



# Work At Rowden





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# Foreword by Rob Harper

Founder and CEO

We're building the next-generation UK headquartered engineering powerhouse, providing critical technology that strengthens national security and resilience.



The UK still builds things that matter, and it remains one of the best places in the world to build them. We are here to build an engineering powerhouse, and rather than getting distracted by pessimistic noise, we are focused on the long-term work of patiently, consistently building something that endures.

The underlying conditions for that ambition are far stronger than they are often given credit for. The UK continues to produce genuinely world-class technical talent through its universities and apprenticeship pathways, and those talent pathways fuelled the conviction that led to the founding of Rowden.

I've also seen - first hand - the chasm between the money that is spent in critical industries and what is delivered to end users, and I started the company with a clear intention to be part of a new generation of UK engineering businesses - those that are willing to take on difficult, high-stakes problems in critical infrastructure, defence, national security, and emergency services, and turn them into real, usable capability that reaches the people who depend on it.

Over time, many incumbent technology and engineering organisations lost sight of the customer. They deprioritised customer service and increasingly avoided the hardest problems, particularly where those problems required bespoke, complex solutions. At the same time, the rise of software-as-a-service created a strong (financially motivated) pull toward cleaner, more standardised, desk-based use cases, leaving behind the users whose needs were messier, more demanding, but ultimately more critical.

We can't solve it all, and our focus is on operating at the edge, where networking is unreliable and constraints are tight. Whether in a military context or within critical national infrastructure such as water or energy systems, the future technology landscape will be defined by complex, heterogeneous fleets of devices that must work together coherently in challenging environments. Our role is to take that complexity and turn it into information systems that are deployable, effective, and trusted.

Choosing to join a company like this will shape both the trajectory of your career and the reality of your day-to-day work in a very direct way; you will find yourself closer to the problems that matter, closer to the people affected by them, and operating at a pace and level of ownership that larger organisations rarely sustain for long.

It is not for everyone, but if reading this creates a sense of energy rather than hesitation, then you are likely the right type of person. The work itself is demanding and will stretch you, but the rate of learning, the level of responsibility, and the sense of impact tend to be disproportionate in return. There is also no fixed profile for what good looks like here; we do not anchor on conventional academic backgrounds or linear career paths, and domain expertise on its own is not a reliable predictor of success.

"This isn't life in the fast lane, it's life in the oncoming traffic."

...and it's awesome.

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Rowden are an excellent example of how we can champion our homegrown industry and ensure the UK is at the leading edge of innovation in NATO. With government backing, Rowden are delivering pioneering technology for our frontline forces at pace - driving economic growth and creating skilled jobs in the area.”

**Rt Hon John Healey  
MP, Secretary of  
State for Defence**



# How We Build

Jake Reynolds, VP Product



My background is in building and scaling complex commercial products, where success depends on disciplined engineering, clear decision-making, and a realistic understanding of how systems behave once they leave controlled environments. That perspective shapes how I approach my role at Rowden.

The work we do here is defined by the conditions our systems operate in. They are expected to function at the edge, under constrained and unreliable network conditions, and to remain usable and dependable when circumstances are not ideal. Designing for those conditions forces decisions to be grounded in reality.

Across the business, whether through complex programme delivery for government customers, product design and manufacture, or applied research, what connects our work is a shared set of core engineering principles that genuinely motivate us. We stay focused on what matters for national resilience and for the people who rely on these systems in practice, and they are central to how we differentiate.

Ease of use is one of those principles. Complexity does not disappear; it either lands on the user or returns later as operational friction. So we focus on design that hides complexity. You can see this in how we built Mimic, which delivers RF deception capability at pace with a dramatically reduced training

burden, using a user interface inspired by familiar commercial apps rather than specialist military software.

Modularity is another. Requirements and threats change faster than systems can be replaced. Designing hardware and software to evolve without wholesale redesign underpins how we operate across the full technology stack. It is reflected in our mission systems engineering work, where we integrate commercial off-the-shelf components and build open designs that give customers options to evolve capability over time.

System availability is non-negotiable. We design for challenging network conditions from the outset, including periods of deliberate or unavoidable disconnection. That thinking runs from the incident response systems we are building for Scottish Fire and Rescue through to product lines like Dovetail, designed to enable edge devices to be provisioned and managed at scale in disconnected environments.

Together, these principles define how we build and how we grow. They set the standard for our work and shape the kind of engineering organisation we are deliberately creating.

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I've led Rowden's Applied Research work since joining in 2019, focused on Machine Learning and Radio Frequency technologies. After years working in this space, we see the same pattern across national security: strong advances in models and techniques, but real uncertainty about what can be assured, integrated, and relied on once systems are deployed. That gap is where our work sits, and it's the problem we care most about solving.”

