

Professional Development Experts – Information booklet

National Adult Literacy Agency

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is recruiting three part time Professional Development Experts.

We are looking for motivated, energetic and results driven team players to join our organisation and help us to achieve our vision.

The Professional Development Experts will play an important role in a new three-year project which will support the embedding of evidence-based learning to further support the adult literacy work done in all Education and Training Board (ETB) communities.

The ideal candidates will have at least five years' experience in supporting adults with unmet literacy, digital skills and numeracy needs in the further education sector, a relevant third level qualification in teaching and learning and experience in developing professional programmes for practitioners.

To apply for this position you must send a CV and cover letter to recruitment@nala.ie by August 7th, 2020 at 5pm.

The National Adult Literacy Agency is an equal opportunity employer.

At the moment, we do not require the assistance of recruitment agencies to fill our vacancies.

Summary

There are three roles available.

Titles

1. Professional Development Expert in Numeracy
2. Professional Development Expert in Family Literacy
3. Professional Development Expert in Intellectual Disabilities

Reports to: Dr. Ann Hegarty, Training Coordinator.

Location: Work from home with onsite work where applicable.

Contract: Part-time, 7 hours per week

Contract duration: Three year contract beginning August 2020¹,

Salary: €15,000

Annual leave: 4.4 days

Application process: CV and cover letter.

Closing date: Friday 7 August 2020 @ 5pm.

Questions: Email any questions to recruitment@nala.ie or call 01-4127900.

¹ All contracts at NALA are subject to annual funding.

Background information

About NALA

NALA is an independent charity committed to making sure people with literacy, numeracy and digital skills difficulties have access to educational opportunities that meet their needs. Our vision is an Ireland where adult literacy is a human right, where everyone can develop their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills, and where individuals can take part fully in society. Our mission is to advocate for literacy as a human right and to collaborate with our partners to influence policy and practice to support the development of literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

NALA is the only organisation in Ireland that is solely dedicated to improving adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills. We are a membership organisation and a registered charity that is publicly funded. We carry out our work with an independent voice in the interests of the public. We learn from, and contribute to, literacy developments at European and international levels. We are both an advocate for, and a provider of, adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills supports. Our advocacy role includes trying to advance policy through engagement with government departments and relevant organisations.

NALA is grant-aided for the majority of its work on an annual basis by SOLAS through the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

Literacy, numeracy and digital needs in Ireland

The most recent OECD Survey of Adult Skills showed that 550,000 Irish adults are at or below level 1, the lowest level on a five-level literacy scale. Even more Irish adults — 750,000 — are at or below level 1 for numeracy and digital skills¹.

At these levels people may find it difficult to:

- understand the instructions on medicines,
- fill in an application form,
- add up a bill,
- help their children with homework, or
- search the web for information.

Low literacy costs. High literacy pays. Unmet literacy needs cost everyone and have devastating consequences for our society, economy, environment and democracy.

A cost benefit analysis of adult literacy in Ireland concluded that by investing in literacy there is a positive and rapid return on investment across the board, for participants, the companies they work for and for the exchequer.

Recent research has shown the need to raise productivity through employee training, including those with literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills needs. Those in lower skilled roles are less likely to receive training and yet are most vulnerable to changes in the world of work. But the impact of skills goes far beyond earnings and employment – individuals with literacy difficulties are more likely to report poor health, low financial wellbeing, to believe that they have little impact on political processes, and not to participate in volunteer activities. They are also less likely to trust others.

Taken together, the results emphasise the importance of literacy for a more inclusive society – in people’s participation in the labour market, education and training, and in social and civic life.

Evolving definition of literacy

In the past, literacy was understood to be about individuals having the skills needed to read and write. These skills were seen as technical skills that remained the same and unrelated to the social context in which they were used.

Today, however, literacy is a broader concept and is understood to be about individuals having the skills needed to fully take part in society. Literacy involves listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and using everyday technology to communicate, access services, and make informed choices. These aspects of literacy evolve and are closely related to social practice which recognises that people use different literacies for various situations, for example people need health specific literacy skills when dealing with a doctor. For the purpose of this document, we use the terms literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

See www.nala.ie for more information.

