# SECTOR BRIEFING

**4 UR FUTURE**

# IT & SOFTWARE

**With many new technological advancements in the world, and more being developed on a constant basis, the IT & Software sector is fundamental to the running of modern society.**

Employing approximately 30,000 people, the industry is one of the fastest-growing in Northern Ireland, with a diverse range of companies involved in areas such as cyber security, artificial intelligence and data analytics, cloud-based services, financial technology (fintech), education technology (edtech), medical technology (medtech), government technology (govtech), sports technology, and more.

Northern Ireland is now home to a range of international technology leaders as well as NI-grown tech companies, which means the demand for knowledgeable, skilled, and talented employees for the sector is ever-increasing.

IT & Software companies develop digital infrastructure, build online platforms, develop games and a huge range of software applications, fix problems, and provide a range of tech-related services to clients from every sector and industry.

- Nearly one in four jobs **(23%)** advertised in Northern Ireland in 2021 was for a **digital/tech role**, the highest percentage in the UK.

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- Salaries in the sector are around **17% higher** than the national average, with salaries for digital roles **growing by 120%** over the last four years.

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- Belfast has been named in the world's top 15 Digital Economies of the Future and **ranked 2nd in the UK**, making it one of the best cities to work in technology.

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- Northern Ireland's software industry is **growing faster** than anywhere else in the UK, with **1 in 7 jobs** now in the sector.

## ? WHY IT & SOFTWARE?

**As society evolves to rely even more on technology, there will always be a need for digitally-focused jobs.
This level of job security is promising for future prospects.**



New jobs in the IT & software sector are being created all the time. So, it's possible your future job in the industry hasn't even been invented yet. It's this fast-paced, innovative, and exciting environment that many people thrive on, with advancements in the sector happening at a rapid pace.

Many digital companies and roles are international, offering relocation and travel opportunities, as well as the ability to work in a remote, hybrid, and/or fully flexible work-from-home model. For some people, being able to work from anywhere in the world means they can maintain employment whilst travelling (or being a 'digital nomad') at the same time.

# WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES?

All of the roles in this sector involve working with technology in some capacity and using a computer. There are a wide range of careers available, each with massively transferrable skills that can be applied to other jobs within the same sector, or enable you to work within most other sectors, including:

- Software Developer
- Data Scientist
- IT Manager
- System Analyst
- Virtual Reality (VR) Engineer
- Video Game Designer
- Augmented Reality (AR) Engineer
- Scrum Master

- Web Developer
- System Administer
- Computer Programmer
- Internet of Things (IoT) Engineer
- Blockchain Engineer
- Cyber Security Analyst
- App Developer
- UX (User Experience) Designer

...and more!

# SALARY EXPECTATIONS

Salaries within this sector can vary based on the responsibilities of each role, as well as the qualifications and level of experience required for each job.

Here are some **average salaries** for job roles within the sector:

| Software Developer | Web Developer | Cyber Security Analyst |
|---|---|---|
| Average salary | Average salary | Average salary |
| **£42,774 per year** | **£33,026 per year** | **£44,228 per year** |

| Data Scientist | Scrum Master | Technical Lead |
|---|---|---|
| Average salary | Average salary | Average salary |
| **£41,856 per year** | **£47,032 per year** | **£63,881 per year** |

| IT Manager | Python Engineer |
|---|---|
| Average salary | Average salary |
| **£45,477 per year** | **£51,535 per year** |

For further information, click the link highlighted in **blue**

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**Most jobs in the IT & Software sector require a degree in a relevant subject area, with universities often offering specialist courses that are tailored to specific roles. There are also broader topics that can be studied, including general IT or programming degrees.**

Apprenticeships are becoming a more common method of entering the sector, with a range of employers now offering Apprenticeships, Higher Level Apprenticeships, and other routes of entry such as Academies and bespoke training programmes.

Apprenticeships are a great option as you can learn on the job whilst also earning money. It is always important to check what qualifications you need to gain entry on to specific courses, as some may specify certain GCSE and/or A Level subjects you need to have.

