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FAQ

FOR .NET CANDIDATES

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PROJECT

1. Which technologies, frameworks, and tools are used in the project I would be potentially assigned to?

In our project, we are using C# as the main programming language. We are migrating to .NET 6 this year, 2022, from the existing .NET Framework. All of our applications are web applications and in some of them we are using Angular 12+ Web API, along with ASP.NET MVC web applications.

Our system contains many services, both REST (web API) and SOAP (WCF). If you are into developing web services, it will definitely match your expectation 😉

For database operations, we are mainly using native T-SQL (procedures, functions, etc.) with ADO.NET in C#.

2. What is the current composition of the team that I would be a part of?

Our team is distributed between a few countries (the UK, Poland, and India), which makes the cooperation more interesting. We have colleagues with different cultural backgrounds and our everyday language is English.

Considering the UK region, we have business analytics and architects (one architect is in the Polish team, therefore if you want to pursue this path, we are open to it).

Both our developers and testers are based in Poland and the UK. However, the majority of developers are within the Polish team. A few developers are also situated in India. We also have a DevOps team in Poland and the UK region.

3. Will I be exposed to communication with the customer?

Aspire Systems Poland is a software house, so our customers are companies for which we are developing software. In this specific project, it's an insurance company based in the UK.

We are working with them on a daily basis, which also means that you will have an opportunity to explore customer communication for this project.

However, we do not engage in communication with users of these applications (people who are buying insurance). This particular communication is handled only by the UK team.

4. Do you use CI/CD in this project?

Yes, as we have a DevOps team, this uses TeamCity for automated builds and Octopus for automated deployments. We are deploying our applications once every month to production and currently it's being done automatically.

5. Which development processes are used in the project?

We are working in SCRUM methodology; therefore, we have Analysis, Refinement, Planning, Implementation, Testing and Maintenance phases done in iterations. The sprint lasts 4 weeks and it includes 3 weeks of development phase including functional testing and 1 week of regression phase. At the end of each sprint we also have retrospective meetings.

6. What is the test unit coverage in the project?

We do an increased number of unit tests to both existing functionalities and to the new features that are implemented. Unlike the earlier times, we do not measure test coverage now and unit tests have taken its place.

7. Do you have automation tests in the project and if so, which framework is used to build them?

We have a dedicated team of 10 automation testers responsible for this part of development. We have implemented a custom framework, which uses Selenium, and is combined with CI/CD set up to carry out all the tests. All the test scripts are implemented in C#.

8. What is the architecture of the project?

We are having a distributed architecture based on services and web portals. The system uses eventing and message queue mechanisms in order to be transactional. Our platform consists of on-prem solutions as well as Azure.

9. Do you use microservices?

Our system consists of dozens of services, but these are not strict microservice architecture. Most of the systems are not autonomous and they are related to each other. These are mostly Microsoft WCF services.

10. How do you check the quality of the code?

We have a dedicated Metrics portal, which contains a number of KPIs calculated from the data we store in Azure DevOps. We also use a code review process, where each developer should send a code review before applying the code change. This helps us to keep the quality of the code.

11. What does the code review process look like?

The code review process is described in a document, which is shared with all developers. The code review request is sent to a few team members, who are responsible for reviewing the code change as soon as possible. The developer as well as the reviewers will have to follow the code review guidelines from the document.

12. What does the process of committing code look like?

The code needs to be related to a particular work item. Before that, the code shall be reviewed and if there are no remarks after the review or all of them are fixed, the code can be checked into the source control.

13. Which language is used to communicate with other team members and with the customer?

All the communication is in English, as the project is for a British client and we also have non-Polish team members in the team. We use the Polish language at our office in Gdańsk.

14. Which code naming conventions are used in the project?

We are certain predefined project standards, which includes mostly:

> Microsoft coding standards
> T-SQL coding standards
> Angular coding standards

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1. Is the recruitment process completely virtual?

It's totally up to you. For folks from Tricity, we recommend visiting our office and meeting on-site. For all others, it is up to them to decide whether they want to travel to Tricity to meet us or they prefer to have an online interview.

2. When can I expect the response from Aspire post the interview process?

We usually try to respond on the next working day after the interview; however, at times it might take up to 2 working days in total.

3. What does the Technical Interview look like?

Our technical interview consists of two parts:

> Discussion with one of our Technical Recruiters where certain technical questions will be asked. They will vary from simple ones to more complex ones. This helps us assess your current level of knowledge and the potential assignment of your designation (level) in our company.

