



Candidate Information Booklet

Please Read Carefully

Open competition for appointment as:

Head of Local Government Unit, Senior Specialist

Closing date: Tuesday, 5th March 2024 @ 1pm

Contact:

Conscia Limited

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About the IPA

The Organisation

Founded in 1957, the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is a leading provider of education, professional development and consultancy services for the public sector in Ireland. Its objective is to advance the understanding, standard and practice of public administration and public policy.

The IPA is a recognised college of the National University of Ireland. It provides third-level programmes, professional development courses, and training and advisory services in areas including Public Management, Local Government, Governance, Leadership, Human Resources and Finance.

To support its continued success the IPA is seeking to appoint a Head of Local Government Unit, Senior Specialist.

What we do

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is Ireland's only public service development agency focused exclusively on public sector development. It delivers its service through:

- Education and Professional Development: building people's capability to meet current and future challenges;
- Advisory and Consultancy: solving problems and helping plan, and shape the future;

We are proud of our distinct mission and role in the provision of Education, Training, Consultancy and other services for the wider public sector both in Ireland and abroad.

Our blend of experience, skills and knowledge of the public sector allows us to offer a wide range of bespoke services which meet our clients' needs precisely and effectively and whilst our services are delivered mainly to clients in the Irish public service, we have a strong reputation and demand for our services internationally also.

Find out more about the IPA at: www.ipa.ie.

Why consider a role in the IPA

If you are looking for a career where you can make a real difference, with the potential for enormous personal satisfaction, then we urge you to consider a role with the Institute of Public Administration.

We make a difference and we are proud of what we do. The Institute is involved in every part of the public service and our role is exciting and varied. If you're ready to join us, to be challenged, and to grow professionally, then consider a role with the Institute of Public Administration.

Our commitment to supporting our Staff

The Institute is committed to embracing opportunities for blended working, to build a dynamic, agile and responsive organisation while sustaining strong standards of performance and high levels of productivity.

A healthy work-life balance is important to us and we recognise this by offering a comprehensive range of work-life balance options and a wide variety of special leave options.

We provide access to the Cycle to Work Scheme and the Tax Saver Scheme and we have a staff wellbeing and employee assistance programme.

We are committed to providing ongoing learning and development opportunities so that you can develop to your full potential. Staff are actively encouraged to pursue further education opportunities.

Our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

As an equal opportunity employer, we are committed to implementing equal opportunities in all our employment policies and procedures.

The Institute of Public Administration values and welcomes diversity and is committed to creating a truly inclusive workplace. We aim to develop colleagues to enable them to make a full contribution to meeting the Institute's objectives, and to fulfil their own potential on merit.

We welcome and encourage job applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

About the role

Head of Local Government Unit, Senior Specialist

Grade: Grade 2

Reports to: Professional Development Director

Overview: The Head of the Local Government Unit is a senior specialist who plays a pivotal role in the development, management and delivery of Institute's professional development services for the local government sector. Through their leadership of the Local Government Unit, the appointee will be responsible for ensuring that the existing and future portfolio of professional development services contributes to enhancing the capabilities and expertise of personnel within the local government sector in Ireland. The Local Government Unit, and the Institute as a whole, play an important role in supporting the sector to deliver on its ambitions for its services to the public.

The role is central to the Institute's commitment to support the learning and development needs of our local government sector clients and thereby ensure that local government employees are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge to effectively serve the community and adhere to regulatory standards.

Reporting to the Director of Professional Development, the Head of Local Government Unit will be responsible for managing the Unit Team and Associate resources to deliver professional development courses, advisory and related services including conferences, seminars, fora and networks on behalf of the Institute's local government clients.

This role involves supporting the Director General and Director of Professional Development in the delivery of the Institute's strategy for professional development to meet the needs of the public service. The Head of Unit will collaborate with other Senior Specialists across the Professional Development Department, the Senior Public Service Department and OneLearning to ensure an holistic, coherent, relevant and evolving portfolio of services are available to our clients.

The Head of Unit will own and manage the operational relationship with Local Government Unit clients across the sector. The role includes designing, delivering, and evaluating professional development programmes that enhance the skills, knowledge, and effectiveness of local government staff in at all levels and in various capacities.

