

Research and Policy Officer

Hiring booklet

Deadline for applications:

5 pm, Monday 8 May, 2023



National Adult Literacy Agency

Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

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1. About the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is a registered charity and membership-based organisation committed to ensuring that people with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital skills needs can fully take part in society.

The OECD Adult Skills Survey¹ shows that 18% or about one in six Irish adults are at or below level 1 on a five-level literacy scale. At this level a person may be unable to understand basic written information.

25% or one in four Irish adults score at or below level 1 for numeracy. At this level a person may struggle with doing simple math calculations. 42% of Irish adults score at or below level 1 on using technology to solve problems and accomplish tasks.

These unmet needs have devastating consequences for individuals, communities and the economy. People at the lowest literacy and numeracy levels earn less income, have poorer health and are more likely to be unemployed.

Since we were set up by volunteers in 1980, we have been a leading campaigning and lobbying force on adult literacy issues. We have been involved in national policy, tutor training and teaching resources, research and campaigns to support people with these unmet needs.

We are an equal opportunity employer.

See www.nala.ie for more information.

¹ For this survey the Central Statistics Office (CSO) assessed 6,000 people aged 16 – 65 in Ireland. The survey was done in 2012 and the results were announced in 2013.

2. About the position we are hiring for

2.1 About the position: Research and Policy Officer

We are recruiting a Research and Policy Officer to help us achieve our vision.

Our vision is an Ireland where:

- adult literacy is a human right,
- everyone can develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills, and
- everyone can take part fully in society.

This is an exciting opportunity to make a difference.

We are looking for an experienced and enthusiastic individual with the capabilities and commitment to

- create and contribute to NALA's legacy of evidence-based research and policy
- effect change:
 - for individuals with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs
 - in organisations that provide information and services to those individuals.

This role will support the delivery of:

- [NALA's Strategy Statement 2022-2023](#),
- the [Adult Literacy For Life: A 10-Year Adult Literacy, Numeracy And Digital Literacy Strategy](#) and
- [Future FET: Transforming Learning The National Further Education and Training \(FET\) Strategy](#).

2.2 Job description

Reporting relationship and key responsibilities

Reporting to NALA's Communications, Advocacy and Outreach Manager, you will undertake the following activities:

Research and policy

- Conduct and oversee internal research projects
- Oversee any externally commissioned research projects within budget and in accordance with agreed timelines and expected outcomes
- Oversee the preparation of policy submissions and consultation-based submissions that analyse and highlight gaps in literacy together with identifying recommendations / solutions to close those gaps
- Stay informed and assess the implications of relevant public policy, economic and social trends on literacy and NALA's current and future activities
- Support NALA and other key stakeholders to understand and respond appropriately to relevant public policy, economic and social trends impacting on individuals with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital skills needs
- Advise on areas of relevant research, policy and practice that should and could be developed, strengthened and, or implemented
- Develop and maintain relationships with policy makers and influencers.

Communications, Advocacy and Representation

- Represent and promote us at national, international fora, in the media when requested
- Liaise with key decision makers, statutory, voluntary bodies, international organisations, practitioners, academia, other NGOs, media and members when requested

Organisational Development

- Support NALA and NALA staff in developing their research and policy activities and skills
- Actively contribute to strategic planning, work planning, budgetary and evaluation activities
- Undertake other duties as may be reasonably required from time-to-time

2.3 Experience and qualifications

Applicants should have the following experience, attributes and qualifications.

Essential skills

- At a minimum, a level 8 qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications in social science, adult education, community development or related discipline;
- Experience of researching, drafting and editing preparing research documents, policy and consultation submissions;
- Strong qualitative and quantitative research skills;
- Experience convening and managing focus groups, action research, case studies statistical and trend analysis and other relevant research methods;
- Experience in advocacy, policy work and campaigns to effect change and to influence decision makers
- Analytical skills, including the ability to access and assimilate myriad sources information quickly and strategically;
- Recent experience of scoping, commissioning and managing research projects;
- Experience of developing and disseminating research and policy through events and other channels
- Excellent communication skills, written and verbal, and experience in clearly and creatively communicating complex issues clearly to diverse audiences;
- Excellent knowledge of the Irish political systems, as well as the policy environment
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to network, build relationships and engage effectively with, and influence, stakeholders at all levels;
- Proven ability to deal with multiple demands and competing priorities to tight deadlines;
- Ability to work well within a small dynamic team;
- Ability to work independently and autonomously and demonstrate initiative;
- Competency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Powerpoint), Teams and Sharepoint;
- Understanding and appreciation of NALA's mission and values

