



Candidate Information Booklet  
Please Read Carefully

Open competition for appointment as:

## **Financial Controller**

Closing date: Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 @ 1pm

Contact:  
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Institute of Public Administration  
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# About the IPA

## The Organisation

Founded in 1957, the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is a leading provider of education, training, consultancy, publications and research 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.

## 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 Training: building people's capability to meet current and future challenges;
- Advisory and Consultancy: solving problems and helping plan, and shape the future;
- Research and Publishing: understanding what needs to be done and making these findings readily available;
- International projects, study visits and cooperation.

We are proud of our distinct mission and role in the provision of Education, Training, Research, 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](http://www.ipa.ie).

# Why consider a role in the IPA

## Financial Controller

Reporting to the Director of Finance & Corporate Services, who has overall responsibility for the IPA'S Finance and Corporate Services, the Financial Controller will have responsibility for managing the finance function of the IPA which incorporates the procurement and payroll functions.

## Is this opportunity for you?

As the holder of a new role, you will be able to initiate and lead thinking around innovative processes to maximise efficiency and effectiveness across the Finance function.

You will be joining the IPA when we are at the early stages of a Transformation Programme and 5 year Strategy Implementation and will have the opportunity of working with multidisciplinary teams, and being part of the co-creation and implementation of initiatives, policies, and procedures in line with business plans to support delivery of strategic goals

Working closely with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, you will lead a dynamic and progressive department, providing a multiplicity of services to the IPA's internal and external stakeholders.

## You will demonstrate:

- Exemplary personal values of integrity, honesty, trustworthiness and commitment.
- Leadership by example, exercising sound judgement and decision-making.
- A preference for collaborative working, building partnerships across all IPA Finance stakeholder groups.
- An appetite for business process improvement, underpinned by a digital first mindset.
- A strategic outlook and "business first" approach to finance, financial management and management information provision for decision-making.
- Commitment to standards of excellence in all aspects of your work and the work of your team.

## Our commitment to supporting you

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. There is an opportunity to avail of flexible work programmes, including the hybrid model where working from home 2 days a week can be combined with working in the office when this suits both personal and business needs.

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.

## **Our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

At the IPA, we are committed to fostering an environment that promotes diversity and inclusion. We welcome team members with different backgrounds. We want everyone to feel empowered to fulfil their potential while making a full contribution to meeting the Institute's objectives.

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

### **As Financial Controller, your responsibilities will include:**

#### **Supporting the understanding of the financial performance of the different Divisions through the provision of reliable and timely financial and management information**

- Management and control of the day-to-day operations of the finance, payroll and procurement Department.
- Ensuring the timely and accurate preparation of financial and management reports, using a digital first approach.

#### **Championing a culture of strong financial management discipline**

- Working closely with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, leading on finance driven business process improvement projects; for example, fixed asset project, debtor review project, procurement to pay cycle project and order to cash cycle project, including developing, amending and reviewing standard operating policies and procedures.
- Maintaining all procurement and purchasing files to Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) standard.
- Creating and managing the IPA contracts register, to OCAG standard, monitoring the contracts lifecycle, and working with IPA contract owners on performance monitoring and measurement.
- Reporting on procurement compliance/non-compliance on a monthly and quarterly basis, including recommendations on solutions to identified non-compliance.
- Working with IPA budget holders to run procurement campaigns, in line with IPA approved procurement policy, from approval through to contract award stage.

#### **Handling multiple priorities to meet the demands of various stakeholders**

- Developing and reviewing the annual finance calendar, ensuring that all deadlines are met.
- Timely and accurate production of the IPA Statutory Financial Statements as prescribed by FRS102 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016.
- Successful management and delivery of the annual audit by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- Working with IPA budget holders to develop specifications for procurement campaigns, recommending the appropriate type of campaign in line with public procurement guidance.

### **Measuring results against expectations and driving actions for continuous improvements**

- Managing the IPA's suite of Corporate Insurance policies, including renewal reviews and making recommendations to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services.
- Documenting, monitoring and reviewing the System of Internal Financial Control (SIFC) across the IPA, including implementing/improving internal controls and checks to ensure good financial control and safeguarding of assets.

### **Helping the internal stakeholders understand the rationale for movement in numbers**

- Monitoring, interpreting, and reporting to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on monthly management accounts through comprehensive variance analysis reporting.
- Assisting and supporting the Director of Finance and Corporate Services in communications with the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform.

### **Seeing and helping unleash the potential in all team members**

- Enabling and supporting team members deliver to the highest standards of proficiency and effectiveness.
- Overseeing the monthly and quarterly management accounting process, undertaking all necessary checks, reconciliations and sign off to guarantee accuracy and completeness.

