**Candidate Information Booklet**

The National Disability Authority is committed to a policy of equal opportunity. The National Disability Authority will run this recruitment process in alignment with best practice for the Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service prepared by [Commission for Public Service Appointments](http://www.cpsa.ie) (CPSA).

National Disability Authority

25 Clyde Road

Dublin D04 E409

[www.nda.ie](http://www.nda.ie/)

Telephone: (353) 01 608 0400

Title of Position: Communications Officer

Grade: Higher Executive Officer (Standard) Full-time, Permanent

Reports to: Head of Policy, Research & Public Affairs

Employing Authority: National Disability Authority

Location: 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 E409

The National Disability Authority (NDA) is the independent statutory body that provides evidence-informed advice to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on policy and practice relating to persons with disabilities. In practice, the NDA delivers on this role through advising officials in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, and in other Government Departments and key state agencies, as well as direct advice to the Minister.

The National Disability Authority’s statutory functions include:

* To act as a central national body to assist the Minister in the co-ordination and development of disability policy;
* To undertake, commission or collaborate in research projects and activities and to assist in the development of statistical information for the planning, delivery and monitoring of disability programmes and services;
* To advise the Minister on standards for disability programmes and services, to prepare codes of practice and to monitor the implementation of standards and codes in this regard;
* To monitor the employment of people with disabilities in the public sector against targets set in legislation.
* to promote, through the Centre of Excellence in Universal Design, universal design of the built environment, products, services and information and communications technology, so that they can be accessed, understood and used by all persons regardless of their age, size, ability or disability

Further information is available on the NDA’s website at <http://www.nda.ie> and on the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design website at <http://www.universaldesign.ie>

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) was established with effect from 1 January 2007 as part of the (NDA) in accordance with the requirements in the Disability Act 2005.

# Job Description

The NDA wishes to appoint a Communications Officer within the Policy, Research & Public Affairs Department to lead on the public affairs/communication functions of the organisation. The appointment will be made on a full-time permanent basis. A panel will also be established to fill any future vacancies for Communications Officer roles within the organisation on a permanent, temporary, part-time or full-time basis. It is envisaged that this panel will be in operation for at least two years from the date of its establishment. The post holder may be redeployed at Higher Executive Officer Level to another area of work within the organisation. The post-holder will report to the Head of Policy, Research & Public Affairs or his/her nominee.

As Communications Officer with a focus on communications and public affairs, the post holder will, under the guidance of a Senior Policy and Public Affairs Advisor, be required to lead on the development and implementation of internal and external communications programmes and activities, in addition to supporting the delivery of policy advice in the organisation. The Communications Officer will work as part of a team with a focus on delivering of the NDA’s Strategic Plan and annual work plan and guided by relevant developments as appropriate to the remit of the NDA.

The successful implementation of this role requires a number of key relationships to be fostered and developed. These will include relationships with colleagues and personnel from a range of agencies, including the public and private sectors and representative organisations of people of any age, size, ability or disability. A high degree of flexibility and creativity will be required.

As a staff member, the holder of the post will be expected to work cross-functionally to actively contribute to and participate in the overall development of the NDA and to promote its policies at all times and to adhere to NDA values.

## Main Duties and Responsibilities

The core duties and responsibilities will include the following:

* To take a leading role in the development and implementation of the NDA’s communication strategy, including delivery of annual action plans and evaluating the impact of communications activities;
* To manage and oversee the organisation’s multiple websites, generating content, manging for consistency, monitoring analytics and addressing any issues with design or user experience;
* To work with colleagues to ensure compliance of the websites with the Web Accessibility Directive;
* To manage and oversee the organisation’s multiple social media channels including generating content, monitoring analytics, ensuing adherence to the Social Media Policy and advising on the feasibility of new social media channels;
* To develop and manage relationships with relevant stakeholders, including across Government Departments, public agencies, the disability sector and communication partners;
* To manage the NDA’s projects on disability awareness raising, including consideration of new initiatives as relevant and appropriate;
* To work with Senior Advisor(s) on the public relations function of the NDA which includes handling press queries and requests for interview; preparing and issuing press releases; supporting the launches of key publications;
* To take a leading role on influencing and providing support to ensure high-quality and consistent communications approaches across the organisation and ensuring the NDA’s style and brand guidelines are embedded;
* To manage, motivate and empower the communication team to deliver on the annual action plan;
* Support planning and delivery of NDA external events such as exhibitions, conferences, meetings and seminars, managing external contractors where necessary;
* To develop, update and assist in the implementation of relevant policies and protocols relevant to communications including social media, privacy, data protection etc.;
* To lead on the development of guidance on ensuring the accessibility of all information and platforms used in NDA communications;
* To work under the guidance of a Senior Policy Advisor(s) in reviewing and analysing relevant policies, legislation and issues relevant to persons with disabilities in Ireland, in line with NDA’s remit of providing policy advice; and
* To carry out such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Head of Unit or line manager.