The key duties and responsibilities of the role are as follows:

Strategic Planning and implementation

- In conjunction with the Director of Professional Development, design the strategic plan for the Unit, to set the direction for the business over a multi-year horizon.
- Implement the strategic plan for the Unit, communicating the vision and objectives to the team and wider Institute, setting tangible objectives and deliverables for each team member.
- Monitor progress against plan, taking remedial action as required and identifying opportunities to increase revenue through development of new programmes and services, and expansion of existing programmes and services.
- Initiate and develop services to respond to the challenges and opportunities facing local government, particularly at senior levels.

- Stakeholder Engagement: Engage with clients to identify needs and learning and development and advisory solutions. Develop solutions that will meet client needs, promote the IPA brand, and deliver long-term value for the IPA.
- Work collaboratively with other Units and Departments across the Institute on the design and delivery of programmes and services.

Business Development

- Client Relationship Management and Business Development: Build and manage client relationships across the local government sector, along with relationships with key stakeholders.
- Develop responses to client requests, both from direct requests and in collaboration with the Marketing and Promotion Manager.
- Develop and maintain relevant contacts in Ireland and abroad.
- Professional Development Best Practices: Regularly research and integrate best practices into the Local Government Unit's portfolio of services. Stay updated with changes in policies, regulations, and technology affecting local government and contribute to the Institute's thought leadership. Keep abreast of emerging trends and proactively engage with the sector to build strong relationships with clients.
- Thought Leadership: Contribute to the ongoing development of the Institute's reputation for thought leadership in professional development, local government and relevant service domains through publications, speaking engagements and other events.

Training and delivery

- Curriculum Development: Lead the team on the design and develop professional development solutions that reflect the current trends and requirements in local government operations. Ensure that curriculum development reflects the ambitions of the Unit in delivering future-focused programmes for Local Government personnel to enable them to meet the challenges of their jobs, now and over the long term.
- Convene and deliver training and development programmes, seminars, conferences, fora (including both face-to-face and on-line delivery) and events, taking responsibility for the content and delivery of programmes in the Unit.
- Provide advisory and related services for the local government sector, particularly at senior levels.
- Manage the conference and event portfolio for the Unit with regular reviews to identify new opportunities to support the IPA's brand and strengthen relationships for further business in this area.
- Manage the quality review process and plan for the Unit, reviewing evaluation and feedback gathered from programmes. Co-ordinate the team to collect and analyse feedback from participants to continuously improve training quality. Manage the process of implementation of assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs.

Management

- Responsible for the line management of professional and administrative staff within the Unit including recruitment (in conjunction with the Director), training, motivating, and performance review for all staff. Overseeing all staffing matters including leave arrangements, cover for day-to-day and additional events, facilitating a positive team environment for staff. Ensure all staff in the Unit adhere to IPA policy and procedure.
- Management of Associate Lecturers including the engagement process, overseeing content and delivery of material by Associate Lecturers, performance evaluation and contract management.

- Unit Resource and Capacity Management: Plan and manage the capacity requirements of for the Unit based on annual budgets and business plans. Coach and guide staff assigned to programmes and projects to ensure that the services are delivered to a high standard.
- Financial Management: Assist the Director of Professional Development with the financial management of the Unit as required, specifically in relation to the preparation and review of annual plans and budgets. Monitor income spend against plan and highlight any areas of risk, providing recommendations to address these.
- Reporting and Documentation: Ensure that accurate records of training sessions, participant progress, and program evaluations are maintained in the Unit. Prepare reports for the Director and Executive Leadership Team on progress against plan, operational activities, issues and resolutions, new developments.

General

- Continuous Professional Development: Actively participate in professional development opportunities to enhance personal training skills and sector-specific knowledge. Develop and maintain a record of expertise in local government policy and practice.
- Participate as part of the extended senior management team in Institute-wide matters.
- Other Duties: Undertake such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Director General or Director of Professional Development. Deputise for the Director of Professional Development on a range of topics as required.

Essential Requirements

Character

Each candidate must demonstrate commitment to the following values of the IPA:

- Integrity;
- Client-Centred and Responsive;
- Openness and Accountability;
- Trust and Respect;
- Innovation and Learning;
- Research-Led;
- Practice-Led.

