Information Booklet

Open competition for appointment to the positions of

Senior Manager – Communications

Closing Date: Friday 12th June 2020

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Title of post: Senior Manager – Communications

Authority: Higher Education Authority

Location: 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4

About the Higher Education Authority

The HEA leads the strategic development of the Irish higher education and research system with the objective of creating a coherent system of diverse institutions with distinct missions, which is responsive to the social, cultural and economic development of Ireland and its people and supports the achievement of national objectives.

The HEA has a statutory responsibility, at central government level, for the effective governance and regulation of higher education institutions and the higher education system.

In exercising our mandate the HEA works to ensure that –

- we have due regard to institutional autonomy and academic freedom;
- institutional strategies are aligned with national strategic objectives,
- agreed objectives (detailed in compacts with institutions) are delivered through effective performance-management at institutional and system-levels.

Objectives span the enhancement of teaching and learning, the promotion of equity of access to higher education, the enhancement of institutions’ responsiveness to the needs of wider society, research capacity-building, and the internationalisation of Irish higher education. The HEA leads in developing the evidence-base which underpins strategic planning and strategy implementation at institutional, regional and national level.

In support of our mandate the HEA exercises functions in respect of –

- Funding
- Accountability
- The quality of outcomes
- Policy research and advice to the Minister
- Data analytics and knowledge management
- Advocacy and communicating higher education
- Co-ordination of interaction between public bodies and the higher education system.

The HEA is accountable to the Minister for Education and Skills, through his Department, for the achievement of national outcomes for the higher education sector. The HEA has conducted a service level agreement with the DES. Taken overall, the HEA exercises a central oversight role in the higher education system and is the lead agency in the creation of a co-ordinated system of higher education institutions with clear and diverse roles appropriate to their strengths and national
needs. HEA acts as a catalyst for change in the higher education system, requiring higher levels of performance while demonstrating an appropriate level of accountability, consistent with institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

**About the Irish Research Council (IRC)**

The Irish Research Council is an associated agency of the Department of Education and Skills under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The Council’s mission is to create and to sustain excellence within and balance across the Irish research ecosystem. The Council supports exceptional researchers in developing their research ideas throughout all career stages, ensuring that their potential is fully realised so that Ireland can reap the full benefit of those ideas and innovations. The Council fosters and invests in a range of partnerships, both nationally and internationally, to enable the development and transfer of knowledge that underpins social, economic and cultural progress, and to connect researchers and expertise with the wider community. In delivering on its mission, the Council also partners on a number of initiatives with enterprise, employers, government departments and civic society.

Further information on the HEA and IRC are available on our websites [www.hea.ie](http://www.hea.ie) and [www.research.ie](http://www.research.ie)

**Context for the role**

**Senior Manager – Communications**

The HEA wishes to appoint a communications professional to lead and oversee the development of a new communications unit that will effectively manage the internal and external communications of the HEA. Central to this role will be the finalisation and implementation of a HEA communications and stakeholder engagement strategy.

**Job Description Senior Manager, Communications**

- Manage a small communications team working to deadlines across the HEA’s remit
- Working with Section Head and HEA management to finalise a HEA’s Communications and Stakeholder Strategy and develop a roadmap for its implementation
- Deliver the full range of communications planning, implementation and evaluation services to HEA internal clients
- Be service-user and client-focused, and understand the fundamental role, purpose, structure and strategic goals of the HEA and IRC
- Work and manage as project lead on a varied cross-section of communications projects. This will involve analysis of client needs, identifying audiences and their needs, drafting a communication strategy and plans, agreeing and achieving priorities, objectives and KPIs, carrying out the project tasks, ensuring others carry out their tasks, and closing evaluations
- Work as a team member on implementation of larger scale projects, with a focus on communications effectiveness and evaluation. This will involve developing information, education, news or creative content; producing materials, print and online tools or
resources; ensuring they are shared with the target audience to achieve behaviour change, learning or solve audience problems.

