

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**
Trawl

IRC250904
Deputy Principal
European Social Fund (ESF)
Managing Authority
Department for the Economy (DfE)

Completed Application Forms
must be returned to
HRConnect no later than 12
noon (UK time) on
Friday 7th August 2020

Department for the Economy

A Globally Competitive Economy that works for Everyone

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

Contents

	Page
Background	3
Job Description	4
Key Responsibilities	6
Eligibility Criteria	9
Person Specification	10
Interview Criteria	11
Selection Process	14

BACKGROUND

The European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authority sits within European Fund Management Division in the Department for Economy (DfE). The Division is made up of three separate Branches each headed by a Grade 7, the other two Branches within the Division are the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Managing Authority and the ESF Project Delivery Branch.

The Northern Ireland ESF Investment for Growth and Jobs 2014-2020 Programme has a total value of €451 million and is managed by European Fund Management Division within the DfE (Managing Authority).

The strategic aim of the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme 2014-2020 in Northern Ireland is to combat poverty and enhance social inclusion by reducing economic inactivity and to increase the skills base of those currently in work and future potential participants in the workforce.

DfE is the Managing Authority (MA) (designate) for the ESF 2014-2020 Programme in Northern Ireland and as such is responsible for the development, implementation and management of the Programme.

The ESF Programme has the following four Priorities: -

- **Priority 1:** Access to Employment - promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility (Unemployed / Economically Inactive and NEET Investment Priorities)
- **Priority 2:** Social Inclusion - promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and discrimination (Disability and Community Family Support Programme Investment Priorities).
- **Priority 3:** Skills for Growth - investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and life-long learning (Apprenticeship NI and Higher Level Apprenticeship government programmes).
- **Priority 4:** Technical Assistance – supporting the effective management and implementation of the ESF Programme.

JOB DESCRIPTION

There is currently 1 permanent, full time vacancy.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which have similar duties and responsibilities.

Applications Invited From

Trawls are open to all staff in all grades and disciplines who consider that they meet the eligibility criteria. Staff who have been advised by their Department in writing that they have been excluded from promotion/selection are excluded from the field of consideration.

Salary and Allowances

£38,017 - £41,799 (under review)

Salary will be within the above range. Pay progression will be as per current NICS pay policy. Starting salary on appointment will be determined by promotion, re-grading or downgrading terms. Please refer to the Pay and Grading Chapter of the Staff Handbook.

Location

The post holder will be based at Adelaide House, Adelaide Street, Belfast.

Hours of Work

The normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours excluding meal breaks Monday to Friday. Most offices work flexi-time. Alternative working patterns may be considered.

Travel

The successful candidate must be prepared to occasionally travel outside of NI to attend meetings and training events which will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities. The successful candidate must also have access to a form of transport which will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

Pre-Appointment Checks

The successful applicant will be required to satisfy a pre-employment check undertaken by AccessNI in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007.

Trial Period

On transfer as the result of a trawl, you will serve a 12 month trial in your new post. This will commence from the date of placement. At the end of the trial

period both you and the employing Department or Branch will consider whether the posting should be made permanent.

If the posting is not made permanent, the officer will be transferred back to the former grade/discipline (where applicable) but will remain in their new Department (where applicable). Only where absolutely necessary will the officer be considered for a return to their former Department or, if necessary the wider NICS.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone Paula Hill on 02890 257925 or email paula.hill@economy-ni.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

To manage and oversee the work of the ESF Managing Authority Performance Management and Communication Team in the validation and verification of Programme performance information and ensuring the Managing Authority, Intermediate Body and Government Beneficiaries comply with EC regulatory obligations.