Note: The duties and responsibilities enumerated in this job description should not be regarded as comprehensive in scope and may be added to or altered as required. There may be a requirement to undertake occasional evening or weekend work and travel including overnight travel. The successful candidate is expected to display flexibility in making themselves available for this work. Any such requirements will be managed in alignment with the NDA’s policies on overtime/time off in lieu.

## Person Specification

In applying for the post, applicants are strongly advised to clearly demonstrate how they fulfil the following essential requirements and competencies. The selection process may include short-listing of candidates on the basis of the information provided in the application form. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of how your skills, personal qualities, qualifications and experience meet the requirements for the post.

**Role Requirements**

* Honours primary degree in a relevant discipline or equivalent; and
* A minimum of three year’s work experience at an appropriate level in a role relevant to communications and public affairs.

The following criteria are considered **essential** for the post:

* Knowledge of effective internal and external communication approaches and strategies to effectively communicate NDA outputs such as website and social media content creation and management, organising events etc;
* Understanding or knowledge of communications best practice, particularly in relation to policy advice, and the ability to critically evaluate the effectiveness of communications strategies and/or campaigns;
* Experience of managing staff to achieve organisational goals;
* An ability to analyse and assimilate information and data and present it in a comprehensible form;
* Experience in stakeholder management and communicating to different audiences;
* Experience in planning or managing events to maximise impact on policy and practice;
* Experience in project management, ability to work on multiple projects and adaptable to change;
* Excellent ICT and English language skills with good attention to detail, proficient in the use of key applications;
* An ability to work on own initiative complemented by a capacity for teamwork;

The following criteria are considered **desirable**for the post:

* Experience in a policy role including writing briefing documents, submissions to national consultations and speeches;
* Have a good understanding of the public affairs and policy landscape relevant to disability;
* Knowledge of accessibility in relation to content creation and use of software;
* Experience in digital and social media analytics;
* Experience working with content management systems;
* Experience or knowledge of the development, execution and delivery of communications campaigns.

In addition to the above, the Key Competencies for effective performance at this level are detailed below.

**Competencies for role at Higher Executive Officer Level:**

**Team Leadership**

1. Works with the team to facilitate high performance, developing clear and realistic objectives and addressing and performance issues if they arise
2. Provides clear information and advice as to what is required of the team
3. Strives to develop and implement new ways of working effectively to meet objectives
4. Leads the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required
5. Places high importance on staff development, training and maximising skills & capacity of team
6. Is flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change

**Judgement, Analysis & Decision Making**

1. Gathers and analyses information from relevant sources, whether financial, numerical or otherwise weighing up a range of critical factors
2. Takes account of any broader issues, agendas, sensitivities and related implications when making decisions
3. Uses previous knowledge and experience in order to guide decisions
4. Uses judgement to make sound decisions with a well-reasoned rationale and stands by these
5. Puts forward solutions to address problems

**Management & Delivery of Results**

1. Takes responsibility and is accountable for the delivery of agreed objectives
2. Successfully manages a range of different projects and work activities at the same time
3. Structures and organises their own and others work effectively
4. Is logical and pragmatic in approach, delivering the best possible results with the resources available
5. Delegates work effectively, providing clear information and evidence as to what is required
6. Proactively identifies areas for improvement and develops practical suggestions for their implementation
7. Demonstrates enthusiasm for new developments/changing work practices and strives to implement these changes effectively
8. Applies appropriate systems/ processes to enable quality checking of all activities and outputs
9. Practices and promotes a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service, for internal and external customers

**Interpersonal & Communication Skills**

1. Builds and maintains contact with colleagues and other stakeholders to assist in performing role
2. Acts as an effective link between staff and senior management
3. Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues
4. Projects conviction, gaining buy-in by outlining relevant information and selling the benefits
5. Treats others with diplomacy, tact, courtesy and respect, even in challenging circumstances
6. Presents information clearly, concisely and confidently when speaking and in writing
7. Collaborates and supports colleagues to achieve organisational goals

**Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self-Development**

1. Has a clear understanding of the roles, objectives and targets of self and team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department/ Organisation and effectively communicates this to others
2. Has high levels of expertise and broad Public Sector knowledge relevant to his/her area of work
3. Focuses on self-development, striving to improve performance

**Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values**

1. Strives to perform at a high level, investing significant energy to achieve agreed objectives
2. Demonstrates resilience in the face of challenging circumstances and high demands
3. Is personally trustworthy and can be relied upon
4. Ensures that customers are at the heart of all services provides
5. Upholds high standards of honesty, ethics and integrity

# Selection ProcessGuide

## How to Apply

All candidates should download and complete the application form. Once the application form has been completed, please return it, along with a cover letter (max 2 pages), to [recruitment@nda.ie](mailto:recruitment@nda.ie)

Candidates should also indicate their interest with regard to full-time and/or part-time roles in their cover letter and application form.

Applications will not be accepted after the closing deadline of **7th January 2025 at 5p.m** local time**.**

We are unable to accept hard copy applications submitted by post. All applications must be submitted by email for consideration.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within 24 hours of applying, please contact [recruitment@nda.ie](file:///C:\Users\oreillysm\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\IE\DB228211\recruitment@nda.ie).

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from the NDA. Candidates are advised to check emails on a regular basis throughout the duration of the competition; in addition, being sure to check junk/spam folders should any emails be mistakenly filtered.

The NDA accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

The NDA is an equal opportunities employer. Applications would be particularly welcome from persons with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations can be provided.

## Selection Process

The Selection Process may include the following:

* Submission of application (Application form and cover letter)
* Shortlisting of candidates based on the information contained in their application
* Initial/preliminary interview
* Presentation or any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate
* A final competitive interview

### **Shortlisting**

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While you may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the NDA may decide that a smaller number of applicants will only be called to interview. In this respect, the National Disability Authority provide for the operation of a shortlisting process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position.

An expert board will examine the application forms against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in your own interests to provide a precise, detailed, accurate account of your qualifications/experience in your application.

A panel of successful candidates may be formed as a result of the interviews. Candidates who obtain a place on the panel and who fulfil the conditions of the selection process may, within the life of the panel, be considered for subsequent approved vacancies. The candidate who obtains first place on the panel will be the first candidate considered for a position, subject to satisfactory clearances, and so on in order of merit.

## Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 applications will be treated in strictest confidence.

## Other Important Information

The National Disability Authority will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result notification, is not to be taken as implying that the NDA is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements 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 that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position the NDA will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises the Board may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

## Candidates' Rights - Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process

The NDA will consider requests for review in alignment with the provisions of the codes of practice published by the CPSA. The Codes of Practice are available on the website of the [Commission for Public Service Appointments](http://www.cpsa.ie).

Should a candidate be unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their application they can seek feedback. An initial review will be carried out internally by the NDA’s Corporate Services Department as to why their application was deemed unsuccessful. The outcome of this review will be sent to the candidate in written format.

* To request an initial review, a candidate must write to the NDA within 5 working days of receiving notification of the decision on their application. The NDA will carry out the initial review without delay. If the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may resort to the formal procedures within 2 working days of receiving notifications of the outcome of the initial review.
* The decision arbitrator will be a person unconnected with the selection process and he/she will adjudicate on requests for review. The decision of the decision arbitrator in relation to such matters is final.

## Candidates’ Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

## Candidates must not

* Knowingly or recklessly provide false information;
* Canvass any person with or without inducements;
* Interfere with or compromise the process in any way;
* A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process;
* Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

* Where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate;
* Where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

## Specific candidate criteria

In order to be offered an appointment from the panel, candidates must:

* Have the knowledge and competence to discharge the duties of the post concerned;
* Be suitable on the grounds of character;
* Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned and if successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:
  + Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed;
  + Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position;
  + Be passed medically fit to take up the appointment.

## Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by the NDA, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as required by the NDA relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

# Citizenship Requirement

Eligible candidates must be:

1. A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
2. A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
3. A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
4. A non-EEA citizen who has a stamp 41 or a Stamp 5 visa

1 Please note that a 50 TEU visa, which is a replacement for Stamp 4EUFAM after Brexit, is acceptable as a Stamp 4 equivalent.