- Show excellent writing, editing and communications skills, tailored for target audiences, with an understanding of online and offline writing requirements.
- Work with colleagues across the HEA, IRC and from external partners to contribute to stakeholder engagement. This will also involve developing media relations as Press officer and first point of contact for media queries.
- Act as a key client contact with the HEA and IRC’s range of service providers and suppliers, including media monitoring, the creative and media buying advertising agencies, distribution companies, research companies, printers, graphic designers, digital agencies, press and others.
- Represent the HEA and IRC in business relationships with suppliers; draft briefs, manage contracts, establish/commission media plans, budgets and performance on relevant projects, and develop an excellent working knowledge of the marketing communications industry and how it operates.
- Support Section Heads and other managers in the HEA and IRC on the proactive use of social media.
- Manage HEA’s web presence (www.hea.ie) and social media and as required other websites in the HEA and IRC. Lead on social media engagement and identify optimal media opportunities to engage with the HEA and Council’s multiple stakeholder.
- Other duties deemed appropriate.

Requirements:

Qualifications

- Minimum NFQ level 8 qualification in Marketing/Communication/Journalism or similar.

Experience:

- Significant experience within a team that has delivered projects/ campaigns involving media relations, corporate communications, public relations, public information materials, digital content and marketing.
- Management, supervisory experience with staff.
- Significant experience that has involved the delivery of results through a project/programme management approach.
- Demonstrated capacity to achieve results through engagement with multiple stakeholders and competing demands as relevant to this role.
- Experience in the development and publication of web content.
- Experience in using social media and online hosting platforms to include, for example, Twitter, Hootsuite, LinkedIn, Podbean, YouTube.
- Experience in creating accessible content on complex policies and functions suitable for a wide audience.

Skills and personal attributes

- Attention to detail, including excellent writing ability and experience in the production of professional reports and content and documents for online and offline publication.
- Excellent IT skills including Microsoft Office Suite or similar, Social Media and Digital Media experience.
- An ability to think and operate at policy, strategic and operational levels.
- Ability to exercise professional judgement, and to behave with tact and force yet be diplomatic.
• Ability to manage internal and external relationships and deal with sensitive issues in the appropriate manner
• Proactive in approach using initiative and innovation in pursuing challenges

**Required Competencies**

• Leadership and strategic direction
• Analysis and decision making
• Management and delivery of results
• Building relationships and communication
• Specialist knowledge, expertise and self-development
• Drive and commitment to Public Service values

**Desirable Qualifications/Experience**

• Professional or Postgraduate qualification is desirable
• Strategic Digital Marketing
• Irish language ability
• Membership of Public Relations Institute of Ireland / Marketing Institute of Ireland
• Project Management
• Google Analytics

**Reporting to:** Head of Policy and Strategic Planning

**Principal Conditions of Service**

**Part 1 (Conditions which particularly apply to this position)**

1. **Pay:** The salary scale for this position is as follows:

PPC - €67,659 €70,104 €72,537 €74,977 €77,411 €78,816 €81,274 (LSI 1) €83,740 (LSI 2)

PPC (Personal Pension Contribution) Scale (for officers who are existing civil or public servants appointed on or after 6 April 1995 or who are new entrants to the civil or public service and who are making a compulsory personal pension contribution).

Different pay and conditions may apply if, prior to appointment, the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed prior to 6th April 1995.

Increments may be awarded subject to satisfactory service and to changes in the terms and conditions relating to salary increments in the Civil/Public Service generally.

The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

**Salary:** The appointment will be made on the salary scale at a point in line with current Government Pay Policy. New entrants to the Civil or Public Sector, as defined in Circular 18/2010, will commence on the first point of the salary scale. Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant.

2. **Annual Leave:** Annual Leave will be 30 working days. This leave is exclusive of public holidays.
3. **Hours of Attendance:** Working hours will be in accordance with the standard arrangements for HEA and will equate to no less than a 37 hours (net of rest breaks) per week.

   No additional payment will be made for extra attendance as the rate of remuneration payable covers any exceptional extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

4. **Location:** This position is currently based at 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4. Currently HEA staff are working from home having regard to Government arrangements. While some return to working from the HEA’s Offices is possible from mid-June it is envisaged that staff will continue to work from home for a number of days each week having regard to the need to maintain physical distancing through the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Part II (Other conditions which apply generally to appointees to this position)**

1. **Tenure:** The appointment is a permanent post subject to a probationary period that will be no greater than 11 months.