**Sarah Nash,  
Applied Research Lead**



# Values

At Rowden, our values are not slogans or cultural statements. They are the standards we use to make decisions every day, about how we operate as a business, how we treat each other, and how we approach our work.

If we cannot meet these standards, the risk to outcomes and to people becomes too high. We hold ourselves to these standards and expect people joining Rowden to be comfortable doing the same.

For anyone considering joining Rowden, these values are one of the best ways to understand how the company really works.

Our focus is on the end user.

Pace matters.

Our diverse skills and backgrounds make us better.

We are radically honest.

We are pragmatists.

We improve continuously.

# Our focus is on the end user.



We exist to deliver the best possible outcomes for the users of our systems. At Rowden, customer service and user experience are central to how people approach their work and the standards they hold themselves to.

That focus is what motivates people here. It shows up in how we work day to day, from how we listen to users to how we respond when something is not working as it should. We aim to build systems that are intuitive, dependable, and fit for real-world use, so technology supports people rather than getting in the way. We will never lose sight of why we do the work we do.

# Pace matters.



We work in environments shaped by rapid technological change, where the ability to execute at pace is a real advantage. In government and other mission-critical settings, progress is often slowed by long planning cycles, layered assurance, and delayed decisions. We take pride in doing things differently.

Pace, for us, is not about speed for its own sake. It is about advancing technology with purpose and control. We prioritise early, end-to-end delivery to surface real constraints quickly and learn from them, while applying the rigour required to build systems that others rely on in complex, high-risk environments. Decisions are made deliberately, revisited when the

evidence changes, and progressed without unnecessary delay.

This approach is a differentiator for the business, and it matters even more as we grow. Work is structured so people have the autonomy to move things forward, with the backing to slow down when accuracy, safety, or assurance demand it. Knowing when to accelerate and when to be precise is a core expectation in every role, and a defining part of how we operate as we scale.

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Fire officers are asked to process a vast amount of information in a risk critical environment. Through technology, and through partnership with Rowden, we hope to deliver both a format, and a technology - hardware and software - that allows our crews to make operational decisions safely and effectively. We're really excited about this partnership.”

**Gary Mackay, Head of Operations, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**



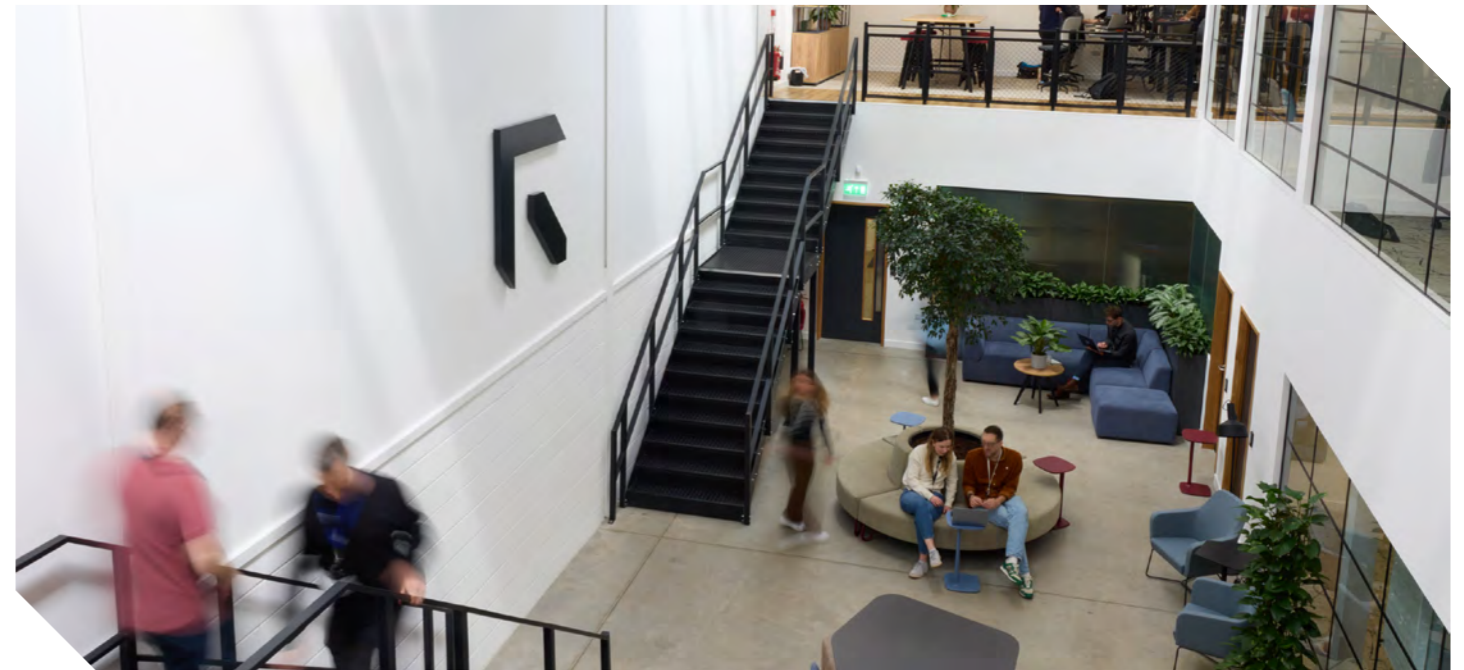
# Our diverse skills and backgrounds make us better.

