



# SaaS isn't simple:

A guide to successful KYC/  
CLM SaaS implementation



# Contents

Foreword	3
How to use this guide	4
Introducing Generation 2 KYC/CLM	5
Preparing for Generation 2 KYC/CLM	6
1. Set yourself up for success	6
2. Plan for quick wins	6
3. Keep self-sustainability in mind	7
Transforming your KYC/CLM Operating Model	8
1. Technology architecture	9
2. Data and reporting	10
3. Policy mapping	11
4. Process review	11
5. People	13
What's next?	14
Let's talk	15

## Imagine you're planning to upgrade your KYC/CLM platform to a new cloud-based system.

The software you're considering is marketed as '90% ready' out of the box. The vendor promises a straightforward transition from your current setup. After a few weeks or months, your KYC/CLM operations will be more efficient, scalable, and automated.

But there's a catch. Even if the software is 90% ready, your organisation might not be.

KYC operations are extremely complex. Trying to fit even the most carefully tailored and customised platform into your unique operating environment is like forcing a square peg into a round hole. It can take much longer than you think, and you may not see the benefits you expect.

We have found that the only way to implement SaaS cloud-based KYC platforms successfully is to address both your operating model—data, workflows and processes, organisational structure, roles and responsibilities, policies, technology integrations—and the software together. This way, the new system can truly fit your organisation, and you can realise the benefits you're aiming for more fully, and more quickly.

This guide will help you start your implementation on the right foot—or put you on track if you're already underway.