2. **Duties:** The appointee will be expected to perform all acts, duties and obligations as appropriate to this position (which may be revised from time to time).

3. **Outside Employment:** The position is whole-time and the appointee must avoid involvement in outside employment/business interests in conflict or in potential conflict with the business of HEA. Clarification must be sought from management where any doubt arises.

4. **Sick Leave:** Sick leave with full pay may be allowed at the discretion of the Higher Education Authority in accordance with established procedures and conditions for the public service generally.

5. **Retirement and Superannuation:** The appointee will be offered public service pension terms and retirement age conditions in accordance with pension arrangements in the HEA depending on the status of the successful appointee:

   a) 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);

   b) An individual who is on secondment will remain a member of the parent organisation’s pension scheme and the pensionable remuneration will be based on his/her substantive grade i.e. the grade at which the individual is employed in his/her parent organisation;

   c) 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 be a member of the HEA’s Staff Superannuation Scheme and Associated Spouses and Children’s Scheme;

   d) At the time of being offered an appointment, the HEA in consultation with the Department of Education & Skills and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform if necessary, will, in the light of the appointee’s previous Public Service (and/or other) employment history, determine the appropriate pension terms and conditions to apply for the duration of the
appointment. 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;

e) Retirement age shall be subject to relevant superannuation scheme provision and the statutory provisions set out in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 and the Public Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act 2018;

f) 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 Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER) or the Health Service Executive VER/VRS which, as outlined below, render a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to payment of that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

- **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.

6. **Pension Related Deduction:** This appointment is subject to the pension-related deduction in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2009. For further information in relation to public service superannuation issues please see the following website: [http://per.gov.ie/pensions](http://per.gov.ie/pensions)
7. **Eligibility to compete:** Candidates should note that eligibility to compete is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

8. **Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):** It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

9. **Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):** The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

10. **Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants**
    The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the public service by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility) and the Minister’s consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any public service body.

11. **Declaration of previous public service employment history:**
    Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement and/or the collective agreement outlined above. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

**Competition Process**

**How to Apply**
Applications should be made by sending a current CV together with a cover letter / supporting statement outlining suitability for the post by email to Padraig Mellett, Head of Corporate Affairs recruit@hea.ie no later than **5pm on Friday 12th June 2020**. Applicants will be required to provide a declaration as outlined in paragraph 11.

**Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.**

**Cover letter / supporting statement**
In less than 1000 words in total, please outline the reasons you are applying for this post. Please refer to the competencies set out in the "required competencies" section above and outline how you specifically meet each of the competencies by providing at least one example for each.

**Selection Process**

The selection may include shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application and by:

- Interview, either in person in the HEA’s offices or via MS Teams.
- Satisfactory references (referees will not be contacted without the candidate’s prior agreement)

The Higher Education Authority reserves the right to require candidates attend a second interview.

**Shortlisting**

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate 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 HEA may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, the HEA provide for the employment of a short-listing 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 interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application.

**Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 as amended applications will be treated in strict confidence.

**Security Clearance**

Police vetting may be sought in respect of individuals who come under consideration for appointment. The applicant will be required to complete and return a Garda Vetting form should they come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to An Garda Síochána for security checks on all Irish and Northern Irish addresses at which they resided. If unsuccessful this information will be destroyed by the HEA. If the applicant subsequently comes under consideration for another position, they will be required to supply this information again.

**Other important information**

The HEA will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the HEA are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition 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 HEA 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 HEA may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process

**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.

**Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**
Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by the HEA, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the HEA requires in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

**Quality Customer Service**
We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

Feedback will be provided on written request. Having regard to the significant level of recruitment involving the HR section applicants are advised that it may take some time to respond to requests for feedback.

**Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2018**
When your application form 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 should you be successful certain information you provide will be held by the HEA. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988, 2003 and 2018. To make a request under the Data Protection Act 2018,
please submit your request in writing to: Human Resources & Accounts, HEA, 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Crampton Avenue, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4, ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. 

Alternatively, you can email dataprotection@hea.ie A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, or personal cheque, made payable to the ‘HEA’.