Our team prides itself on being inclusive and multidisciplinary.

At Rowden, teams are made up of people who have worked in government, served in the military, built products in commercial tech, come from academic research, or brought experience industrial sectors where reliability, scale, and performance matter. That mix is intentional and central to how we work.

Working closely with government and mission-critical organisations carries a risk of familiar thinking taking hold. It can become easy to repeat established approaches or mirror existing processes without question. Bringing together people from different sectors, disciplines, and career paths helps counter that. It creates space to challenge assumptions, test ideas, and approach long-standing problems in new ways.

That is why we treat diversity of skills, experience, and perspective as a practical advantage, and a core part of how we build teams and work together.





# We are radically honest.

Saying what we mean, even when it is uncomfortable, is a core part of how we work at Rowden.

Internally, that means people are encouraged to speak up when something is not working, to challenge assumptions, and to be honest about outcomes, including when something could have been better. Decisions are not always made by consensus, but they are made with input, and once a direction is set, teams commit to delivering it.

The same approach shapes how we work with customers. Honesty here is not about criticism or point-scoring. It is about helping customers make informed decisions and move forward with clarity and confidence.

For people joining the company, this creates an environment where your judgement is respected, your voice matters, and difficult conversations are part of doing good work rather than something to be avoided.

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Mimic, Rowden's sensing product line, began as a sketch on a whiteboard and was taken through design, production, and deployment in under a year to meet an urgent operational need. It's now deployed in multiple environments, with new variants launched already. It's a good example of how quickly decisions turn into working systems here.”

**George Thomas,  
Design Manager**



# We are pragmatists.

We provide realistic, focused solutions that get to the point.

That pragmatism shapes how we design and build our systems. We focus on strong design and practical engineering, with an emphasis on hiding complexity from users rather than passing it on to them. The goal is technology that works in context and can be relied on in the most challenging environments.

This way of thinking carries through to how the business operates. We care about outcomes rather than intent, and about progress that can be sustained over time. For the people who work here, this means taking responsibility for closing the gap between ideas and delivery. We value those who can make sound judgements and take practical steps to move work forward, even when the path is not straightforward.





# We improve continuously.

We are relentless in our drive to make things better.

The work we do, and the environments we operate in, demand that we regularly reflect on how things are done and raise the standard over time. That means acting, learning, and refining in cycles. We do not assume the first approach is the best, and we are willing to revisit decisions, processes, and ways of working when they no longer serve the outcome. Progress comes from deliberate iteration, not waiting for perfect conditions.

This applies across the business. Individually, it is about developing skills and judgement. As teams, it is about improving how we collaborate and make decisions. As a company, it means evolving how we operate so we can continue to deliver increasingly complex and consequential work for UK and international partners.



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The Rowden team have been nothing but a refreshing change from the others. You have delivered on your words and have been an advocate for the end user. Not many can say that.”

**SO2, British Army**

# How We Hire

Ellie Steers, Chief Operating Officer



I joined Rowden when we were a team of 13 - not quite at the very beginning, but early enough to help shape how we think about people and talent. I worked closely with Rob and the founding leadership team to develop our values and architect the culture. Hiring has been a core part of that, and something I care deeply about as we build the right foundation for the business.

Every person who joins Rowden has an impact on how the company works and what it becomes. Given our ambition and the nature of our work, we are deliberate about who we bring into the team. Finding the right people is a constant priority and something we invest significant collective energy in.

We don't look for a single type of person. Different backgrounds and experiences are valuable, and not everyone needs to have worked in our sector before. What does matter is that you resonate with our values and are motivated by the work we do. That alignment creates cohesion and helps us move quickly.

Working at Rowden will not always be easy. We take on difficult problems and see them through. It is hard work and can be pressurising, even with the support of the team. Often, that means rolling up your sleeves and putting in sustained effort. While we find it rewarding, we recognise that this environment does not suit everyone.