The following criteria are desirable:

- A Masters and, or Phd in a social science discipline;
- Recent experience and, or training in hybrid working;

- Teaching, lecturing and, or facilitation skills;
- Experience in a not for profit, membership organisation and, or registered charity.

2.4 Summary of the pay and conditions

Pay: The starting salary for the position will be at a point on NALA's Administrative Officer scale ranging from **€34,162 - €59,980**. Progression on the scale is subject to NALA's pay policy, satisfactory service and NALA's financial resources.

Hours: Full time, 35 hours a week.

Contract term and probation: The position is initially offered for 3 years on a fixed term basis. The contract will be renewed subject to satisfactory performance and NALA's financial resources. A probationary period of 6 months will apply from your start date.

Location: Hybrid (Sandford Lodge, Ranelagh, Dublin 6 and home). Hybrid (Sandford Lodge, Ranelagh, Dublin 6 and home). **Please note:** NALA has a Hybrid Working Policy that allows you to apply to work from home up to three days and in the office for a minimum of 2 days a week. The current anchor days for this position to be in Sandford Lodge are Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Annual Leave: 22 days a year subject to NALA's annual leave policy and your working full time (35 hours over 5 days). This is exclusive of the public holidays and privilege days that NALA staff are granted at Easter (Good Friday plus two days) and Christmas (Christmas Eve and all days falling before New Year's Day)

The above represents the primary pay and conditions of service. It is not the complete list which will be included in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful applicant.

3. About our hiring process

How to apply

Applicants should email a Cover Letter and Curriculum Vitae (CV) in one document to recruitment@nala.ie by **5pm Monday 8 May, 2023**.

The cover letter should outline:

- how you think your experience and qualifications match the criteria discussed in Section 2.2 above;
- why you want to work with us and;
- what difference you think you could make

The Cover Letter and CV should be:

- saved as one document
- named using the following format:

Last Name_First Name_NALA_Research

For example: Bloggs_Joe_ NALA_Research

- emailed to recruitment@nala.ie by **5pm Monday 8 May, 2023**.

Please note: Only applications that have followed the instructions above will be considered.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 5 days of applying, please email recruitment@nala.ie.

Selection process

The selection process will include a shortlisting of applicants based on their cover letter and curriculum vitae (CV). Shortlisted candidates will be called for interview. All applicants will receive an acknowledgement of their application and final notification of the outcome of their application.

Shortlisting

A shortlisting process is done by a panel of persons to select applicants for interview. The panel will review applicants' cover letter and CVs against the essential and desirable criteria. The panel will decide which applicants appear most suitable for the position and invite those applicants for interview. Shortlisted candidates may be required to submit further information before the interview.

Interview

NALA will invite shortlisted candidates to interview by a panel. The interview will explore how the candidate meets the essential and desirable criteria and their relevant experience to date. If required, candidates may be called for a second interview and or asked to complete a short task. Further information will be provided to shortlisted applicants before the interview.

Date of interview: Interviews for this position are provisionally scheduled to take place during the week of 22 May 2023. If you are shortlisted, you will be notified of interview dates and arrangements at the earliest opportunity. It will be your responsibility to make yourself available for interview as advised. If you do not attend for interview at the time agreed with NALA, your application will not be progressed.

Candidate feedback

We will provide you with feedback on your application and or interview if you submit a written request to recruitment@nala.ie.

Confidentiality

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

Canvassing will disqualify

4. Queries

Elaine Mullen, Office Manager

National Adult Literacy Agency

01 412 7900 recruitment@nala.ie.

NALA does not require the assistance of recruitment agencies to fill our vacancies.