



DIGITAL STRATEGY 2026-29

1. Introduction

OSCR's mission is to regulate Scottish charities in a proportionate and targeted way that promotes trust and confidence, ensures accountability, and strengthens the sector's ability to deliver public benefit.

This Digital Strategy sets out how OSCR will strengthen its digital capability, modernise its regulatory services, support staff to work effectively, and align our work with the wider Scottish Government digital and public service reform agenda.

This new strategy is set within the context of significant advances in available technology over the past three years, and in particular modern workflow automation, AI, reusable government components, and the development of person centred service design across the public sector in Scotland.



2. Our digital vision for 2029

By 2029, OSCR will deliver smart, flexible and user-centred digital services that enhance our regulatory decision making and allow charities and the public to interact with us simply, securely and efficiently. This work will be built on and around clear, well-structured data, which is critical to enabling longer-term capability.

We will:

1. Deliver regulatory services that are customer focussed, responsive, intuitive and transparent
2. Automate routine regulatory decision making to support faster outcomes for applicants and charities
3. Provide staff with modern tools, training and data insights
4. Ensure our systems remain secure, resilient and trustworthy
5. Work collaboratively with partners across Scotland to share solutions, data and expertise

This vision aligns with the Scottish Government's Public Service Reform agenda, and its ambition for smarter, fairer, and more efficient public services.

3. Strategic context

3.1 Progress to date

Over the course of OSCR's previous Digital Strategy, we have delivered a range of improvements. We have:

- Developed and implemented a trustee database and the publication of all charity accounts
- Increased the connectivity between our digital systems
- Migrated all systems to the cloud

These changes have improved the customer experience for charities and individuals who use our services, while also increasing productivity and improving efficiency for staff. Our digital security is also in line with best practice in the public sector.

3.2 Where OSCR is now

OSCR's 2026–29 Corporate Strategy sets out four strategic themes for the organisation over the next three years:

1. Driving compliance through proportionate and effective Regulation
2. Supporting the development of a resilient, effective and trusted charity sector
3. Continuing to drive efficiency as a public body
4. Supporting our people

Our digital services are a key enabling tool to support delivery in each of these areas.

OSCR has made strong progress in digitising our core regulatory processes, and in the automation of internal processes using existing platforms.

Looking ahead we want to focus on capability-building. To do this we will develop systems that work well today but still have the necessary flexibility which will allow us to meet tomorrow's challenges without the need for expensive

updates. Maximising the capacity of our technology to use the data we hold should enable us to improve the services we deliver to customers, operate even more efficiently as a public body and regulator whilst also minimising the requirement for significant digital investment.

3.3 Scotland's Public Service Reform landscape

The Scottish Government's approach to public service reform emphasises person centred, preventative and locally delivered services, supported by appropriate use of digital tools, data and AI.

The Government's refreshed Digital Strategy for Scotland and accompanying delivery plan emphasise:

- Reusable digital components (single sign in, payments, notifications)
- Better use of data and ethical AI
- Workforce capability and leadership
- Collaborative digital programmes across public bodies

OSCR's 2026–29 Digital Strategy seeks to align our regulatory services with these themes and to contribute to this national programme.

OSCR's evolving role, new legislative responsibilities, and rising user expectations require a strategic, capability driven approach to digital development, particularly in light of our predicted resource availability over the next three years.

4. Strategic pillars

Our vision is built on six strategic pillars. *Table: The Six Pillars of OSCR's Digital Strategy (2026–2029)*

Pillar	Description
1. Building digital capability	A move to flexible systems that can change more easily as needs change. This includes tools that can be adapted in small parts; tools staff can update without specialist coding; systems which work well together, and parts we can reuse in other services.
2. Automation and ethical use of AI	Using automation for routine regulatory work to support staff decisions, and using AI in a way that is open, fair and can be checked, to improve the speed, consistency and quality of decisions.
3. Alignment with SG & Public Service Reform	Making sure OSCR's services follow Scottish Government design standards, use shared tools where possible, and link into wider public sector digital work.
4. Customer-centred digital services	Services built around what charities need, with clearer information, simpler steps, better guidance and more tailored support.
5. Strengthening our people and culture	Helping all OSCR staff build their digital skills and confidence through training and by encouraging a culture of ongoing improvement.
6. Security, trust and resilience	Keeping systems secure and reliable, protecting them from cyber threats, and building public trust through safe and open services.

