Python Developer

Are you a Python Developer looking to use your skills to help mission-driven organisations make lasting impact?

We're building an organisation that works well for the people in it, delivers for clients, and contributes something useful to the wider world. Our work sits where data, policy and social impact meet.

Key information

Salary: £47,922 + profit share per year (full-time equivalent, pro-rated for part-time working)

This is a flat pay structure across all employees of the coop. Members may also decide to distribute a portion of company profits between all staff at the end of the financial year.

Working pattern:

- Full-time as 37.5 hours per week or
- Part-time as 30 hours per week

Location: Remote, UK-wide with occasional national travel to meet with colleagues in-person

We are committed to the safety and well being of our members and employees and offer a range of support for employees, to ensure that work travel complements your life situation. Travel expenses are covered by Open Data Services.

Benefits:

- 8% pension contribution
- co-working space budget
- £1,000 + 5 days annual training budget
- health cash plan
- group life insurance
- generous parental leave
- a health and wellbeing service that includes GP consultations and counselling
- cycle-to-work scheme
- 33 Days Holiday allowance - inclusive of bank holidays

We welcome applications for part-time working and particularly welcome applications from people who are underrepresented in the tech sector, including women and people of colour.

Deadline for applications: 12th April

About Open Data Services

Open Data Services Co-operative (ODS) was founded in 2015 to help mission-driven organisations design and deliver data initiatives that create lasting impact.

We're building an organisation that works well for the people in it, delivers for clients, and contributes something useful to the wider world. Our work sits where data, policy and social impact meet. We help our partners build data infrastructure and tools that are usable, robust and designed to last.

We're a worker co-operative, owned and governed by our staff. We use an equal pay model, including a profit share. Our team of 22 people work across data architecture, software engineering, analysis, strategy, operations and communications. We work remotely by design, with practices that support thoughtful collaboration across roles, disciplines and time zones.

In practice, that means you'll have opportunities to contribute to decisions about how the co-op runs – including areas that sit behind the scenes in many organisations, like finance, strategy, staff well-being, technology and ethics. You don't need to be a specialist in those areas, but you'll be able to take part, learn, and support people who are.

If you like work that is purposeful, technically thorough , and connected to practical outcomes, you'll likely feel at home here. People tend to do well here when they are comfortable working in ambiguity, focused on practical outcomes and motivated by public interest work.

You don't need previous experience in a co-op, but you do need to be interested in working in this way.

The role

As a software developer joining our team you will:

- Develop and maintain useful and reliable Python-based back-end systems
- Build and support web-based tools and data infrastructure used in purpose-driven data initiatives
- Work with complex datasets and shared data standards
- Build and improve data systems including pipelines, validation processes, quality checks and tools that help people publish, use and maintain data well
- Work closely with colleagues across engineering, analysis and directly with partners and clients

Over the past decade, we've helped more than 50 organisations design and build data initiatives that support better decisions. To give you an idea of the kind of projects you'll get to work on, here are some examples of our impact.

We've helped:

- [improve how development and humanitarian resources are tracked](#)
- [understand the sustainability of infrastructure projects](#)
- [build standards that climate and disaster risk data easier to find](#)
- [map high-speed internet networks to close connectivity gaps](#)
- [build data infrastructure that makes grantmaking more informed and effective](#)

Skills, knowledge and experience

We recognise there are many paths to becoming a software developer. We're more interested in demonstrable skills and experience than formal qualifications.

We often work in specialised areas, and we'll support you to learn the domain, build new skills, and apply your existing experience in context.

Essential

- Experience of developing maintainable software in Python

- Experience of back-end web development (most of our projects use a combination of Django, DRF/FastAPI, and PostgreSQL)

- Experience of HTML, CSS and JS for front-end web development

- Experience of developing software and systems with a focus on robustness and quality through test-driven development, shift left testing, or other emphasis on automated unit/integration testing, including use of standard tools and frameworks (e.g., pytest, Selenium).

- Use of Git for version control and collaborative development

- You understand the value of clear and thoughtful written and spoken communication and have experience offering this to others.