> Live Coding. You will be given a task to write a piece of code based on the instructions provided. You get 60 minutes to write it and it will be verified by our Technical Recruiter who will assess the quality of your code in real-time.

4. It is mentioned that the last meeting is with one of the leaders. What type of questions can I expect at that meeting?

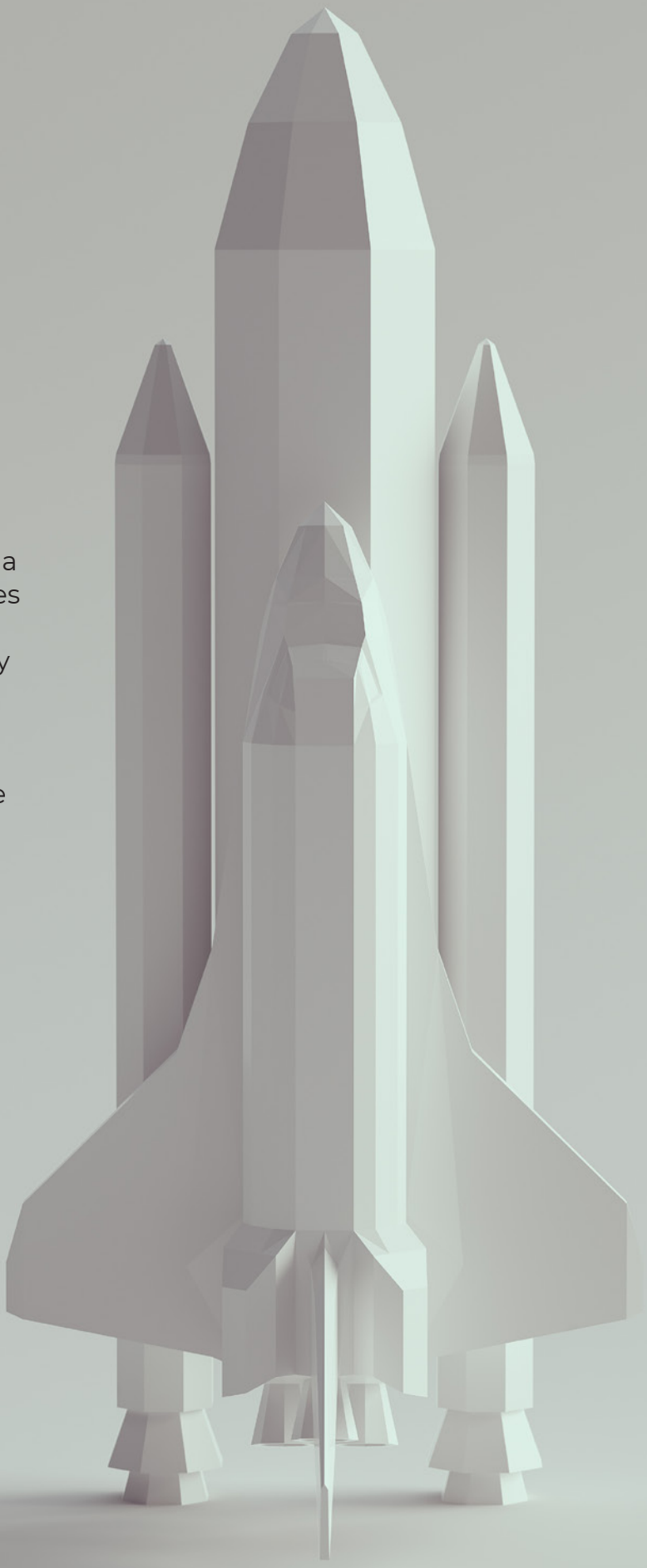
The last round of meeting is not a typical interview, but rather a get-to-know kind of meeting to understand whether Aspire can meet your expectations and if we feel there is a good alignment with our culture and way of working. Therefore you can expect questions like "how would you perceive an ideal working day", "what type of work activities do you like doing most" or "what are your hobbies". It's a short, to-the-point meeting which we always try to conduct in a very friendly atmosphere, so there is no need to stress 😊

5. Do you use the addressing terms like ‘Mr.’ and ‘Mrs.’ during the interviews?

No, we do not use this form of addressing. Our communication with the candidates is very informal, the same as with our employees. We do not believe in traditional ways of conducting interviews where the formal bureaucratic atmosphere is introduced, making our candidates feel stressed. We believe that friendly, open meetings have more value and make it easier to see whether there is a mutual match between our candidates and Aspire. We treat these meetings as a perfect opportunity to answer any of the questions that our candidates might have, tell them more about us and our company, and create some initial bond with them. Open dialogue is what we believe in.