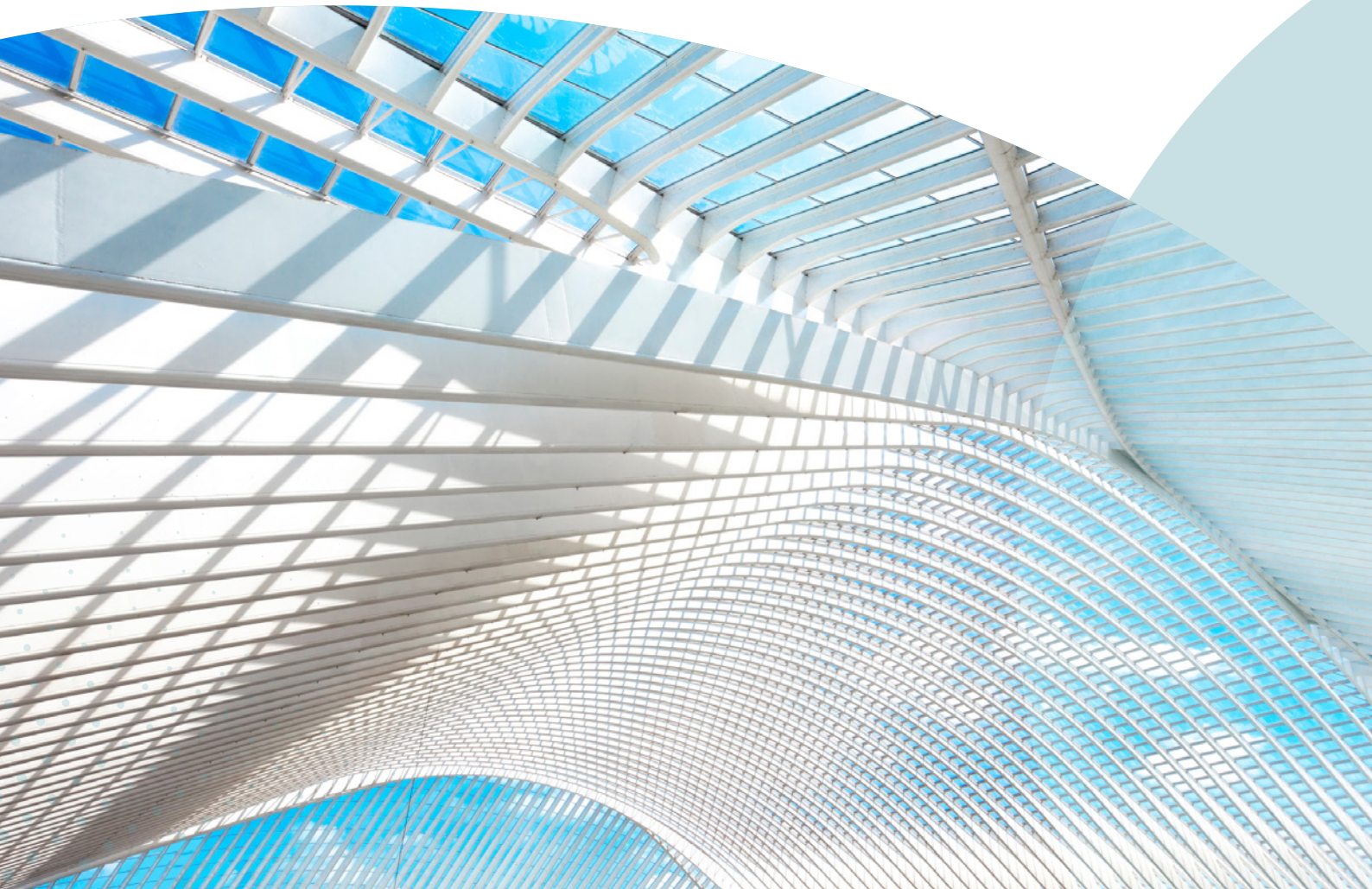
## How to use this guide

**The consultancy team at BeyondFS has extensive experience leading KYC/CLM transformation programmes within financial institutions.**

We've written this guide for professionals responsible for KYC/CLM operations, systems, or transformation initiatives. It can help you if you are:

- Deciding whether to move to a SaaS solution;
- Starting the vendor selection process;
- In mid-implementation or migrating from a previous solution;
- Struggling with a SaaS solution already in place; or
- Considering switching SaaS providers.

The guide outlines how to succeed with large-scale SaaS KYC/CLM transformations, covering the key workstreams involved. Our framework will help you design and execute a programme that ensures the effective selection, implementation, and rollout of a new KYC SaaS platform.



## Introducing Generation 2 KYC/CLM

Over the last decade, the Know Your Customer (KYC) and broader Client Lifecycle Management (CLM) operations of banks and other financial institutions have evolved beyond recognition in scale and complexity, largely in response to regulatory pressure.

The operational models that have arisen throughout this period are now struggling to scale as new regulations, new technologies and more demanding customer expectations emerge. To stay compliant, firms are having to add ever more people to manage broken processes, layering inefficiencies on inefficiencies.

At BeyondFS, we call this outdated approach Generation 1 KYC/CLM. It's costly and frustrating for both employees and customers—and it's unsustainable.

The good news is that we are now seeing a shift to what we call Generation 2 KYC/CLM.

This is a new, holistic approach that not only ensures compliance but also improves risk management, efficiency, and customer experience. It centres around configurable cloud-based SaaS solutions – but importantly, it also focuses on broader digital transformation and operational change.

### Implementing a SaaS KYC/CLM Model

#### Expectations Vs Reality

This slick looking SaaS platform is 90% ready to go, and they work with our competitors—this should make our lives easier without too much effort!

We want to get this new model implemented ASAP. Involving the rest of the organisation will just slow us down—they'll see how great this new way of working is when it's ready!

If this vendor works for our competitor, who operates in the same markets we operate in, there's no need to check if their solution complies with all our policy requirements!

A SaaS solution is more easily configurable and does not require technical resource to update the solution. It'll be so easy to make our changes quickly and easily!

When the SaaS platform comes into contact with your organisation's data, policies, processes and people, 90% of the implementation work still remains.

Without engaging with all stakeholders and end users before talking to vendors, you won't have a full understanding of all the requirements and integrations needed to make this new operating model work.

Every organisation has their own compliance needs, based on where their markets are and the products and services they offer. You need to check that any SaaS vendor can comply with all the policy requirements you have.

SaaS means that you can only configure the solution based on the available functionality—there is a single roadmap. Changes still require teams who understand the tool in huge depth and changes / releases must still be properly governed.

## Preparing for Generation 2 KYC/CLM

Preparing for Generation 2 KYC/CLM transformation needs careful planning and the right approach. To set yourself up for success, focus on strong leadership, internal collaboration, and a shared vision. Prioritise quick wins to build momentum and confidence early on, and design for long-term sustainability by developing in-house capabilities and empowering your team.