# WHAT SKILLS ARE USEFUL?

Beyond the qualifications needed to pursue a career in the IT & Software sector, there are a range of employability skills and personal attributes that are useful to have.
These include:

- Analytical thinking
- Creative thinking and problem solving
- Coding and testing skills
- Communication skills
- Organisation skills

- Flexible and adaptable
- Resilience
- Technical literacy
- Ability to multitask
- Fast learner

### Digital DNA

Digital DNA is an organisation based in Belfast that strives to support the growth of projects, companies, and start-ups in the digital sector. It runs multiple events that bring together digitally-minded individuals, such as Digital DNA Upstart, a pitch competition for digital start-ups.

### ALT NI

ALT NI is Northern Ireland's Association for Learning Technology members group. The group supports its members' activities and runs events and social activities to promote collaboration and networking.
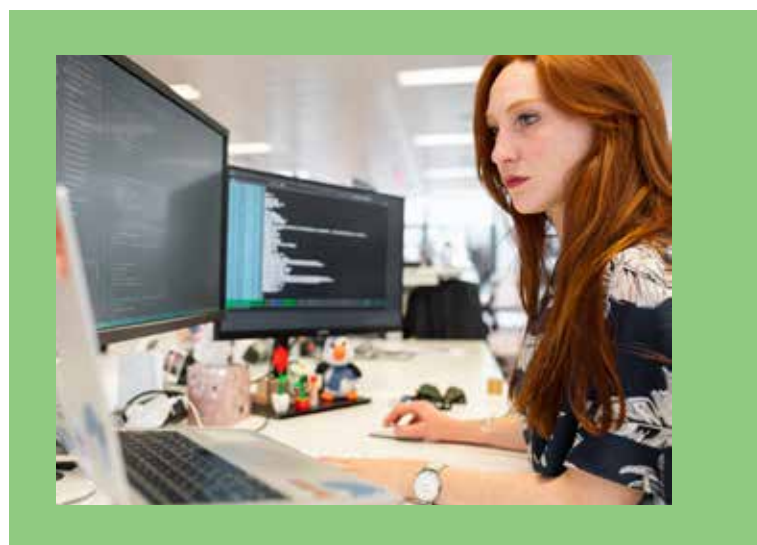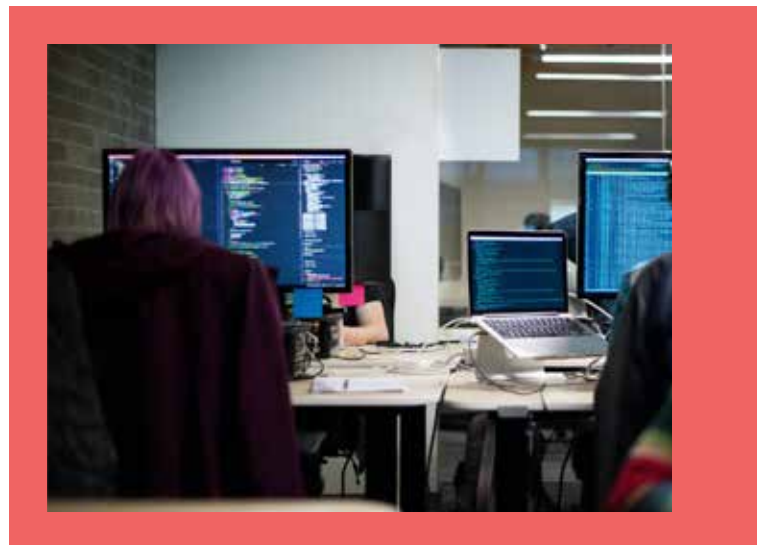
### NI Game Dev Network

The NI Game Dev Network is a community for game developers, or anyone involved in the video game development process, in Northern Ireland. It hosts multiple different resources and helpful links, as well as keeping game developers up-to-date on the latest events and opportunities.



### The Software Alliance

The voice of the software industry in Northern Ireland, this group exists to lobby government and support strategy and policy development to ensure that Northern Ireland becomes the world's leading region for innovative software businesses.

### Bring I.T. On

Bring I.T. On helps to address the skills shortages within the Northern Irish IT sector. It aims to highlight the many opportunities available within this sector to the future workforce, and encourages young people to seek a career within IT and software.



For further information, click the link highlighted in **blue**

## Further Information

If a career in the IT & Software sector sounds interesting to you, you can find out more at:

**TechIreland    Tech Nation    CoderDojo**

For further information, click the Company Logos or the links highlighted in **blue**