6. I am in between jobs; could I immediately start working for Aspire?

As we have a very thorough onboarding, which lasts for 2-3 working days and includes a series of meetings, we usually try to group our newbies and let them all start at the beginning of the month. We also have a newbie’s welcome cake for all the new members when you are introduced to our people and this usually happens at the beginning of a month.



BENEFITS

1. Do I get access to all the benefits mentioned in your job ads?

Yes, you get access to all the benefits and it does not matter whether you have joined Aspire as an intern or an architect. What's worth noting though is that the Conference Budget (the exact budget) you get per year depends on your designation (band).

2. How does the Mind Spa benefit work?

Mind Spa takes care of the mental health and well-being of our people. This is recommended not only for our colleagues who might have any particular challenges, but for everybody who feels it might be worthwhile meeting with a psychologist. Addressing mental health has become as important as physical health as it contributes to living a happy life.

At Aspire, you can consult with our psychologist and these sessions are kept confidential. This means that no one from Aspire will even know that you have participated in them. You can have such sessions on a regular basis as there is no upper limit per person, especially taking into account that it is confidential, it would not be tracked.

3. How does the Professional Development benefit work?

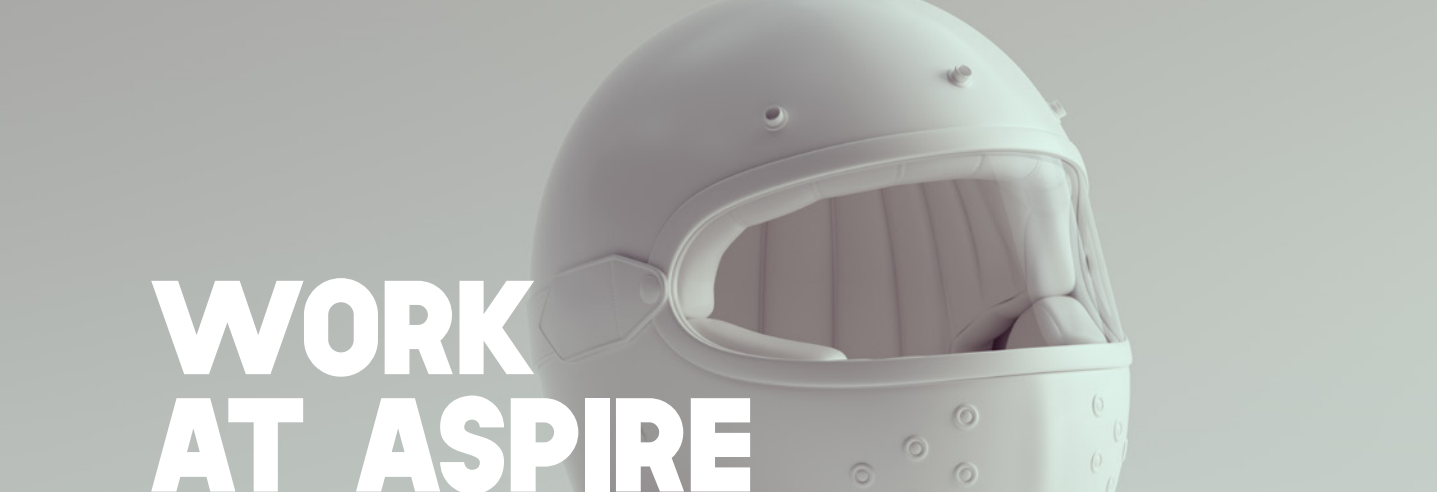
Each Aspirian can avail of 1500 PLN per year for their professional development and growth. This can be used for any exams or courses that award you with a certification. In some particular cases, this budget can be extended, with due approval from your leader.

4. How does the Private Health Insurance benefit work?

Each Aspirian gets access to the basic tier of Saltus private health insurance. Saltus is an insurer that enables you to choose from a variety of different medical facilities (like LuxMed, SwissMed, EVI-Med, etc.). Therefore, your private health insurance is not related only to one particular facility but to several of them. No matter where you are in Poland you should always be able to find the right facility, although such facilities can be found mostly in large cities.

