

## **Department of Finance (NI)**

### **Innovation & Consultancy Services (ICS)**

## **PRIVACY NOTICE (June 2025)**

Innovation & Consultancy Services (ICS) is committed to protecting your privacy when you use our services. This privacy notice explains how ICS uses information about you and the ways in which we will safeguard your data.

### **ICS and what do we do?**

ICS is the NICS' internal consultancy service, situated within the Department of Finance, providing services across the NI Civil Service and wider NI Public Sector. Our team is comprised of a multi-disciplinary team of skilled consultants, with experience of working together with departments and public bodies to deliver high-quality and professional products and services that add value for clients.

Our mission is: To support the public sector to deliver better outcomes for our people through independent advice, insights and service improvement.

Our approach covers three broad service areas:

- **Setting Direction:** we bring people and organisations together to work through challenging issues and reach consensus on the way forward.
- **Evaluation & Design:** we draw on a wide range of evidence and research to provide advice and insights that can improve and design strategies, policies, programmes, organisations, services and processes.
- **Strengthening Governance:** we help organisations comply with the highest standards of corporate governance and risk management.

Our work is delivered through client agreed projects, covering a wide range of operational, strategic, policy and corporate related matters. Client departments provide hard charge funding for services and agree to approaches, methodologies and information requirements, including any requests for personal or other information in order to deliver on Project Terms of Reference.

## **What information we may need**

ICS may be the data controller and/or the data processor of any personal data provided to us, depending on the source of the data. The information we may need to collect may include:

- personal details,
- locational information,
- family and social circumstances,
- financial details,
- employment and education details.

We may also need to collect project-related personal information and this will be agreed in advance with the client, be subject to a Data Protection Impact Assessment Screening Exercise and full assessment if personal information is to be requested, held or processed.

We do not collect more information than we need to fulfil our stated purposes and will not hold it for longer than is necessary.

## **Why we process personal information (Lawful basis)**

If we collect or process personal information it is strictly for the performance and completion of our public functions or task.

We collect personal information to enable us to deliver our services, to maintain our accounts and records, to support and manage Northern Ireland Civil Service staff.

We may also collect information with your prior consent when individuals voluntarily complete surveys or participate in consultations.

We will only collect and hold the minimum amount of personal data necessary in order to provide and manage our services.

## **Use of cookies**

Website usage information is collected using cookies. You can read more on the Department of Finance Cookies page [Cookies | Department of Finance](#).

## **How we may obtain personal data**

We may obtain personal information directly from you and from other sources, such as government departments.

We may also obtain your personal data from publicly accessible sources or from surveys or other forms of primary or secondary research related to specific consultancy projects including through recorded virtual media, following prior consent.

## Who your information may be shared with

In many circumstances, we will not disclose personal data without your consent. For personal data obtained during the course of delivering consultancy projects, the treatment and necessary sharing of personal data will be agreed with the Client and commitments provided to those who provide personal information on the use of the data, how long it will be retained for and who (if anyone) it would be shared with. This commitment will apply whether ICS acts as the Data Controller or agreement with the Client if they are the Data controller for the project. This is specific to each project. However, we may share your data with the following to meet our public function requirements, for fraud or crime prevention and detection purposes, to process benefits, or in your vital interests:

- central government,
- local government,
- courts, tribunals and parties to litigation,
- police forces,
- emergency responders.

Our [Departmental guidance on data sharing](#) provides further information on the factors we shall consider when deciding whether information should be disclosed to other parties.

## How we may use information about you

Any personal information we process will only be used for the purposes stated or if necessary to fulfil legal or regulatory requirements.

This may include:

Personal data to fulfil recruitment requirements, process expense reimbursement payments and to respond to individuals on their specific queries.

All the personal data we use is processed within the European Economic Area (EEA). Sometimes it may be necessary to transfer personal information outside the EEA. Where this is required, information may be transferred to countries or territories around the world. Any transfers made will be in full compliance with all aspects of data protection legislation.

## How long we keep your personal data

We keep personal information about you only for as long as is necessary to fulfil the purpose and in line with the [DoF Retention and Disposal Schedule](#), after which time it will be destroyed securely.

## Your rights

Under data protection legislation, you have rights as an individual which you can exercise in relation to the information we hold about you. SPAR tries to be as open as possible in terms of giving you access to your personal data. You can find out if we hold any information by making a subject access request. If we do hold information about you, we will:

- Give you a description of it;
- Tell you why we are holding it;
- Tell you who it could be disclosed to; and
- Let you have a copy of the information in an intelligible form.

To make a request for any personal information we may hold, or to raise an objection about the processing we carry out, you should put the request in writing and email it to [DataProtectionOfficer@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@finance-ni.gov.uk).

If, at any point, you believe the information we process on you is incorrect, you can ask to have this information corrected.

If you wish to raise a complaint about how we have handled your data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer (contact details below) who will investigate the matter.

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you can complain to the Information Commissioner at:

[casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

or:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

## Changes to this Privacy Notice

We keep our privacy notice under regular review. This privacy notice was last updated in May 2025.

## How to contact us

If you want to request information about this privacy notice or our data protection policy, you can email us at [DataProtectionOfficer@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@finance-ni.gov.uk) or write to:

### **Data Protection Officer**

Information Management and Assurance Branch  
2nd Floor, Craigantlet Buildings Stoney Road  
Belfast  
County Antrim  
BT4 3SX