**Candidate Information Booklet**

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

National Disability Authority

25 Clyde Road

Dublin D04 E409

[www.nda.ie](file:///C:\Users\oreillysm\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\IE\DB228211\www.nda.ie)

Telephone: (353) 01 608 0400

Title of Position: Policy & Public Affairs Advisor – Permanent and Specified Purpose Panel

Grade: Higher Executive Officer (Standard)

Reports to: Head of Policy, Research & Public Affairs

Employing Authority: National Disability Authority

Location: 25 Clyde Road, Dublin D04 E409

The National Disability Authority (NDA) is the independent statutory body that provides expert 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 through direct advice to the Minister.

The NDA’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, including the 3% target set out in the Disability Act 2005
* to promote, through the Centre of Excellence in Universal Design, accessibility and the principles of universal design in relation to the built and digital environments, services and systems.

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.

The NDA wishes to form a panel of Policy & Public Affairs Advisors at Higher Executive (Standard) grade for appointment to current and future permanent and specified purposes contract roles in the Policy, Research and Public Affairs Division. It is envisaged that this panel will be in operation for at least two years from the date of its establishment. Appointments from this proposed panel will be to permanent and specified purpose roles on a full-time and/or part-time basis depending on the requirements of the roles to be filled. Currently there is one full-time permanent vacancy.

## **Overview of the role of Policy & Public Affairs Advisors**

Policy & Public Affairs Advisors appointed through this recruitment campaign will report to the Head of the Policy, Research and Public Affairs Department or his/her nominee within the NDA but may be redeployed at Higher Executive Level as needs arise within the NDA.

Successful candidates will work, under the direction of the Head of the Department or his nominee, as part of a team with a focus on delivering evidence informed policy advice in line with NDA’s Strategic Plan and annual work plan and guided by relevant developments as appropriate to the remit of the NDA.

Policy and Public Affairs Advisors are expected to actively contribute to and participate in the overall development of the NDA and to promote its policies at all times, to effectively represent the NDA, and to adhere to NDA values.

The successful implementation of Policy & Public Affairs Advisor roles requires the development and fostering of key relationships. These include relationships with colleagues and personnel from a range of agencies, including the public and private sectors, and representative organisations of disabled people and other relevant stakeholder groups.

## **Main Duties and Responsibilities**

The core duties and responsibilities relating to Policy & Public Affairs Advisor roles typically include the following:

* To work with Senior 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;
* To develop and draft NDA policy briefing papers on relevant areas;
* To assist in gathering information and data on proposals, policies, initiatives and issues in the relevant policy areas working closely with the NDA Research and Standards Development staff;
* To conduct consultation where appropriate, particularly with persons with disabilities;
* To develop and manage relationships with relevant stakeholders across Government Departments and agencies;
* To attend committee and working group meetings on specific topics and to present NDA information and advice at such meetings and to represent the NDA;
* To assist in monitoring the implementation of policies, strategies, standards and codes of practice in services provided for people with disabilities where required;
* To work with the Research & Policy team to monitor emerging developments in the landscape of disability services and to assist in positioning the NDA to advise on these developments;
* To work closely with the NDA’s Research team to ensure policy advice is based on a strong evidence base and to collaborate in the development and delivery of research briefs where required;
* Occasional evening or weekend work and travel including overnight travel, for example, to conduct consultations may be necessary. 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.
* 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 exhaustive in scope and may be added to or altered as required.

**Role Requirements**

* Honours primary degree in a relevant discipline or equivalent
* A minimum of three years’ work experience at an appropriate level in a role relevant to analysis, advice and development of policy;

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

* A demonstrated ability to evaluate policy and to formulate policy advice based on research, evidence and best practice;
* An aptitude for precision, attention to detail and commitment to quality results;
* Strong influencing skills with a track record of effective engagement with external stakeholders;
* Excellent interpersonal skills including experience of interacting effectively with a range of statutory and non-statutory agencies;
* Good judgement, decision-making, analysis and problem solving skills;
* Strong written and oral communication skills. Demonstrated experience of preparing comprehensive and succinct reports and/or advice papers;
* Demonstrated project management experience, ability to work on multiple projects and adaptable to change;
* An ability to work on own initiative complemented by a capacity for teamwork.
* 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 seminars;

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

* An understanding of the policy environment in Ireland
* Knowledge and experience of disability-related issues

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 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 other exercises
* A final competitive interview
* Any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate

## **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 3rd October **2023 at 11a.m GMT.**

Due to current policy 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.

### **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.

**Interviews**

Candidates who are successful at the shortlisting stage will be invited to attend a competency based interview.

**Establishment of Panel**

It is intended to form a panel of successful candidates for appointment to Policy and Public Affairs Advisor for permanent and specified purpose roles following the outcome of the selection process. It is envisaged that this panel will be in operation for at least two years from the date of its establishment. Candidates who obtain a place on the panel may, within the lifetime of the panel, be considered for 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; and
* 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

* Be suitable on the grounds of character
* Have the knowledge and competence to discharge the duties of the post concerned
* Be available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the post concerned
* 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
* Be passed as 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

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete for posts is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) or to non-EEA nationals with a valid work permit. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Under the Common Travel Area UK citizens may apply. Swiss citizens under EU agreements may also apply.

# 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 March 2023 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)**

€53,955 €55,532 €57,106 €58,680 €60,259 €61,831 €63,407 €65,682¹ €67,951²

Non-Personal Pension Contribution Pay Scale with effect from 1 March 2023 (for those appointed before 6 April 1995):

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

€51,387 €52,871 €54,351 €55,844 €57,339 €58,844 €60,340 €62,492¹ €64,651²

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.

## **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. The NDA is currently operating a hybrid working arrangement subject to business needs.

## **Tenure**

Permanent or Specific Purpose contract – full and/or part-time positions dependent on the corresponding vacancy. 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 Employment Affairs and 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 Employment Affairs and 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 and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007**

The Department of Education and Skills 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.