- You're interested in working in a flat organisation, where people contribute proactively, share responsibility and work collaboratively towards a shared purpose

We don't expect candidates to match every point listed here. If you meet most of the essential skills and experience, and this role feels like a good fit, we'd encourage you to apply.

Desirable

- Experience developing data pipelines and/or code and systems that manipulate complex data in common data formats, such as JSON, XML and CSV.

- Experience in UI/UX and accessible front-end web development, or a desire to develop skills in this area.

- Experience of cloud/remote systems administration

- Experience of CI/CD and/or software deployment, e.g., Saltstack, OpenTofu

- Experience communicating with clients and/or other stakeholders

- Knowledge of the open data movement and community and/or understanding of open source software and content licensing

The application process

When you apply you'll be taken through to an application form and asked:

- for your contact information, right to work status (you must have the right to live and work in the UK) and any practical needs or adjustments to support the recruitment process
- to upload a copy of your CV
- to answer the following questions to assess your suitability for the position. You may wish to prepare your answers elsewhere before pasting them into the application form.

1. You are building a Django web application that needs to authenticate users to a SaaS identity service using an open and well-documented protocol.

   Drawing on your own experience, explain the issues and human factors in selecting a suitable Python package, and/or writing custom code for authentication.

   How might your answer change if this were a package for currency conversions? [up to 500 words]

2. A frontend that allows users to explore a large dataset must allow downloading a bundle of CSV files, selected by the user, from related tables in a Postresql database, which can optionally be filtered by some common fields.

   The largest tables have millions of rows if no filtering is done, but commonly will be much smaller if the user applies filtering, and the system must be implemented on one, relatively modest, server.

   Describe what issues you would take into consideration and the approach you might take to implementing the parts of a backend to handle this functionality, linking this to your previous experience. [up to 500 words]

3. You need to build a Python-based system that ingests a diverse range of document types from multiple sources, processes them according to document type, and makes them available for searching and querying.

   The number of documents will be moderate (tens of thousands), but they need to be ingested multiple times daily. The client is an NGO with very high compliance requirements, so auditing and traceability of the entire pipeline are vital.

   Describe the approach you might take to design and build such a system, using real examples from your own experience where appropriate. [up to 500 words]

4. Open Data Services Cooperative is a small (22 employees) organisation, with a relatively flat structure, where most employees are involved in running the business, beyond what is in their job title.

   We work with a wide range of non-profit organisations across the globe, often with open data standards but more generally in the field of "data for the public good".

   Our work contributes to a wide range of sectors, from tracking international aid or charity grants to the sharing of data on corporate social responsibility or climate risks.

   Please tell us both why you want to join our organisation and what excites you about the work we do? What particular skills, experience, or perspective can you bring to our team? [up to 500 words]

The deadline to apply is: 12th April

The recruitment process for this role is being managed by Radiate Hiring Limited on behalf of the Open Data Services.

Applications should be submitted via the application form linked in this advert. Radiate Hiring will manage the application process in accordance with their privacy policy.

Shortlisted candidates will receive communication around next steps from Open Data Services.

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact Radiate Hiring at applications@radiatehiring.com.

A note on using AI to assist your application:

We recognise that AI tools are increasingly used in the workplace. Whilst you may use AI to help you with your application, it is important to ensure your answers truly reflect your own experience and work. If shortlisted, you should be prepared to discuss and expand on your responses during the interview.

Bear in mind that reviewers read many applications and AI-generated responses can often sound generic, which may make it harder for your application to stand out.

What happens after you apply?

Once you apply, your application will be reviewed and scored against the criteria set out in this job description. After the closing date, we will be in touch to confirm whether your application has been shortlisted or not.

If you are shortlisted for interview then you will be invited to a face to face interview either in:

- London on 21st April or
- Manchester on 23rd April

Travel expenses can be reimbursed for face to face interviews.

We want the process to be clear and useful, both for us and for you. We'll share details of each stage in advance, including what to expect and how to prepare. We aim to make this process a genuine two-way conversation, so you can get a good sense of whether ODS is the right fit for you, too.