care and consistency, maintaining top supplier status across almost every account he's worked with and never losing a client based on results. His approach is long-term, high-touch and always rooted in doing the right thing for clients both candidates and companies.

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