### 1. Set yourself up for success

- **Invest in change management:** Ensure that change management is an integral part of your programme, wrapping around every aspect of your transformation.
- **Appoint a senior leader:** Identify a senior leader with clear accountability for the programme. This person will act as your sponsor and champion, driving the programme forward.
- **Build internal partnerships:** Establish forums for collaboration across compliance, operations, technology, and business teams. When doing so, consider how you'll bridge technical and non-technical ways of working.
- **Create a shared vision:** Bring stakeholders together to develop a shared vision of success. This vision will guide decision-making and help align the organisation. This should start with vision statements but then be translated into a detailed target operating model which provides the 'north star' for the programme.
- **Build the right team and structure:** A critical success factor for the programme will be ensuring that you have an experienced, capable team in place. Design your programme structure carefully and ensure key roles are filled with people who have done this before. The earlier these roles are filled, the better.

### 2. Plan for quick wins

- **Focus on early value:** Identify and plan for quick wins early in the programme. These small, tangible achievements will help maintain momentum and build confidence across the organisation. For example, it is often possible to build journeys for a selected business area and / or client type quickly. Getting an initial population live on the platform early can help with buy-in, build momentum and generate key learnings across the whole programme team.
- **Celebrate successes:** Set up a communications channel to share progress and celebrate wins. Regular updates can motivate the team and help keep the programme on track.

Regular updates can motivate the team and help keep the programme on track

### 3. Keep self-sustainability in mind

- **Appoint a Product Owner (PO):** Assign a dedicated PO to oversee the SaaS solution's implementation. This role is crucial for ensuring the long-term success of the programme.
- **Build cross-departmental teams:** Involve stakeholders from across the organisation to specify requirements and work with the PO to tailor the software to your operational model. Importantly, remember to empower these stakeholders through ownership and appropriate decision-making authority.
- **Develop in-house capabilities:** Focus on enhancing your team's product management skills during the programme so that your organisation can adapt the SaaS platform as needs evolve.
- **Invest in training:** Implement a structured training programme with clear assessment criteria. On-site expert support during training can be invaluable for building confidence.

#### CASE STUDY SNAPSHOT

### Front-to-Back CLM for a Challenger Bank

**Challenge:** A leading challenger bank wanted 'world-class' onboarding and CLM capabilities to support its rapid growth and ensure regulatory compliance.

**Solution:** BeyondFS delivered front-to-back KYC/CLM transformation, integrating new digital onboarding processes and seamless data flows across the bank's systems.

**Results:** The implementation led to a 50% reduction in onboarding time and significantly improved compliance efficiency.

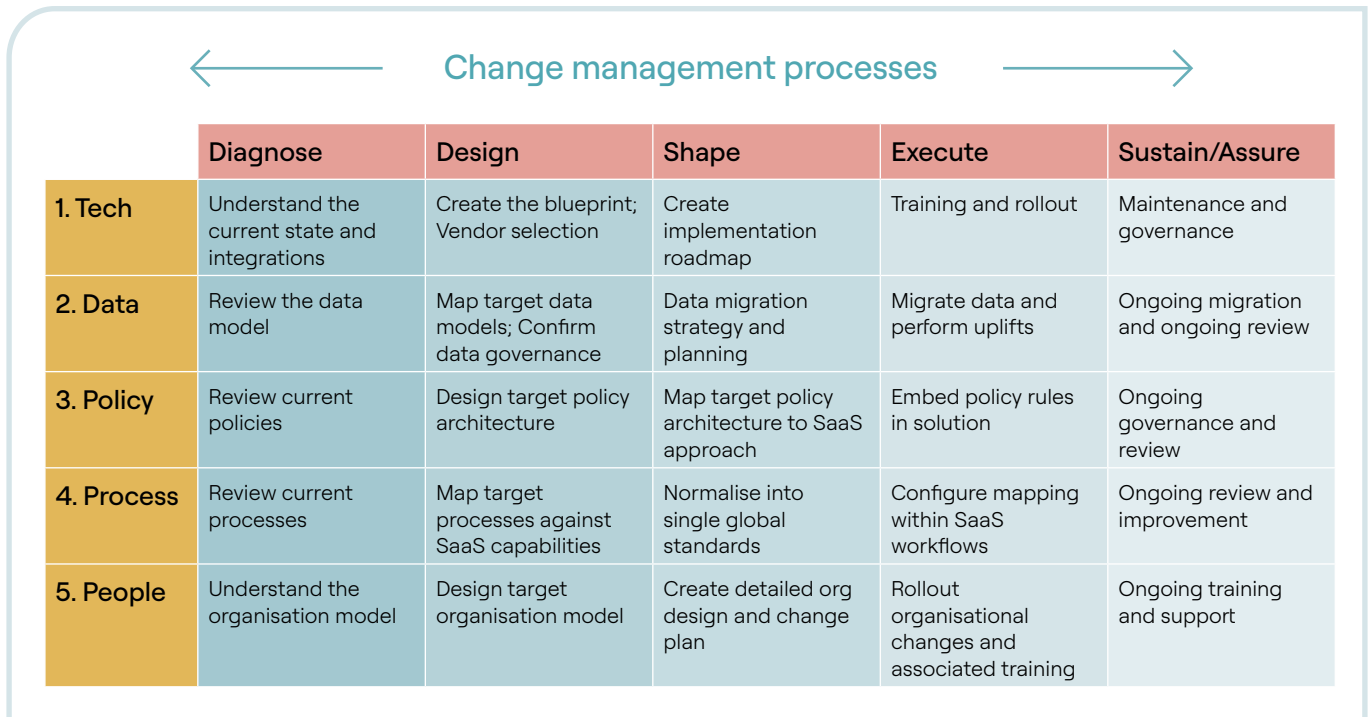
"BeyondFS brought structure, strategy, and drive in helping us to develop our onboarding platform and our KYC / AML processes. I look forward to future projects together."