Purpose of Post

Main management responsibility for:-

1. Verification and validation checks of Programme Monitoring Data.
2. Reporting Performance Monitoring Data to European Commission (EC) for drawdown of EU funds working closely with ESF Core Team.
3. Drafting and submission to the EC of the ESF Annual Implementation Report (AIR).
4. Secretariat for the bi-annual Programme Monitoring Committee meetings.
5. Evaluation of the ESF Programme.
6. ESF Programme communication and marketing activities.
7. Oversight of Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) inspection reports on quality of Priorities 1&2 provision.
8. Programme Governance.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Programme Performance Verification and Validation

- Maintain MA Management and Control Procedures for Monitoring and Reporting for the Programme.
- Develop and maintain ESF MA Programme Performance Monitoring Data Verification Process and staff guidance.
- Manage the Performance Team Workplan and staff workload to perform verification and validation checks of Priorities 1, 2 and 3 Performance Monitoring Data.
- Manage the documentation of verification checks and validation of performance data and systems for collecting and reporting programme performance information as part of ESF drawdown and reporting.
- Provide performance monitoring advice, guidance and support to the Intermediary Body (ESF Project Delivery Branch) /government beneficiaries (Apprenticeships Delivery and Performance Branch).
- Approve Project Delivery Branch's Performance Monitoring Data Verification process and any amendments.
- Participate in Programme bi-lateral meetings with Project Delivery Branch and government beneficiaries.

Annual Implementation Report

- Manage the request and collation of inputs for drafting the ESF annual implementation report (AIR) for submission to the EC. Submit the AIR to the EC and respond to follow-up queries/requests.

Programme Monitoring Committee

- Manage the gathering and collation of programme statistical data and prepare biannual reports to the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC).
- In conjunction with the ERDF MA and DoF EU Division, provide secretariat for the bi-annual PMC meetings. This includes logistics, hospitality, collation of papers, production of minutes and arranging itinerary of visit to projects for EC representatives as required.

Evaluation

- Manage the ESF mid-term evaluation tender process.
- Manage the relationship with the external contractor and quality assure all outputs against EC guidance and regulatory requirements.
- Manage the provision of information and technical support to external contractor.
- Maintain and update the Data Sharing Agreement and Data privacy Impact Assessment throughout the lifetime of the evaluation process.
- Engage with external consultants to conduct the mid-term evaluation and analyse and disseminate the results.

Communication and Marketing

- Manage the maintenance and update the Programme communication plan and identify and assist in the organisation of the required annual communication and publicity activity in line with EC regulatory requirements.
- Manage and maintain the publication of programme case studies highlighting the achievements and progression of Programme participants.
- Manage the programme's marketing and communication activity, including the maintenance and update of the Department's and NI Direct's ESF web pages.
- Provision and co-ordination of Programme Monitoring Data as required.

Quality of Priorities 1&2 Provision

- Liaise with Project Delivery Branch and Department's Quality Improvement Team regarding Education Training Inspectorate's Priorities 1&2 project inspections. Attend quarterly meetings.

Programme Governance

- Maintain and update MA guidance notes, Operating Manual and Programme Management & Control description.
- Review of Intermediate Body Programme guidance.
- Co-ordinate with MA Core and Financial Verification Teams issues regarding Programme Governance as appropriate.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must have, by the closing date for applications:

1. 2 years gained within the last 5 of operational management experience of the current EU Structural Investment Funds Programme and strong working knowledge of the associated EC regulations.

AND

2. At least 12 months experience of collation, validation and analysis of EC Funded Programme performance data ensuring ongoing adherence to EC requirements.

AND

3. At least 12 months experience of actively building and maintaining effective working relationships with external stakeholders to achieve specific business plan targets and ensure obligations are met.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition, applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the Panel will carry out an objective evaluation of the information provided by candidates in response to all of the eligibility criteria. This will be completed on a scored basis and only the highest scoring applicants will proceed to interview.

Please note:

- **It is essential that you clearly demonstrate in your application form how and to what extent (including dates where applicable) you meet each of the essential criteria and shortlisting criteria for the post.**
- **You must provide sufficient details to allow the panel to assess how well you meet these requirements.**
- **It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure the application form is completed appropriately, candidates are therefore strongly advised to demonstrate each criterion in the section of the form that specifically addresses that criterion.**
- **If you do not clearly demonstrate in your application form that you meet all the essential criteria and if necessary, the shortlisting criteria you will not be invited to interview.**
- **Only the details provided by you for the eligibility and shortlisting criteria, in Part 3 of your application form will be available to the sift panel.**

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the eligibility criteria *and shortlisting criteria*. In addition, they will also be required to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competence framework at Level 3 for the purposes of personal and professional development.