5. How do online English classes benefit work?

Each Aspirian can participate in 2 English classes per week. To start with, you will have to do an English test which will qualify you for a particular group. For the advanced groups, we have native English teachers. Each class lasts for 1 hour and is held during working days. As this is a part of your professional development, these hours are not calculated into the normal working hours.



WORK AT ASPIRE

1. What is the working model at Aspire in Poland?

For all our colleagues who live in Tricity, we recommend working from our office premises at least 2 days per week. This is though not a strict requirement; it is up to a person to decide based on the team and the project.

For any colleagues outside of Tricity, the default collaboration model is fully remote. There are periodical events like Team Hangouts, Christmas and summer parties which we will invite you to join from our office in Gdansk. This is still voluntary, but we feel these events help in developing team bonding and socialization.

2. What dress code is required at Aspire?

There is no official dress code that we follow. Aspirians have the freedom to wear what is comfortable while making sure that it is appropriate for an office space.

3. What are the working hours at Aspire?

We work 8 hours a day. You can start at any time from 7:30 to 9:30 AM. Be aware that we are not a company that checks each hour of your working day. We trust our colleagues and so far we haven't experienced any serious situations where this trust would have been undermined.

4. Will I have to work overtime?

No, there is no concept of forced overtime at Aspire. In case of very rare scenarios where such need might arise, we will ask you if you could be available 1 or 2 hours on Friday evening to support us with the production deployment. This is though not a requirement; we understand that our colleagues have their own private lives and other plans, so it is completely up to them to decide.

5. Aspire seems to be a big company so probably there is a lot of hierarchy in the structure. Is this true?

That's by no means true. First of all our office in Gdansk is a small unit (about 150 colleagues) where any complex hierarchical structure would be more of an obstacle than help. Furthermore, we do believe that a flat structure is something that makes it easier to collaborate and make mutual trust between all the colleagues, leaders, and the management.

Here's our current Delivery structure:

Every developer/tester joining Aspire has their Team Leader, who will be responsible for checking their level of work satisfaction, caring for their growth, and supporting them on a daily basis. This is not a formal role at Aspire, this is just a person who is there to help you and guide you especially during the first months of your journey at Aspire.

Apart from a Team Leader, there is also a concept of a Manager, who is responsible for managing our projects, high-level communication with the customer and the like. Within the projects, we also have the concept of a Scrum Master for removing any obstacles that the team might encounter on a daily basis and making sure that the right Agile/Scrum mindset is present within the Development Team.

6. Many companies boast that they use Agile/Scrum whereas in reality they use just a small part of it or they use it very artificially. How does this look like at Aspire?

Words fail to explain how deeply rooted Agile/Scrum is in our way of working. We have implemented Agile/Scrum at Aspire long before it was even popular. The first projects we did using the Agile/Scrum method were already more than 15 years ago. For us, Agile/Scrum is not just a method of developing software. It's our mindset and the mindset of our teams. It's about partnership and the collaboration with our customers who are not just our customers, but our partners. It's about the team where we understand the power of the phrase "In unity there is strength".

FINANCIALS/ WORKING CONDITIONS

1. How many paid holiday days will I have on a B2B contract?

Depending on the designation you would be qualified for either 20 or 25 days. 25 holidays are assigned for designations starting from Technical Leader.

2. Are there any particular circumstances when Aspire offers a labor contract or B2B?

No, it doesn't matter for us whether you choose a labour contract or B2B.

3. How is the B2B salary calculated versus the labor contract salary?

Aspire wants to stick to the same total employment cost. This means that no matter which type of contract you choose, our total employment cost would be the same. What's worth noting is that our total employment cost is the same as the net B2B value you will use while creating your monthly invoice towards Aspire.

4. How often will my salary be evaluated?

Your salary will be evaluated once per year at the end of the year. This is though not applicable to the ones who joined Aspire in the last months of a particular year.

5. Does Aspire accept B2B contractors with IPBox?

Yes, it's not an issue for us.

6. Does Aspire accept B2B contractors who are not self-employed but have other legal entity (Spółka akcyjna, Spółka komandytowa, Spółka z o.o.)

Yes, we have separate contracts for different types of B2B collaboration.

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