**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](https://nda.ie/)

Telephone: (353) 01 608 0400

Title: Senior Research Officer Roles

Grade: Assistant Principal (Standard), Full-Time Permanent and Part-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 and guidance to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) on policy and practice relating to persons with disabilities and promotes awareness and adoption of Universal Design. In practice, the NDA delivers on this role through advising officials in DCEDIY 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, 4.5% by end of 2024 and 6% by the end of 2025.
* 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 form a panel of Senior Research Officers, at Assistant Principal (Standard) grade for appointment to current and future permanent vacancies within the Policy, Research and Public Affairs Department. It is envisaged that this panel will be in operation for at least two years from the date of its establishment. Appointments from this panel will be to permanent roles on a full-time and/or part-time basis depending on the requirements of the roles to be filled. There is currently one full-time vacancy and one part-time vacancy.

The post holder will report to the Head of the Policy, Research and Public Affairs or his/her nominee within the NDA but may be redeployed at Assistant Principal Level as needs arise within the NDA.

As Assistant Principal the post holder will be required to work, under the direction of the Head of the Department, as part of a team with a focus on applied research, monitoring and evaluation in support of the NDA’s role to provide evidence-informed advice on disability policy and practice. They will contribute to the NDA’s work to support implementation of policies, programmes and strategies, including evaluation of same, and impact. The primary target audience for NDA research is policymakers and practitioners, and research will be disseminated to a wider audience as appropriate, particularly including persons with disabilities. The NDA has an ambition to grow collaborative research with disabled people and has established quality criteria for research outputs, including all internal, commissioned and funded research work.

Senior Research Officer roles may involve:

* monitoring and evaluation, including developing monitoring systems, of national level strategies and programmes relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities.
* gathering, analysing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data and commissioning research to inform policy and practice in relation to disability.

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 post holder will be 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.

## **Main Duties and Responsibilities**

The core duties and responsibilities will include the following:

* Conduct desk, primary and secondary research and applied research to underpin the NDA’s policy and advisory role and ensure such advice is evidence-based.
* Design and undertake quantitative research, statistical analysis, qualitative research, comparative studies, and evaluation studies.
* Conduct literature reviews and gather evidence of similar programmes in other jurisdictions.
* Commission and manage research and evaluation studies, which includes developing requests for tender, evaluating proposals, preparing contracts, managing externally commissioned work to agreed standards, costs and timelines, and financial tracking of projects.
* Project manage and deliver research and evaluation studies to guide and support the implementation of national policies and programmes relevant to disability.
* Form and consult with advisory groups, scientific advisory groups, and other groups as relevant to inform and guide research projects.
* Produce, collaborate on, or oversee production of statistics or economic data on disability.
* Prepare policy, position and discussion papers on relevant disability issues and review literature, reports and submissions.
* Organise consultations with key stakeholders and take opportunities for more applied research, participatory process and co-research with disabled people.
* Foster strong collaborative relationships with research, policy, disability, and other relevant stakeholders
* Plan for and oversee strategic dissemination of research findings to key target audiences including organising seminars, launches etc. and ensuring outputs are accessible to non-specialist audiences.
* Ensure adherence to defined quality, standards and policies on all projects, in particular the quality control of research output.
* Ensure ethical principles are adhered to in research and seek research ethics approval where appropriate.
* Collaborate with colleagues and with partner organisations on cross-functional projects, ensure policy advice is informed by research and contribute where required to policy advice formation.
* Contribute to developing an appropriate research programme, based on the NDA’s Strategic Plan and annual work programme, guided by topics of strategic importance to the development of disability policy and practice in Ireland.
* Manage and develop staff, as relevant and appropriate.
* Demonstrate leadership in all aspects of the role.
* Demonstrate flexibility and carry out other duties as may be assigned, and if required, reassignment to other projects within the NDA.
* Occasional evening or weekend work and travel including overnight travel, for example, to conduct interview or 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.

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.

## **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 will 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.

The followingcriteria are considered **minimum** for the post:

* A relevant post-graduate qualification (Level 9) in public health, health services research, psychology, social sciences, economics or similar.
* At least five years’ experience of applied research and research management in the fields listed above or similar.

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

* A sound knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methods, applied research, evaluation methods and quality criteria.
* Experience in designing and implementing monitoring and evaluation studies, including identifying appropriate performance indicators and developing survey tools.
* A sound capacity to review quantitative and qualitative research and analyse and synthesise findings, paying attention to methodologies and validity of such findings.
* A track record in project management and delivery of timely research/evaluation including ability to successfully manage a number of workstreams concurrently.
* Excellent quantitative and data analysis skills including knowledge of a statistical software package(s) and capacity to identify and quantify effects and relationships along with a keen appreciation of hypothesis testing and statistical significance.
* Experience of managing commissioned research, including preparing and assessing research briefs/tenders/proposals, and managing deliverables from contractors
* Strong communication skills tailored to a variety of technical and non-technical audiences.