Health

Each candidate shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Person Specification - Essential Criteria in bold

Qualifications:

- **Master's level postgraduate degree (or equivalent) in Education, Training, Public Administration, Public Policy, Governance or a related field.**
- Additional professional qualifications in training and development are highly desirable.

Experience:

- **Seven to ten years' experience at the appropriate level and in a training, L&D or education role, preferably within the public sector**
- **Experience in curriculum development and delivery.**
- Experience of management of teams in a professional setting.
- Evidence of managing of projects in a complex multi-stakeholder environment.
- Experience in the Irish local government system

Knowledge:

- An understanding of the role and objectives of the Institute.
 - Familiarity with the latest trends in professional development within the public sector in general and local government in particular.
 - In-depth understanding of local government operations and challenges is desirable.
 - Proficient in using virtual delivery technologies such as Zoom and MS Teams.
 - Familiarity with e-learning platforms and tools such as Moodle, Sli.do or other Learning Management Systems.

Skills:

- Strong track record of service portfolio development and management in a learning and development environment.
- Ability to design professional development solutions to address complex client requirements.
- Ability to manage a diverse workload and competing demands.
- Excellent training and facilitation skills including presentation and communication skills.
- Excellent client relationship management skills.
- Strong organisational and planning abilities.
- Strong research, analytical and writing skills.
- Ability to analyse data and participant feedback to improve training effectiveness.
- Creative problem-solving skills and adaptability.
- Ability to facilitate effectively, to engage with large and small audiences, and to manage group dynamics.

Personal Attributes:

- Ability to lead a team, setting out vision, goals and tangible deliverables and fostering commitment to achievement of strategic objectives with a focus on performance and accountability.
- High level of integrity and professionalism.
- Passionate about public service and capability development.
- Approachable, with the ability to build rapport with a diverse range of participants and clients.
- Committed to lifelong learning and professional growth.
- Adaptable to diverse groups and learning environments.
- Willingness to travel within Ireland for training delivery.
- Fluent in English, with proficiency in Irish being an advantage.

Principal Conditions of Service

Remuneration

The salary scale for this position ranges from €76,028 to €109,089 (12 point scale including 2 long service increments) per annum pro rata.

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant or Public Servant.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current government policy.

Tenure

Permanent basis, or on a contract or secondment basis with a view to permanency.

Location

While the position is Dublin based, a considerable proportion of our work is delivered in client organisations throughout Ireland, and abroad on occasions. Members of the staff of the Institute may be required to attend meetings and other functions on occasions outside normal working hours.

Hours of Attendance

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time but will not amount to less than 35 hours per week. The successful candidate will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of their duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.

The Institute operates a formal Blended Working model based on service/business requirements.

Annual Leave

The Annual Leave allowance for this position is 30 days. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the Institute, is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Sick Leave

The rate of pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the Civil & Public Service sick leave circulars.

Confidentiality

All enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings relating to recruitment and selection are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone outside those directly involved in the recruitment process.

Freedom of Information

Candidates can expect that all enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014.

Safety & Welfare

The holder of the post shall co-operate with the terms of the Institute's Safety Statement. They shall familiarise themselves with the safety rules and procedures and adhere to same.

Training

It is a condition of employment that successful candidates will be required to participate in training programmes relevant to the skills necessary for the performance of the duties attaching to the post.

Eligibility to Compete

Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

- A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

Superannuation Contribution

Membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme is compulsory for all employees except where there is membership of pre-existing public service superannuation scheme. Details will be provided to the appointee prior to appointment.

For new entrants under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme, effective from 1st January 2013, superannuation contributions are as follows: 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration and 3% of pensionable remuneration. Pension and retirement lump sum will be based on career-average pensionable remuneration; pensions will be co-ordinated with the State Pension Contributory.

Additional Superannuation Contribution

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. Note; ASC deductions are in addition to any pension contributions (main scheme and spouses' and children's contributions) required under the rules of your pension scheme.

Communications

Conscia will contact you when necessary at each stage of the competition by email. You should only submit one email address for all correspondence in relation to this competition.