To qualify candidates must be eligible by the date of any job offer.

# Data Protection Act 2018

When your application is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and as part of the recruitment process. Such information held by the NDA and the employing organisation is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information on how we retain and use your personal data, please review the [National Disability Authority’s Privacy Policy](http://nda.ie/Privacy-Policy/) which includes instructions on their right to withdraw consent at any point.

To make a subject access request under the Data Protection Act 2018, please submit your request in writing to: Data Protection Officer, National Disability Authority, 25 Clyde Road, Dublin D04 E409, or email [dataprotection@nda.ie](mailto:dataprotection@nda.ie)

Ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.

# Principal Conditions of Service

Principal conditions of service will be applied in line with all relevant governmental circulars/procedures and policies applicable at time of placement.

## Salary

Entry will be at the minimum of the Higher Executive Officer Standard Salary Scale. The salary scale for the position is as follows:

Pay scale with effect from 1 October 2024 for established employees appointed on or after 6th April 1995 paying the Class A rate of PRSI contribution and making an employee contribution in respect of personal superannuation benefits (PPC):

### **Higher Executive Officer Standard Scale (PPC)**

€57,122, €58,791, €60,459, €62,124, €63,796, €65,460, €67,129, €69,537¹, €71,939².

Non-Personal Pension Contribution Pay Scale with effect from 1 October 2024 (for those appointed before 6 April 1995):

### **Higher Executive Officer Standard Scale**

€54,404, €55,974, €57,541, €59,122, €60,704, €62,299, €63,881, €66,160¹, €68,446².

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with Government Policy. Long service increments may be payable after 3 (LSI-1) and 6 (LSI-2) years’ satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Entry will be at the **first point** of the scale. Different terms and conditions may apply if you are a currently serving civil or public servant.

## Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance for the position of Higher Executive Officer is 29 days rising to 30 days after 5 years’ service.

This allowance is subject to conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the public sector and is based on a 5-day week, exclusive of public holidays.

## Hours of Work

Hours of attendance will be not less than 35 hours net per week. Your normal working hours are from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. The NDA operates a blended working policy which requires a minimum attendance on site of two days per week. This requirement is dependent on the requirements of the role and will vary from time to time. Details of this arrangement are agreed locally with your line manager.

## Rest Periods

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 will apply to this appointment.

## Place of work

The National Disability Authority is currently located in 25 Clyde Road, Dublin D04 E409.

## Tenure

This is a full-time position. You will be required to undergo a probationary period.

## Sick Leave

Pay during sick absence will apply in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Sick Leave Regulations.

## PRSI

Officers who pay Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts directly to the NDA. Payment during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

## Outside Employment

The appointees to full-time positions may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business, which would interfere with the performance of official duties.

## Superannuation and retirement

The successful candidate will be offered public service pension terms and retirement age conditions in accordance with pension arrangements in the NDA depending on the status of the successful appointee:

1. In general, an individual who has no prior pensionable Public Service history in the 26 weeks prior to appointment will be a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme) which commenced from 1 January 2013 [Section 10 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 refers];
2. An individual who was a member of a “pre-existing public service pension scheme” as construed by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 and who does not qualify for membership of the Single Scheme will have standard public service pension terms reflecting new entrant or non-new entrant status for the purposes of the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004.

## Appointee’s status for superannuation purposes

Appointees will be required to disclose their full public service history. Details of the appropriate superannuation provisions will be provided upon determination of appointee’s status. The following points should be noted:

## Pension Accrual

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one existing public service pension scheme will apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. **This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.**

## Pension Abatement

The Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 extended pension abatement so that a retiree’s public service pension is liable to abatement on re-entering public service employment, even where the new employment is in a different area of the public service.

However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivized Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER) or the Health Service Executive VER/VRS which render a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to payment of that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment.

## Department of Education Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007

The Department of Education introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the cesser of such employment or on the person’s 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person’s actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

## Ill-Health Retirement

Please note that where an individual has retired from a Civil/Public Service body on the grounds of ill-health his/her pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement within the pension scheme of that employment.

## Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC)

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with Part 4 of the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. ASC is payable in addition to any contributions payable in respect of membership of your main superannuation scheme and/or spouse’s and children’s pension scheme.

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 contracts to be agreed with successful candidates.