**Chief Operating Officer, Challenger Bank**

## Transforming your KYC/CLM Operating Model

Embedding a new SaaS KYC/CLM solution will involve a much wider change to your organisation than you might first anticipate.

To be successful, you'll need to transform your KYC/CLM operating model: the bridge between your organisation's strategy, operational processes and policy rules, and decisions about technology, people and processes.



### Our end-to-end process

At BeyondFS we follow an end-to-end process when delivering any client programme: Diagnose, Design, Shape, Execute, and Sustain/Assure.

Wrapped around this process are our change management principles: start by envisaging success, plan for continued quick wins and keep self-sustainability in mind.

While the process workstreams are unique to every programme, the core elements of any operating model transformation programme are: Technology architecture and integrations, Data and reporting, Policies, Processes and People.



## 1. Technology architecture

To migrate to a SaaS KYC/CLM model you'll need to consider the implications for your technology architecture, including how you will integrate new software and data with your current systems.

Given that we're looking at a SaaS solution, any bespoke features will need to be delivered by the external provider. You should understand how working with a third-party provider in this way will impact your technology roadmap.

### Steps to successful vendor selection

When selecting a vendor for your SaaS KYC/CLM solution, it's critical to identify potential issues upfront and plan accordingly to avoid complications during implementation. Misaligned expectations or integration challenges between systems like CLM and CRM, or CLM and screening systems, can derail your programme if not addressed early on.

- 1. Lay the groundwork:** Ensure that migrating to a SaaS model aligns with your organisation's broader technology plans. Define a target operating model blueprint, drawn up from requirements across the organisation, and start building a business case.
- 2. Narrow down your options:** Begin by scanning the market, followed by initial assessments and demos. Develop a clear set of criteria and requirements to evaluate potential vendors.
- 3. Choose the right provider:** Evaluate vendors through a structured RFP process, focusing on critical functional and technical requirements. Bring in stakeholders from across teams, including end users, for evaluation.
- 4. Final due diligence:** Once a preferred supplier has been chosen, gather references and review the contract terms. Design two-way vendor governance so that decisions can be made efficiently and transparently as the implementation phase begins.

If your current focus is on vendor selection, reach out to us at BeyondFS. We use a rapid, proven vendor selection methodology plus a detailed knowledge of the solutions in the market, to help guide our clients through this process.

### Plan your integrations

When implemented, your SaaS KYC/CLM platform will be central to your client management ecosystem.

You will need data to flow from and to your new system, from sales and CRM software, external data providers such as Credit Ratings Agencies (CRAs), electronic identity verification (eID&V) solutions, document management systems and screening services. We recommend prioritising the integrations that will have the biggest impact on your compliance status, internal efficiency, and your customer experience.