About the role

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) has recently kicked-off a three-year project with SOLAS, Marking Progress, to support the embedding of evidence-based learning from the following three research reports to further support the adult literacy work done in all Education and Training Board (ETB) communities.

1. Enabling Intergenerational Learning: Evidence, guidelines, recommendations and case studies from a Study of Family Literacy Practices in Irish Education and Training Boards (ETBs).
2. Guidelines, research and case studies on the Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Services.
3. The Development of Good Practice Guidelines for Integrated and Standalone Numeracy Provision for Adults with Low Qualification Levels.

These studies have produced rich evidence-based guidelines on inclusion in the context of Family Literacy, Numeracy and the inclusion of people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in the Adult Literacy Service.

NALA seeks to hire **three part-time experts** to consult on, inform, contribute to and guide NALA's Marking progress project, a professional development project in the areas of numeracy, inclusion of learners with disabilities and family literacy.

Key working relationships

CEO, Innovation Manager, Training Coordinator, External Project Partners.

Essential criteria

Applicants must have at least five years experience in supporting adults with unmet literacy, digital skills and numeracy needs in the further education sector as well as a relevant third level qualification in teaching and learning. Key skills required include:

- **Technical skills:** research and analysis skills
- **Problem-solving skills:** experience of using research, innovation and communication to solve project problems.
- **Interpersonal skills:** the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively and professionally with individuals, groups and to the wider public.
- **Organizational skills:** excellent time management and project coordination skills.

Desirable criteria

Preference may be given to applicants who have developed professional development programmes for practitioners supporting adults in developing their literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

Recruitment process

The National Adult Literacy Agency is recruiting for these positions.

How to apply

Applicants should submit a CV and cover letter to recruitment@nala.ie.

Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of applications is 5pm Friday, 7 August 2020.

All applications will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 5 days of applying please email recruitment@nala.ie.

Requirements, knowledge, skills and experience

Candidates will be required to possess all the essential requirements, knowledge, skills and experience required for the position. They will be requested to demonstrate this both in the application form and, if shortlisted, by interview.

Health

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

Selection process

The selection process may include the shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the application form and will include an interview.

Shortlisting

A shortlisting process will involve a panel that will select candidates for interview who, based on an examination of the CV and assessed against the essential requirements and personal attributes required, appear to be the most suitable for the position. Shortlisted candidates may be required to submit further information prior to the interview.

Interview

Candidates who are shortlisted will be called for interview by a panel. The interview will focus on how the candidate meets the essential requirements and personal attributes of the post and their career and experience to date. If required, candidates may be called for a second interview and or asked to complete a short task based test. Further information will be provided on this in advance of the interview.

Note: It is expected that interviews will be held on the week beginning 17 August 2020. Candidates will be notified of interview dates and arrangements at the earliest opportunity. The onus will be on candidates to make themselves available for interview as advised.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview as required or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the National Adult Literacy Agency requires, in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Candidate Feedback

Feedback will be provided on written request.

Confidentiality

Please note that all personal data shall be treated as confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018.

Candidates should note canvassing will disqualify.

Summary of conditions of service

Pay

The salary for each of the three part-time roles is set at €15,000 per annum.

Tenure and probation

The positions will be offered initially on a 12 months fixed term basis. A probationary period of 6 months will apply from the date of commencement of employment.

Duties

The successful candidates will be required to perform any duties appropriate to the position which may be assigned from time to time. The position is part-time and the successful candidates may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which would interfere with the performance of official duties.

Headquarters

The post will be remote with candidates working from home. There will be some requirements to attend face-to-face meetings, workshops and focus groups where necessary.

Hours of attendance

Hours of attendance will amount, on average, to not less than **7 hours per week**.

Annual Leave

Annual leave will be 4.4 days a year. This allowance, which is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave, is on the basis of a one-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.