

Job title: SOLUTION ARCHITECT(PL6)

Core information

Location: Bracknell head office ▾	Lines of business or shared capability area: Shared Capabilities ▾
Reports to: Enterprise Architect L5	
People Management: No ▾	
Assignment Management: Yes ▾	
Partnership Level: Partnership level 6 ▾	Manager's Partnership level: Partnership level 5 ▾
Number of direct reports: 0	Partnership level(s) of direct reports: None ▾

About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands - John Lewis and Waitrose, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business, though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique Purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world**. Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to **Happier People, Happier Business** and a **Happier World**.

Critical purpose of the role

As a Partner, your primary focus is collaborating to drive tangible value for both our customers and our business. Within the Technology & Change operating model, the Architecture function acts as our **strategic compass** - identifying the technical capabilities required for the Partnership to successfully operate, adapt, and transform.

In this role, working with the **L5 Enterprise Architect, Shared Platforms** you shall :

- **Design for Impact:** Architect and guide the delivery of sustainable, highly effective technology solutions that make a measurable difference to our business.
- **Wider Value Delivery:** Ensure that architectural decisions and designs deliver tangible value and impact that is felt **wider than your immediate team**, optimising system architecture for the broader enterprise.
- **Cultural Leadership:** Foster a culture of continuous feedback and actively promote modern engineering practices (e.g., Continuous Delivery, fast flow) within and beyond your primary assignment.
- **Collaborate for Success:** Work seamlessly alongside internal engineering colleagues and third-party SMEs to bridge the gap between architectural vision and pragmatic delivery.
- **AI-Driven Acceleration:** Proactively utilise and advocate for AI-assisted engineering tools to accelerate architectural delivery and improve the quality of technical output across the Partnership.

Ultimately, this role offers the platform to stretch your own professional potential while actively mentoring and developing the capabilities of your fellow Partners.

Primary Outcomes & Accountabilities

- **High-Impact Outcomes:** Use technical expertise to deliver not just completed assignments, but optimised system architectures that drive tangible business value.
- **System Design & Integrity:** Design and maintain accurate logical overviews of systems throughout the product lifecycle, ensuring capacity and capability demands are met.
- **Guardrail Alignment:** Deliver designs strictly aligned with Architectural Guardrails, Engineering principles, and the Partnership's Technology Reference Model.
- **Data & Debt Management:** Specify and record data flows/governance for each solution while proactively identifying and managing technical debt.
- **Relevant Skillset:** Maintain a current, relevant skill set to allow for quick adaptation to new technologies, languages, and frameworks.
- **Continuous Learning:** Always maintain a goal around personal development to ensure you remain relevant in a changing landscape.
- **Psychological Safety:** Challenge issues constructively to maintain a safe, productive environment characterised by clear communication and collaborative interactions.
- **Mentorship:** Actively mentor peers through complex challenges, raising the professional bar for the wider community.
- **Community Contribution:** Support the health of the A&E capability through regular, visible participation in community activities such as recruitment, knowledge sharing, or mentoring.
- **AI Adoption:** Demonstrate technical fluency in AI-assisted productivity, converting new knowledge into delivery improvements like increased velocity or automated workflows.
- **Administrative Transparency:** Ensure total transparency regarding time and availability through consistent compliance with timesheets, mandatory training, and meeting hygiene.

Measures of success

Success in this role is driven by the Partnership's Integrated Objectives and Strategic Priorities. Your performance will be evaluated on your ability to:

- **Strategic Impact:** Evidence of outcomes that deliver value wider than your immediate team.
- **Commercial Value:** An optimal ratio of Product Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) against the value delivered to customers.
- **Corporate Memory:** The absolute accuracy and completeness of architectural documentation and design decision records.
- **Operational Excellence:** Quantifiable improvements in the operational stability, performance, and reliability of the product ecosystem.
- **AI & Innovation:** Demonstrable evidence of supporting the adoption of Partnership-wide AI initiatives within your specialism.

Skills



- **Domain-Driven Design (DDD) & Systems Thinking:** Deep expertise in translating complex business strategies into technical capabilities. Ability to use DDD principles to draw clear boundaries, map business domains to system architectures, and design reusable integration patterns.
- **Commercial Acumen & FinOps:** Strong financial awareness to critically evaluate the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) against tangible customer value. Skill in validating the ROI on large tech investments and forecasting vendor demand accurately.
- **Agile Roadmapping & Capability Planning:** Proficiency in building and maintaining capability maturity roadmaps. The ability to expertly balance short-term MVP (test-and-learn) delivery with long-term, multi-year strategic enterprise goals.
- **Active Empathy & Relationship Building:** Deep empathy towards internal Partners as well as external SMEs. The ability to understand the human impact of architectural changes, fostering a culture of mutual respect and psychological safety when navigating complex integrations or shifting team workflows.
- **Influence & Collaborative Leadership:** High emotional intelligence and the ability to lead through influence rather than just authority. Skill in building consensus among diverse stakeholders, empowering engineering teams, and collaborating effectively with third-party SMEs.
- **Risk & Governance Management:** The ability to pragmatically define and enforce technology guardrails (spanning security, data, environments, and vendors) while actively managing technical debt and improving operational resilience.
- **Market Horizon Scanning:** A keen ability to leverage internal and external networks to stay ahead of rapid technology trends and market conditions, successfully feeding those insights back into the Partnership's strategic direction.
- **Team coaching & Recruitment:** Be known for coaching, developing, and supporting strong, capable, and empowered teams, including supporting recruitment when required.
- **Community Engagement:** Continuous promotion of Engineering and Architecture best practices through active community engagement.
- **Analytical & Adaptable:** Include the application of strong analytical and problem-solving skills to navigate fast-paced, ambiguous environments.
- **Resource Management:** Add the ability to maintain a comprehensive understanding of resource allocation and anticipate future needs.

Qualifications & Experience (where applicable)

Essential

- **Architectural Experience:** Proven track record of designing end-to-end solutions across a wide range of change approaches and IT lifecycles.
- **Modern & Legacy Integration Expertise:** A strong track record of designing "Cloud-first" architectures and successfully integrating modern SaaS/COTS products with large-scale, legacy systems (such as mainframes).
- **Domain-Driven Design (DDD) in Practice:** Demonstrable experience applying DDD to map complex business capabilities to technical architecture, ensuring clear domain boundaries and scalable, decoupled systems.
- **Stakeholder Influence:** High emotional intelligence with the ability to lead through influence and build consensus among diverse stakeholders.
- **Domain Expertise:** Deep understanding of how the Product/Platform Group or Business domain operates and marketplace best practices.
- **Commercial & FinOps Acumen:** Proven experience in managing the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for enterprise solutions, forecasting vendor demand, and guiding executive decisions on 'Buy vs. Build' investments.
- **Methodology Advocacy:** Experience adopting solution architecture methodologies that prove demonstrable improvements in value and reduced delivery risk.

- **Active Empathy:** Ability to understand the human impact of architectural changes, fostering a culture of mutual respect.

Desirable

- **Retail / Omnichannel Experience:** Previous experience working within the retail, e-commerce, or supply chain sectors, with a strong understanding of the specific customer journeys and market pressures in these domains.
- **Modern Delivery Advocacy:** Experience leading teams through transitions to modern engineering practices like Continuous Delivery or fast flow.
- **External Horizon Scanning:** Active participation in external technology networks to bring "outside-in" thinking back into the business.
- **Industry Certifications:** Relevant architectural or cloud certifications (e.g., TOGAF, AWS/GCP Certified Solutions Architect), though practical, lived experience in modern enterprise environments is highly preferred over purely theoretical knowledge.

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