## 2. Data and reporting

As you plan how to implement your new SaaS KYC/CLM platform you will need to align with global entity data models, understand your key reference data and manage data privacy risks. Only then will you be able to migrate data effectively from your legacy systems and integrate with data now originating from your new system.

The SaaS provider you're working with should be able to help you on this journey. However, the responsibility for getting your data models right and remaining compliant lies with you and your organisation.

Responsibility for getting your data models right and remaining compliant lies with you and your organisation

Start by understanding requirements for well-structured and well-governed data across the organisation. Make sure you know what foundational reference data exists, for example, customer types, product lists or sector codes.

It's important to establish clear data governance processes early on. Create a shared data dictionary, system mastery guidelines and change management principles. Without these, a lack of governance can lead to poor data integrity and consistency: a tough problem to solve later down the line.

### Real-time reporting

One enormous benefit of the SaaS model is that it should be feasible to get real-time reporting up and running without a long lead time.

If you don't have access to one already, choose an enterprise reporting tool that's easy to configure such as PowerBI or Tableau. Invest in upskilling the team so they can bridge the data between existing systems, SaaS platform, and your reporting tool: these are the kinds of skills you want to have in-house as your reporting needs grow.

Once accurate real-time reporting is in place, put your new reports to good use. Keep track of your programme's KPIs, building them into programme governance reviews, and reap the rewards of your good work.

### 3. Policy mapping

We've found that there's often a significant gap between the industry-standard policy frameworks offered by SaaS platforms and the specific policy requirements of financial institutions.

Your organisation might have regulatory policies that focus on different areas, such as AML and KYC, and that sit across different jurisdictions and business lines. This policy mix will likely be unique to your organisation, and subject to frequent changes.

Understanding the policy changes needed is one of the most underestimated yet crucial parts of any SaaS KYC/CLM migration programme.

#### Create a global baseline standard

To get on the front foot, start by mapping your organisation's policies and focus on the variables that are most impacted by KYC/CLM processes. From here you can define your target policy architecture, making sure it aligns with your organisation's broader regulatory and risk management frameworks.

Understanding the policy changes needed is one of the most underestimated yet crucial parts of any SaaS KYC/CLM migration programme

Next, review your target policy architecture with the SaaS provider's policy framework: where are the gaps? What's not aligned?

Combine your target policy architecture and gap analysis to write up your global baseline standard, making sure this new policy documentation works within the SaaS provider's policy model. You may then need to re-run this process, going through policies for different business lines or jurisdictions.

### 4. Process review

Most SaaS solutions come out-of-the-box with standard workflows and KYC/CLM processes baked in. However, core processes such as customer onboarding are rarely the same between different organisations. We've found that other processes, such as event-driven and periodic reviews, can vary within organisations too.

#### Reimagine your processes based on a truly digitised flow

Implementing a new KYC/CLM solution offers the opportunity to re-design processes in a more standardised and efficient way, driven by digitisation and automation. Understand current processes but seek to drive real efficiency through automation. Remember this is about transformation, not simply moving our current process into a new system.

## Understand your organisation's unique workflows

Start by digging out the KYC/CLM processes that are already in place, including customer onboarding, refresh and exit procedures. These will serve as a foundation for mapping existing processes against how processes might work in the new post-SaaS implementation world.

Map the identified processes against the SaaS platform's workflows and capabilities. From here it should be clear how processes might need to adapt to the new system.

## Establish global standards

As you review your KYC/CLM processes, look for opportunities to build them into global standards as much as possible. Establishing global standards for all your workflows will help you as you roll out changes and will establish more consistent practices across your organisation.

Tweaking workflows within the software to match your organisation's needs should improve efficiency and make training your team much quicker

Work with your SaaS provider to configure these global standards within your new software platform. Tweaking workflows within the software to match your organisation's needs should improve efficiency and make training your team much quicker.



## 5. People

At first glance, designing your organisational model around a SaaS platform is not radically different to designing it around an on-premises system. However, to make the most of your operating model transformation programme, it's likely that you'd want to build in new efficiencies through some level of centralisation.

Although well worth it long-term, transitioning to a centralised model can be challenging and time-consuming.

