

## Candidate Information Booklet

Senior Professional Development Specialist:  
Management, People Development  
and Human Resources

Institute of Public Administration

Closing date: Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 @12 noon



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# About the IPA

## What we do

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is Ireland's only public service development agency focused exclusively on public sector development, which is provided through:

- Education and Professional Development: building people's capability to meet current and future challenges.
- Advisory and Consultancy: solving problems and helping plan and shape the future.

Our blend of experience, skills and knowledge of the public sector allows us to offer a wide range of bespoke services which meet our clients' needs precisely and effectively and whilst our services are delivered mainly to clients in the Irish public service, we have a strong reputation and demand for our services internationally also.

Find out more about the IPA at: [www.ipa.ie](http://www.ipa.ie).

## The Organisation

Founded in 1957, the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is a leading provider of education, professional development and advisory services for the public sector in Ireland. Its objective is to advance the understanding, standard and practice of public administration and public policy. The IPA is a recognised college of the National University of Ireland.

## Professional Development in the IPA:

The Professional Development Department within the IPA is embarking on an exciting strategic plan, focused on empowering the public service workforce with essential and emerging capabilities through our programmes and services.

Professional Development provides a portfolio of open and custom-designed development programmes, advisory services, seminars, conferences and fora that are specifically designed to meet the needs of client organisations and individuals within the Public Service. The Department works in partnership with clients in the civil service, local government, health, education, commercial and non-commercial state bodies and agencies, and public benefit sectors to build capacity and capabilities at organisational levels, strengthen individual generalist and specialist skills, and build a range of competencies, as well as in the provision of advisory and support services.

Programme specialists and subject matters experts combine experience and expertise in specific disciplines with a deep understanding of the public, state and public benefit sector, and the challenges within client organisations.

Forming a key foundation of the work at the Institute, Professional Development is central to ensuring that the IPA is strategically fit for purpose in delivering against the needs of the public service and continually driving change and transformation required for a future-focused workforce.

## What we offer

<b>Competitive salary (IPA Grade 2)</b>	<p>Starting salary €79,301 per annum.</p> <p>Rising to €113,786 (12-point salary scale, the top 2 points are long service increments).</p> <p>Annual increase subject to satisfactory performance.</p> <p>Additional pay increases in line with national pay agreements (2% March 2025).</p> <p>Prior public sector experience will be taken into consideration in determining starting salary.</p>
<b>Holidays and Leave</b>	<p>30 days annual leave.</p> <p>Hybrid working – up to 2 days working from home subject to operational demands.</p>
<b>Central location</b>	<p>Based in Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4 beside dart station.</p> <p>Premises subject to relocation to central city-centre office in 2025 (estimate).</p>
<b>Pension</b>	<p>Career-Average Defined Benefit Pension Scheme.</p> <p>Retirement benefits are mainly based on a percentage of your pensionable earnings throughout your public service career (Single Pension Scheme for Public Servants).</p> <p>Prior public sector employees (pre-2013) will be entered on to the IPA superannuation scheme.</p>
<b>Staff Development</b>	<p>Support for professional development programmes, to assist in developing skills and expertise.</p>
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>Permanent contract. Employee supports including Employee Assistance Programme, Tax-free travel pass, Bike-to-work scheme.</p>
<b>Public Service ethos</b>	<p>We make a difference, and we are proud of what we do.</p> <p>The Institute is involved in every part of the public service and this role is exciting and varied. If you get satisfaction from your client's successes and you want to be part of a strategy for developing better public services, then you should consider furthering your career within the IPA.</p>

## Job Description

**Grade:** Grade 2

**Reports to:** Director of Professional Development (or their nominee)

### Job Function:

The role of Senior Professional Development Specialist in Management, People Development and Strategic HRM is a new position which will play a pivotal role in the development, management and delivery of Institute's established and successful professional development portfolio in these areas. This portfolio includes role and grade development programmes in the civil service and local authority, people development, recruitment, CIPD, strategic HRM and related courses. Through their leadership, the appointee will be responsible for ensuring that the existing and future portfolio of professional development services contributes to enhancing relevant capabilities and capacity of the public service in Ireland.

The Senior Specialist, their team and Department colleagues, and the Institute as a whole, play an important role in supporting the public service to deliver on its ambitions for its services to the public, as illustrated, for example, in thematic transformation strategies such as Better Public Services, and through public and civil service capability frameworks and professionalisation strategies.

The role is central to the Institute's commitment to support the learning and development needs of our civil and public service clients and thereby ensure that public service employees are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge to effectively serve society and adhere to regulatory standards. In this regard, the Senior Specialist will be a role model internally and externally for our values and ambitions.

Reporting to the Director of Professional Development, the Senior Specialist will be responsible for leading and managing a team and associate specialist resources to design and deliver professional development courses, advisory and related services on behalf of the Institute's clients. Ongoing scoping, design, promotion and review of appropriate role-, grade-, organisation- and sector-relevant courses and services will be critical to ensure this portfolio continues to successfully meet the needs of the public service.