4.1 Pillar One: Building digital capability

OSCR will prioritise investment in systems and services with broad capability.

For example:

- Simple tools staff can use to build and change workflows without coding
- Communication tools that can be adapted for different stages of a user's journey
- Systems that connect easily with other systems and can be reused for other work
- Flexible digital tools that can change as OSCR's work changes

This will result in systems which will be easier to extend, easier to integrate, and more resilient to change over time.

Working this way will ensure:

1. Faster deployment of new features and improvements
2. Stronger alignment with the Scottish Government's reusable components agenda

4.2 Pillar Two: Automation and ethical use of AI

We will explore opportunities to expand our use of automation and the responsible use of AI to increase efficiency and improve the customer experience.

We will ensure all AI and algorithmic tools meet public sector standards for ethics, transparency, testability, data protection and fairness.

Increased automation and use of AI, in particular within our low-risk, high volume work, will ensure:

1. Faster, more consistent regulatory decisions
2. More staff time redirected to complex, specialist work
3. Improved experience for charities, with clearer and quicker interactions, leading to higher levels of regulatory compliance

4.3 Pillar Three: Alignment with Scottish Government & Public Service Reform

OSCR will move to align with Scottish Government Service Design Standards, taking advantage of reusable components, and public service reform programmes when the opportunity arises.

Greater alignment with the Scottish Government's digital strategy will deliver:

1. A more consistent public sector experience for users
2. Reduced costs through reuse of shared components, e.g. the Scottish Government's ScotPayments provides a free to use payments platform for public sector organisations
3. Stronger collaboration between OSCR and wider public sector partners

4.4 Pillar Four: Customer-centred digital services

OSCR will design services around the needs of charity users, not our internal organisational structures.

This way of working will deliver:

1. Higher levels of customer satisfaction from charities, trustees and charity users
2. More accessible and intuitive online services
3. Earlier identification and prevention of compliance issues by making it easier to collect good quality data from charities and trustees

4.5 Pillar Five: Strengthening our people and culture

OSCR will work to develop a confident, capable and digitally skilled workforce.

We will:

- Provide regular training on OSCR's core digital tools
- Build staff confidence in using automation, data dashboards and AI tools
- Increase digital leadership capability across the organisation
- Support a culture of continuous improvement, partly by the establishment of customer journey groups

Investment in improving the digital skills of our people will deliver:

1. More efficient, productive ways of working
2. Better use of available tools
3. Improved staff confidence, morale and capability

4.6 Pillar Six: Security, trust and resilience

OSCR will maintain trust by ensuring its digital systems are secure, compliant and resilient.

We will:

1. Continually maintain and enhance our cyber security as risks evolve
2. Continually work to improve OSCR's cyber security in a proportionate manner, in line with best practice
3. Work with external parties to consider how we might improve incident response planning

This approach will deliver:

1. Greater protection of the personal and organisational data held by OSCR
2. Reduced security risk
3. Improved public and stakeholder confidence

6. Measuring success

We will monitor and report our progress in delivering this strategy through OSCR's Business Planning system and in our Annual Report and Accounts.

7. Conclusion

This Digital Strategy reflects OSCR's ambition to reduce risk, and become a flexible, proactive and modern regulator that maximises the benefits of digital tools, automation and data to enhance how we operate and carry out our regulatory work.

It positions OSCR to support Scotland's wider public service reform agenda and to deliver more efficient, accessible and person-centred services for charities and the public.

Our strategy will be reviewed annually and progress monitored by the OSCR Board.