### Redesign procedures, roles and responsibilities

Shifting towards more digitised, automated processes will mean a significant change in the ways processes should be carried out. Procedures, as well as job roles and responsibilities, will change. The setup and structure of teams will likely also shift. Make the most of your review of internal processes to drive organisational design conversations.

### Create a mobilisation plan for a more centralised model

Create a new target organisational model, including who you need, the functional design and a location strategy. During the process, identify any risks or dependencies, such as jurisdictional data sharing requirements, that could impact your transition and document how you will manage them.

From here, develop a resourcing plan that outlines who you'll need during and after the transition to a SaaS KYC/CLM model. Investigate whether you'll be able to fill any gaps through internal recruitment or through managed services and draft a hiring plan for sign off.

### Design a training plan

Your mobilisation plan will also need to include training for your staff, not only on the new solution but also your new procedures and operating model.

Talk to your SaaS provider to learn about what training they can offer on the solution, and review your work across technology architecture, data, policies and processes to design a training programme that can cover what colleagues need to know that's specific to your organisation.

When the time comes to move to a more centralised model, create a phased transition plan so you can move across bit-by-bit. For example, centralise your governance functions first, then physical locations, so that the process is more manageable.

## What's next?

Embarking on a KYC/CLM transformation journey can be complex and challenging. If you're feeling daunted, focus on your next step.

### Are you deciding whether to move to SaaS?

To move forward, **conduct an impact assessment and develop your business case:**

Evaluate the costs and benefits a new SaaS platform would bring. Present to senior stakeholders, highlighting the opportunity to improve internal efficiencies, the customer experience and maintain best-in-class compliance.

### Are you starting the vendor selection process?

To move forward, **define your target operating model blueprint:**

Get clear on the technical and business requirements from across the organisation so that you can approach vendors with confidence.

### Are you in the middle of an implementation or migration?

To move forward, **assess whether you've covered all aspects of your new operating model:**

Review this guide to understand where there might be workstreams that were left out of the original programme scope but now need to be included. Make sure you have a clear strategy and execution plan in place for each part of the programme and the right people in key seats.

### Have you implemented a SaaS solution but are struggling to make it work for you?

To move forward, **review your technology architecture, integrations and data models:**

Read through this guide and make sure your operating model has been amended sufficiently to make the most of the new SaaS platform. Also consider the business-focused aspects of change management that might have been forgotten during your implementation phase.

### Do you want to switch SaaS providers?

To move forward, **conduct an impact assessment:**

Assess the costs and benefits of moving to a new SaaS provider, talking to colleagues across the business to understand current pain points. Review the contract terms with your current provider.

## Let's talk

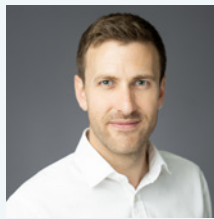
### If you need support with your KYC/CLM transformation, BeyondFS can help.

Our clients turn to us instead of the 'big 4' because of our deep expertise in financial crime and KYC/CLM transformation programmes. We bring in small, dedicated teams who integrate quickly and start delivering from day one.

We'll help you define your success, structure your programme, and keep you on track, ensuring you see early wins and realise the benefits of your technology and operating model transformations in full.

Contact us to speak with our KYC/CLM transformation experts:

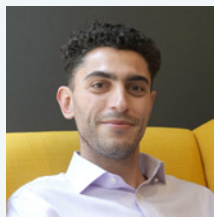
#### **Matt Neill, Partner at BeyondFS**



Matt is a highly experienced consultant specialised in helping clients to shape, manage and drive delivery of their critical KYC, CLM and Financial Crime transformation programmes, helping organisations to manage compliance and risk more effectively, to drive operational efficiency, and to improve service to their customers.

[matt.neill@beyondfs.co.uk](mailto:matt.neill@beyondfs.co.uk)

#### **Paul de Bono, Director at BeyondFS**



Paul has a track record on delivering high quality, tangible outcomes across the financial services sector, including banking, private equity and FinTech. He has led large scale KYC and CLM transformation programmes and has a detailed understanding of target operating model design in these domains.

[paul.debono@beyondfs.co.uk](mailto:paul.debono@beyondfs.co.uk)



---

## Contact

BeyondFS  
Dawson House, 5 Jewry St, London  
EC3N 2EX, United Kingdom

+44 (0)203 637 4117  
info@beyondfs.co.uk  
beyondfs.co.uk