But that challenge is also the opportunity. You get to work on problems that matter, with people who take pride in their craft, and in an environment that is genuinely values-led. You see the impact of your work here, you grow fast, and you are trusted to contribute meaningfully from early on.

Our selection process reflects that. It is thorough and aimed at building a deep understanding of your approach and capabilities. We want to understand how you think and operate, and we want you to understand what it is like to be part of the team. Come prepared with questions and use the process to assess whether this is the right place for you.

You should expect to be assessed on skills relevant to your role. This might include coding, planning a project, or working through options and trade-offs. We will also spend time understanding what motivates you and how you approach problems. We aim to test people properly, not catch them out.

This is a demanding place to work, but it is also one where you can do some of the most meaningful work of your career, alongside people who take standards seriously and care about what they are building. That combination is what motivates people here. If that resonates, we would like to hear from you.

# Our Hiring Process

We design our hiring process to move at pace and to respect people's time. The structure is standardised so candidates know what to expect and can prepare with confidence, while allowing some flexibility by role.

Our aim is to give you a fair opportunity to show how you think, how you work, and what you would bring to the team. Throughout the process, we focus on practical judgement, relevant skills, and alignment with the kind of work we do. We share guidance in advance so you understand what we value and how each stage works.

We also commit to clear, timely communication. After each stage, we aim to come back to you quickly, typically within a week, with transparent next steps. If anything is unclear at any point, we encourage you to ask.

## **Stage 1** **Meet the Talent Team**

A first conversation with our Talent team, usually around 20 minutes, to understand your interest in the role, share context on Rowden, and explore whether there's a strong mutual fit.

## **Stage 2** **Role & Experience Conversation**

A 45 minute video call with the hiring lead, providing an opportunity to discuss your background, while also giving you space to learn more about the role, the team, and the work we do.

## **Stage 3** **Applied Problem Session**

You'll be given a practical task in advance, based on a real problem drawn from the work we do at Rowden. You'll then spend around two hours in person with members of the team talking through your approach, as well as a deeper dive into your experience, ways of working, and our company culture.



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Rowden's commitment to continuous improvement and seeking simplicity in complexity has had a significant impact upon the way the Forward Land Forces Brigade conducts warfare.”

**Staff Officer,  
British Army**

# Interview Guidance

Our interview process is designed to feel like a working conversation. It helps us understand how you think and how you approach problems, and it gives you a chance to see whether Rowden feels like the right place for you.

Prepare by reflecting on concrete examples from your experience. We will ask about work you are proud of, across your academic, professional, or personal life, as well as situations that did not go to plan. Be ready to explain your role, the context you were operating in, the decisions you made, and the impact those decisions had. We are interested in what you owned, the trade-offs you faced, and what you learned.



Be open about what motivates you. We want to understand what you care about, what holds your attention, and why the work you choose to do matters to you.

Engage with the problem. When we explore technical or analytical questions together, think out loud and ask clarifying questions. That is how work happens at Rowden. We value people who are comfortable testing assumptions, involving others, and working through complexity collaboratively.

Come as you are. We are relaxed in how we dress and how we engage through the process. Wear what you are comfortable in and be yourself.

The interview is a two-way decision. Our aim is to be open and honest about what working at Rowden is like. If you decide it is not the right fit, that is completely fine. If it is, you will find a team that cares about the work, supports one another, and takes pride in working here.



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I joined Rowden when it was a 70-person company, drawn by the clarity of its ambition and the opportunity to contribute early. I started in a Business Operations role, and, as the company has scaled, my role has evolved. Today, as Chief of Staff, I work closely with the leadership team to execute our business strategy and support teams across the organisation in implementing change.

**Fenella Mott,  
Chief of Staff**

# Career Development

Our growth reflects sustained demand for the systems we build, and it creates real opportunity for people who want to grow their careers alongside the business.

That opportunity does not come from hierarchy or time served. Progress at Rowden comes from learning quickly, taking on harder problems, and steadily expanding the scope and importance of what you can deliver. As the company scales, opportunities open up to step into senior technical roles, leadership positions, and responsibility across new products, geographic regions, and business units.

Careers here are built through trust and delivery. Most development happens day to day, working closely with a multidisciplinary team on real customer and end-user challenges. People are given responsibility early, supported to make good decisions, and expected to learn from the outcomes.

That day-to-day growth is supported by regular feedback and mentorship, twice-yearly career reviews, and access to technical forums and external learning networks. We care about people improving over time, deepening their judgement, and building confidence through experience rather than following a prescribed path.



People who have built their careers at Rowden have gone on to found their own companies, step into senior roles in government and academia, or move into leadership positions across dual-use sectors. We see that as evidence of the standards people are held to here and the breadth of experience they develop.



 ROWDEN

Build what matters.