It is important to note that the email address you provide when applying must be one that you can access at all times. The onus is on the applicant to inform Conscia of any change in email address throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing ipa@conscialent.com The onus is also on each applicant to ensure that they are in

receipt of all communication from Conscia. Conscia does not accept responsibility for communications not accessed or received by an applicant.

Employee Benefits

Examples of some of the current employee benefits include:

- Generous annual leave entitlement
- Blended Working Policy
- Family Friendly Policies
- Availability of an Optical Benefit Scheme
- Availability of a Cycle to Work Scheme
- Staff Wellbeing Programme
- A range of Learning and Developmental Opportunities
- Sick Leave Scheme
- Paid Maternity and Paternity Leave
- Option to become a member of the Institute's Social Club
- Automatically entered into a pension scheme
- Employee Assistance Programme

Important Notice

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

Application & Selection

Before you proceed

Before proceeding with this phase of the selection process you should satisfy yourself that you meet the education & experience criteria for the post as set out in Page 4 of this booklet.

How to apply

All applications by way of Cover Letter and CV should be emailed directly to mail to ipa@consciatalent.com no later than 5th March 2024 at 1.00pm.

When outlining your application, accuracy is essential. The information you supply in your application will play a central part of the selection process. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application please check your junk/spam folders as email notifications may be filtered here.

Selection Process

The Selection Process may include the following:

- Short-listing of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application;
- Competitive interview;
- Work sample/role play/media exercise, and any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

Please note that the Institute reserves the right to hold any part of the selection process by way of remote/video-call platform or other appropriate methodology.

Shortlisting

The Institute reserves the right to shortlist applications. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop shortlisting process based on the information contained in the applications submitted or a shortlisting interview.

Where, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to the competition and the standard of knowledge, training or experience in general of such persons, the Institute considers that it would be reasonable not to admit all the persons to the competition, the Institute may admit to the competition only persons who appear likely to it to attain in the competition a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment.

The information you supply in your application will play a central part in the shortlisting process. The Institute's decision to include you on the shortlist of candidates going forward to the next stage of the process may be determined based on this information.

Interview

You will be contacted in relation to any interview dates and times. You may also be contacted in relation to the requirement to complete an on-line questionnaire should this be included in the selection process. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you are requested to bring photographic identification.

The interview is your opportunity to give evidence of your knowledge, skills and experience and the Institute's opportunity to assess your suitability for the role as advertised.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the Institute is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the role or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important therefore for you to note, the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview.

The Institute may at its discretion require candidates to attend a preliminary interview in which case admission to the competitive interview would be conditional on candidates reaching such a standard as the Institute considers appropriate in the preliminary interview. Interviews shall be conducted by Board(s) set up by the Institute. The Board(s) will assess the merits of candidates (except insofar as they are assessed otherwise) in respect of matters referred to in the prescribed qualifications and any other relevant matters. Only candidates who reach such a standard as the Institute considers satisfactory in the competitive interview shall be considered for selection and placed on a panel. The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for interview.

The Institute reserves the right to vary the number and sequence of each stage of the selection process as the competition progresses

Panels

A panel may be formed on the basis of the outcomes of the selection process. Placement on any panel from this competition is no guarantee that a position will be offered. The selection process will not be concluded until such time as references have been sought and clearance checks, i.e., occupational health, and verification of education qualifications, have been carried out.

Offer of Appointment

The Institute shall require persons to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month. If they fail to take up the appointment within such period, or such longer period as the Institute in its absolute discretion may determine, the Institute may not appoint them.

Probationary Period

All new employees are required to satisfactorily complete a probationary period, in accordance with the 'Terms and Conditions of Employment' in their employment contract. Employees will be required to serve an initial probationary period. During this period, the employee's performance on the job and potential abilities are evaluated to determine suitability for the position. At the end of this probationary period, a formal assessment will be carried out by the employee's line manager, resulting in a decision on whether the employee has completed their probation satisfactorily.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not complete and submit any assessments before the specified date or do not attend/undertake any stage of the selection process as requested or do not furnish such evidence as requested in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive. The personal information (data) collected on the application form, including any attachments, (which may include the collection of sensitive personal data) is collected for the purpose of processing this application and any data collected is subject to the regulations.

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify.

The Institute will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The Institute is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.