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

* A knowledge of disability-related policy, research and statistics in the Irish context
* Ability to oversee the organisation and management of consultation events and events to disseminate research outputs using multiple media.

Candidates who are successful at the shortlisting stage will be invited to attend a competency-based interview. Candidates will be required to prepare and deliver an 8-minute presentation at this interview focusing on the methodologies used in three pieces of research or similar work. The examples should demonstrate the candidate’s knowledge of a wide range of research approaches and methodologies and include critiques where relevant.

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

# Competencies for role at Assistant Principal Level:

## **Leadership**

1. Actively contributes to the development of the strategies and policies of the Department/ Organisation
2. Brings a focus and drive to building and sustaining high levels of performance, addressing any performance issues as they arise
3. Leads and maximises the contribution of the team as a whole
4. Considers the effectiveness of outcomes in terms wider than own immediate area
5. Clearly defines objectives/ goals & delegates effectively, encouraging ownership and responsibility for tasks
6. Develops capability of others through feedback, coaching & creating opportunities for skills development
7. Identifies and takes opportunities to exploit new and innovative service delivery channels.

## **Judgement, Analysis & Decision Making**

1. Research’s issues thoroughly, consulting appropriately to gather all information needed on an issue
2. Understands complex issues quickly, accurately absorbing and evaluating data (including numerical data)
3. Integrates diverse strands of information, identifying inter-relationships and linkages
4. Uses judgement to make clear, timely and well-grounded decisions on important issues
5. Considers the wider implications, agendas and sensitivities within decisions and the impact on a range of stakeholders
6. Takes a firm position on issues s/he considers important.

## **Management & Delivery of Results**

1. Takes responsibility for challenging tasks and delivers on time and to a high standard
2. Plans and prioritises work in terms of importance, timescales and other resource constraints, re-prioritising in light of changing circumstances
3. Ensures quality and efficient customer service is central to the work of the division
4. Looks critically at issues to see how things can be done better
5. Is open to new ideas initiatives and creative solutions to problems
6. Ensures controls and performance measures are in place to deliver efficient and high value services
7. Effectively manages multiple projects.

## **Interpersonal & Communication Skills**

1. Presents information in a confident, logical and convincing manner, verbally and in writing
2. Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues
3. Promotes teamwork within the section, but also works effectively on projects across Departments/ Sectors
4. Maintains poise and control when working to influence others
5. Instils a strong focus on Customer Service in his/her area
6. Develops and maintains a network of contacts to facilitate problem solving or information sharing
7. Engages effectively with a range of stakeholders, including members of the public, Public Service Colleagues and the political system.

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

1. Has a clear understanding of the role’s objectives and targets of self and the team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department/ Organisation
2. Has a breadth and depth of knowledge of Department and Governmental issues and is sensitive to wider political and organisational priorities
3. Is considered an expert by stakeholders in own field/ area
4. Is focused on self-development, seeking feedback and opportunities for growth to help carry out the specific requirements of the role.

## **Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values**

1. Is self-motivated and shows a desire to continuously perform at a high level
2. Is personally honest and trustworthy and can be relied upon
3. Ensures the citizen is at the heart of all services provided
4. Through leading by example, fosters the highest standards of ethics and integrity.

# Selection Process Guide

## **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 **Friday 30th August 2024 at 5 p.m. local time.**

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

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, to include a presentation
* A final competitive interview, if required.

### **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.

The interview panel 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 will 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; and
* Where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

# Specific candidate criteria

Candidates must

* Have the knowledge and ability 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 post
* 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

Eligible candidates must be:

(a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or

(b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or

(c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or

(d) 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 Assistant Principal Standard Salary Scale. The salary scale for the position is as follows:

Pay scale with effect from 01 June 2024 for Civil Servants 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):

### **Assistant Principal Standard Scale (PPC)**

€78,303, €81,187, €84,111, €87,044, €89,973, €91,662, €94,617¹, €97,583²

Non-Personal Pension Contribution Pay Scale with effect from 01 June 2024 (for those appointed before 6 April 1995):

### **Assistant Principal Standard Scale**

€75,637, €78,390, €79,908, €82,692, €85,475, €87,084, €89,887¹, €92,702²

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 as a civil or public servant.

## **Annual Leave**

The annual leave allowance for the position of Assistant Principal is 30 days.

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

## **Tenure**

There is currently one full-time permanent and one part-time vacancy. You will be required to undergo a probationary period of 9 months.

## **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**

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.