This post is analogous to Deputy Principal in the NICS.

What is the NICS competence framework?

The competence framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results. Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competence at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competence framework can be accessed through www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competence framework as this forms the basis of the assessment / interview criteria as outlined below.

INTERVIEW CRITERIA

The selection process will include a competence based interview -

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEW

The selection panel will design questions to test the applicants' knowledge and experience in each of the following areas below and award marks accordingly.

1. Changing and Improving

People who are effective in this area are responsive, innovative and seek out opportunities to create effective change. For all staff, it is about being open to change, suggesting ideas for improvements to the way things are done, and working in 'smarter', more focused ways.

Marks available: 20

2. Making Effective Decisions

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. For all staff, it means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well reasoned, justifiable decisions.

Marks available: 20

3. Managing a Quality Service

Effectiveness in this area is about being organised to deliver service objectives and striving to improve the quality of service, taking account of diverse customer needs and requirements. People who are effective plan, organise and manage their time and activities to deliver a high quality and efficient service, applying programme and project management approaches appropriately and effectively to support service delivery.

Marks available: 30

Minimum standard: 18

4. Achieving Outcomes Through Delivery Partners

Being effective in this area is about maintaining an economic, long-term focus in all activities. For all, it is about having a commercial, financial and sustainable mindset to ensure all activities and services are delivering added value and working to stimulate economic growth.

Marks available: 20

5. Collaborating and Partnering

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people within and outside the NICS, to help to achieve business objectives and goals. At all levels, it requires working collaboratively, sharing information and building supportive, responsive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, whilst having the confidence to challenge assumptions.

Marks available: 20

6. Leading and Communicating

At all levels, effectiveness in this area is about leading from the front and communicating with clarity, conviction and enthusiasm. It is about supporting principles of fairness of opportunity for all and a dedication to a diverse range of citizens.

Marks available: 20

Total Marks Available: 130

Overall Pass Mark: 78

INTERVIEWS DATES

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in September 2020.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills, abilities and experience in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

SELECTION PROCESS

Making your application

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline.
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria.– This is very important as the examples which you provide may be explored at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.
- Where qualification form part of the eligibility/shortlisting criteria, candidates will be required to provide documentary evidence, if invited to interview.

Application Form Submission

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.
- **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is also the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect. HRConnect will not accept any application where they are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.

- Only the eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- Please note - the session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

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Transgender Requirements

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration in confidence to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

Further appointments from this competition

Where a further position in the NICS is identified during the lifetime of the competition which has the same location, skills and experience requirements to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration may be given to filling the position from this competition.

Disability Requirements

Any candidate who because of a disability cannot complete the application form in its current format should contact HRConnect.

Vetting Procedures

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

The successful candidate will be required to be cleared to Basic level.

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess the information presented by the candidate at interview against each selection criterion. A score will then be allocated against each selection criterion and a total interview score derived accordingly. Following the interview process HRConnect will add the score achieved at interview to the score(s) achieved in any other assessment(s) where applicable. Those candidates who achieve the overall competition and (if appropriate) individual criterion pass mark(s) will be deemed suitable for appointment subject to the number of posts to be filled. HRConnect will then publish the list on the portal and allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in merit order. The findings of the competition cease to be valid on the day on which a new competition is advertised or 2 years from the date of publication of the initial list, whichever is earlier.

Feedback

Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All other requests for feedback are welcome.

Completed Application Forms should be sent to the HRConnect Recruitment Team:

HRConnect
PO Box 1090
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EX

NOTE: Late Applications or applications received by fax or email will not be accepted.

Contact details:

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address above or by:

Email: NICS@HRConnect.nigov.net
Tel: 0800 1 300 400
Fax: 028 9024 1665