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C A S E S T U D Y

Case Study

THE DATA LAB CEO RECRUITMENT

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About The Data Lab

Established in 2014, *The Data Lab* is Scotland's Innovation Centre for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence, hosted by The University of Edinburgh and supported by the Scottish Government via the Scottish Funding Council. This pioneering organisation lies at the forefront of Scotland's digital innovation ecosystem, using data and AI to tackle societal challenges, drive economic productivity, and promote sustainability.

The Data Lab's mission is profound and inspiring — to empower a thriving economy and equitable society through the responsible and productive use of data and AI. With a legacy that includes supporting more than 1,000 studentships and delivering over 600 multi-sector projects, *The Data Lab* continues to evolve as a key enabler of the future data talent pipeline and a catalyst for impactful collaboration.

The Challenge

Recognised as one of the most high-profile leadership roles across Scotland's technology sector, finding the right candidate for *The Data Lab's* CEO position presented a highly complex yet compelling challenge. The ideal individual needed to bring a fusion of visionary leadership, technical understanding, and public presence to advance

Scotland's position as a global hub for data-driven innovation. This was not merely about filling an executive role; it was about identifying a leader capable of shaping Scotland's digital future and creating meaningful change through data and AI.

Following a competitive tender process, *Eden Scott* was selected as the Executive Search partner to collaborate with *The Data Lab* in their search for this critical leadership appointment. Armed with over 20 years of experience within Scotland's tech sector, *Eden Scott* embraced the opportunity to support an organisation so deeply aligned with a mission of societal impact.

The Process

To ensure a successful outcome, *Eden Scott* deployed a meticulously tailored executive recruitment strategy led by Peter Dunn, Associate Director (Tech & Digital), and Aimee Ryder, Senior Resourcing Consultant. The process commenced with an in-depth discovery session with Les Bayne, the Chair of *The Data Lab*, to gain clarity on the specific requirements, cultural dynamics, and strategic ambitions surrounding the role. This step was pivotal in aligning our approach with the organisation's needs and the broader impact the role would have on Scotland's digital and AI agenda.

Building upon this foundation, the team implemented a multi-layered candidate search strategy that combined targeted market research, network outreach, and rigorous assessment methodologies. Leveraging our extensive and well-established network within Scotland's technology ecosystem, we conducted an exhaustive mapping exercise to identify candidates with the capability and vision to deliver on *The Data Lab's* mission.

Our process also included the development of a comprehensive marketing campaign to elevate the profile of the role across multiple channels. This involved the creation of visually engaging digital assets, a detailed job description, and a highly focused email campaign designed to attract top-tier talent.

These efforts ensured we reached a diverse and carefully curated pool of candidates willing to contribute to Scotland's position as a leading digital nation.

Throughout this period, *Eden Scott* maintained regular communication with *The Data Lab*, its stakeholders, and the candidates, ensuring transparency and alignment at every stage of the process.

The Outcome

Following a robust and collaborative recruitment process, *The Data Lab* successfully appointed their new permanent CEO.

The chosen individual demonstrated not only technical expertise and forward-thinking leadership but also the inspirational qualities and commitment required to drive the organisation's ambitious strategic agenda.

Les Bayne, Chair at *The Data Lab*, reflected on the partnership, stating, "Peter and the *Eden Scott* team were valuable partners throughout the process of selecting our permanent CEO. Not only did they take the time to gain a deep understanding of our requirements and those of our key stakeholders, but they also provided key support and invaluable insights into all facets of the process."

Through this successful recruitment, *Eden Scott* was proud to play a part in ensuring *The Data Lab*'s continued growth, innovation, and impact.

The appointment represents not just a new chapter for *The Data Lab* but also a triumph for Scotland's digital future.



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Les Bayne, Chair at The Data Lab