### **Building positive working relationships based on trust and integrity**

- Developing strong, collegiate working relationships with colleagues across the organisation, in particular providing financial advice and assistance to all budget managers.
- Engaging with IPA legal and procurement advisors for campaigns and contracts which require specialist input.

### **Influencing with clear and structured information that makes it easy to understand the rationale for change**

- Implementing audit (internal and external) recommendations relating to the Finance/Payroll/Procurement function.
- Supporting and assisting the Director of Finance and Corporate Services in developing the IPA Procurement and Purchasing Strategy.

### **Striving constantly to improve the quality of processes and practices**

- Operating to "super-user" status in Centros, the IPA Finance system, ensuring the adequacy of any current or future financial system across the organisation.
- Implementing changes in existing financial systems as required.
- Acting as GDPR Champion for the Finance function, engaging with the IPA Data Protection Officer accordingly.

**Providing insights and analysis to inform the development of Finance Strategies, that contribute to the implementation of the overall IPA 5 Year Strategic Plan**

- Supporting and assisting the Director of Finance and Corporate Services in developing the IPA Procurement and Purchasing Strategy.

**Using analytical skills to deliver key messages to internal and external stakeholders**

- Supporting and assisting the Director of Finance and Corporate Services with the compilation and preparation of the annual IPA budget for presentation and adoption by Director General & Board, and quarterly financial performance updates to Director General and Board.

**Essential Skills and Experience for Success:**

- Membership of a recognised accountancy body
- 5+ years Post Qualification Experience and/or 3 years Post Qualification Experience in a Public Service setting.
- Accountancy experience including management accounting, financial accounting and auditing.
- Knowledge of accounting methods, procedures, processes and contemporary management accounting techniques
- Experience of analysis, conceptual thinking and problem solving in Finance and/or Business Management.
- Strong people management experience.
- Highly developed relationship management and interpersonal skills and a capacity to promote co-operation, trust and openness amongst staff and other stakeholders.
- Highly developed verbal and written communication skills, including negotiation, report writing and presentation skills.
- Excellent working knowledge of Integrated Financial Management Systems, Microsoft Excel etc.
- An ability to determine priorities and organise workloads in order to produce quality output within tight time-frames.
- A proven ability to work under pressure and think laterally in dealing with a wide range of issues.

## **Desirable but not Essential:**

- Experience in leading, developing and implementing financial and resource allocation strategies that support strategic corporate objectives.
- Experience in the identification of critical financial issues and of briefing senior management and/or Board of same.
- Accounting and Auditing experience in a Public Sector setting.
- Experience in delivering business process improvements through digital innovation.
- Experience in Public Procurement and Contracts/Vendor Management

### **Health**

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

## **Principal Conditions of Service**

### **Remuneration**

The salary scale for this position ranges from €74,905 to €107,477 (12 point scale including two 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.

### **Outside employment**

The position is whole-time, and the holder is not permitted to engage in private practice, or be connected with any outside business, which would interfere with the performance of official duties.

### **Tenure**

The position of Financial Controller may be filled on a permanent basis, or on a contract or secondment basis with a view to permanency.

### **Location**

The position is currently based at Lansdowne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. The holder of this post may be required to attend meetings and other functions on occasions outside the normal place of work.

### **Working Hours**

Working hours will be as fixed from time to time but will not amount to less than 35 hours per week. If successful, you will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of your 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. The Institute currently has a flexible working hours attendance scheme in operation.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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
- Office location next to Lansdowne Road DART station
- Car-parking (first come first served)
- Automatically entered into a pension scheme
- Employee Assistance Programme

### **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.



## **Safety & Welfare**

The holder of the post shall co-operate with the terms of the Institute's Safety Statement. He/she shall familiarise him/herself 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.

## **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.

## **Communications**

The Institute 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 Human Resources of any change in email address throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing [recruit@ipa.ie](mailto:recruit@ipa.ie). The onus is also on each applicant to ensure that s/he is in receipt of all communication from the Institute. The Institute does not accept responsibility for communications not accessed or received by an applicant.

## **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 qualification & experience criteria for the post as set out in this booklet.

## How to apply

All applications by way of cover letter and CV should be emailed directly to [recruit@ipa.ie](mailto:recruit@ipa.ie) no later than Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 at 1pm.

The information you supply in your application will play a central part in 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 the application;
- Preliminary interview, which may also include a presentation;
- Completion of an online questionnaire;
- Competitive interview, which may also include a presentation;
- 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 the person fails 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.**