The post-holder will collaborate with other Specialists across the Professional Development Department (Governance, Policy, Local Government, Sustainability, etc.), the Whitaker School, Senior Public Service Department and Digital Learning to ensure a quality, holistic, relevant and responsive portfolio of services are available to our clients.

## Duties and Responsibilities

The key duties and responsibilities of the role are outlined below. As a Senior Specialist, the role holder will focus on these duties in the areas of Management, People Development and Strategic HRM, and will also work collaboratively across Professional Development and the IPA to achieve goals and objectives.

### Design and Delivery of Professional Development

- **Design and Delivery:** Convene, design and deliver professional development and training programmes, seminars, conferences, fora and events, taking responsibility for the content and delivery of programmes in Professional Development.
- **Manage quality system:** contribute to an ongoing quality assurance, management and enhancement programme as a senior member of the team, reviewing evaluation and feedback gathered from programmes, and integrate this to future developments.
- **Curriculum Development:** Lead the team on the design and development of professional development solutions that reflect best practice and requirements in public service. This will include a range of non-accredited and professionally accredited programmes, and will often involve client and stakeholder engagement in the development and review process.
- **Best Practices:** Regularly research and integrate best practices into Professional Development's portfolio of services. Develop and maintain relevant networks.
- **Design, lead and provide advisory services:** and related services for the sector.

### Management and Leadership

- **Line management of specialist and professional staff:** Manage and lead team members as assigned, including day to day line management duties, resource planning and fostering of a positive team environment for staff, to high standards and compliance with policies.
- **Management of Associate (contracted) Specialists:** Manage contracted associates across the life cycle of engagement and across the learners' life cycle, in accordance with IPA policies and procedures. This includes the engagement process, overseeing content and delivery of material by Associate Specialists / Lecturers, performance evaluation and contract management.
- **Role model the Institute's values:** actively develop a culture within the team that reflects the mission, values, strategy and ambition of the Institute.
- **Resource and Capacity Management:** Plan and manage the capacity requirements for the portfolio based on annual budgets and business plans. Guide staff assigned to programmes and projects to ensure that the services are delivered to a high standard.
- **Financial Management:** Assist the Director of Professional Development with the financial management of the Department as required, including the

preparation and review of annual plans and budgets, income/ spend analysis, operational review of day to day finances in the team, and contribute to proactive risk management.

- **Reporting and Documentation:** Ensure that accurate record keeping and reporting of portfolio activity, staffing, quality, finance and other measures as required.

### **Strategic Planning and implementation**

- **Strategic Management of portfolio:** In conjunction with the Director of Professional Development and colleagues, strategically plan for the Department's Management, People Development and HRM portfolio, implementing over a multi-year horizon.
- **Strategic Initiatives and Solutions:** Initiate, contribute to, and develop services to respond to the challenges, needs and opportunities facing clients, demonstrating thought leadership and long-term value for the public service.

### **Stakeholder and Client Relationships**

- **Client Relationship Management:** Build and manage client relationships with key stakeholders across the public service.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Pro-actively engage with stakeholders to identify learning, development and advisory needs and solutions. Contribute to a cross-departmental stakeholder engagement plan.
- **Business Development:** Develop proposals and responses to client requests, both from direct requests and in collaboration with the IPA and department's communications and operations teams.

### **General**

- **Continuous Professional Development:** Actively participate in professional development opportunities to enhance personal training skills and sector-specific knowledge.
- **Thought Leadership:** Contribute to the ongoing development of the Institute's reputation for thought leadership in professional development, and relevant service domains through publications, insight pieces, speaking engagements and other events.
- **Collaboration:** Work collaboratively with other IPA teams and with external stakeholders on the design and delivery of programmes and services, e.g., through project and working groups, and formal steering and advisory groups.
- **Other Duties:** Undertake such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Director General or Director of Professional Development. Deputise for the Director of Professional Development as required.

- **One IPA:** Participate as part of the extended senior management team in Institute-wide matters, developing and contributing to Institute-wide initiatives and programmes as required.

## About the ideal candidate

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline (essential)</li> <li>• Postgraduate degree (or equivalent) in management, leadership, learning and development, strategic human resource management, public administration/policy, social sciences or a related field (essential).</li> <li>• Commitment to relevant continuous professional development, including pursuit of any relevant qualifications or memberships required for the continued success of IPA Professional Development.</li> <li>• Professional qualifications and/or membership of relevant professional bodies, e.g., training, learning and development, project management or governance (desirable).</li> </ul>
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An understanding of the role and objectives of the Institute.</li> <li>• Demonstrated knowledge of the latest trends in professional development within the public service in general.</li> <li>• In-depth understanding of public service operations and challenges is desirable.</li> <li>• Working knowledge of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights duty.</li> <li>• Proficient in use of Microsoft suite, virtual delivery and e-learning technologies.</li> </ul>
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seven to ten years' experience at the appropriate level and in a relevant role comprising professional development/training, learning and development, education and/or operations, preferably within the public service (essential).</li> <li>• Experience of management of teams in a professional setting (essential).</li> <li>• Experience in course/curriculum development and delivery (essential).</li> <li>• Evidence of managing projects in a complex multi-stakeholder environment (essential).</li> <li>• Experience of working in or with a public service system (essential).</li> </ul>

Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent training and facilitation skills including presentation and communication skills to varying group and audience sizes.</li> <li>• Demonstrated record of evidence-informed portfolio development and management in a learning and development environment.</li> <li>• Demonstrated ability to design professional development solutions to address complex client requirements.</li> <li>• Ability to manage a diverse workload and competing demands.</li> <li>• Excellent client relationship management skills.</li> <li>• Proven organisational and planning abilities.</li> <li>• Strong research, analytical, data management and writing skills.</li> <li>• Creative problem-solving skills and adaptability.</li> </ul>
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to lead a team, setting out vision, goals and tangible deliverables and fostering commitment to achievement of strategic objectives with a focus on performance and accountability.</li> <li>• High level of integrity and professionalism.</li> <li>• Passionate about public service and capability development.</li> <li>• Upholds the values and obligations of the Equality Acts and Public Sector Duty on Human Rights.</li> <li>• Approachable, with the ability to build rapport with a diverse range of participants and clients.</li> <li>• Committed to lifelong learning and professional growth.</li> <li>• Adaptable to diverse groups and learning environments.</li> <li>• Willingness to travel within Ireland for training delivery or other duties.</li> <li>• Fluent in English, with proficiency in Irish being an advantage.</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each candidate shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service</li> </ul>

## **General Conditions**

This position will be filled on a permanent or secondment basis.

Applicants should note that the Professional Development department is currently undertaking a strategic review, and therefore reporting lines may alter.

## **Our Values**

Character: Each candidate must demonstrate commitment to the IPA values:

- Integrity;
- Client-Centred and Responsive;
- Openness and Accountability;
- Trust and Respect;
- Innovation and Learning;
- Research-Led;
- Practice-Led.

## **Our commitment to supporting our Staff**

The Institute is committed to embracing opportunities for blended working, to build a dynamic, agile and responsive organisation while sustaining strong standards of performance and high levels of productivity.

A healthy work-life balance is important to us and we recognise this by offering a comprehensive range of work-life balance options and a wide variety of special leave options.

We provide access to the Cycle to Work Scheme and the Tax Saver Scheme and we have a staff wellbeing and employee assistance programme.

We are committed to providing ongoing learning and development opportunities so that you can develop to your full potential. Staff are actively encouraged to pursue further education opportunities.

## **Our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

As an equal opportunity employer, we are committed to implementing equal opportunities in all our employment policies and procedures.

The Institute of Public Administration values and welcomes diversity and is committed to creating a truly inclusive workplace. We aim to develop colleagues to enable them to make a full contribution to meeting the Institute's objectives, and to fulfil their own potential on merit.

We welcome and encourage job applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

## **Principal Conditions of Service**

### **Remuneration**

The salary scale for this position ranges from €79,301 to €113,786 (12 point scale, the top 2 long service increments) per annum pro rata.

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant or Public Servant.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current government policy.

### **Tenure**

This role is offered on a permanent basis. A secondment arrangement may be considered on request from another Public Sector organisation.

### **Location**

While the position is Dublin based, a considerable proportion of our work is delivered in client organisations throughout Ireland, and abroad on occasions. Members of the staff of the Institute may be required to attend meetings and other functions on occasions outside normal working hours.

### **Hours of Attendance**

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time but will not amount to less than 35 hours per week (pro-rata for part-time employees). The successful candidate will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of their duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.

The Institute operates a formal Blended Working model based on service/business requirements.

### **Annual Leave**

The Annual Leave allowance for this position is 30 days (pro-rata for part-time employees). This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the Institute, is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

### **Sick Leave**

The rate of pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the Civil & Public Service sick leave circulars.

### **Safety & Welfare**

The holder of the post shall co-operate with the terms of the Institute's Safety Statement. They shall familiarise themselves with the safety rules and procedures and adhere to same.

## **Training**

It is a condition of employment that successful candidates will be required to participate in training programmes relevant to the skills necessary for the performance of the duties attaching to the post.

## **Superannuation Contribution**

Membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme is compulsory for all employees except where there is membership of pre-existing public service superannuation scheme. Details will be provided to the appointee prior to appointment.

For new entrants under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme, effective from 1st January 2013, superannuation contributions are as follows: 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration and 3% of pensionable remuneration. Pension and retirement lump sum will be based on career-average pensionable remuneration; pensions will be co-ordinated with the State Pension Contributory.

## **Additional Superannuation Contribution**

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. Note; ASC deductions are in addition to any pension contributions (main scheme and spouses' and children's contributions) required under the rules of your pension scheme.

## **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.

## **Confidentiality**

All enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings relating to recruitment and selection are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone outside those directly involved in the recruitment process.

## **Freedom of Information**

Candidates can expect that all enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014.

## **Eligibility to Compete**

Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

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

- A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

## **Application & Selection**

### **Before you proceed**

Before proceeding with this phase of the selection process you should satisfy yourself that you meet the education & experience criteria for the post as set out in this booklet.

### **Communications**

Conscia will contact you when necessary, at each stage of the competition by email. You should only submit one email address for all correspondence in relation to this competition.

It is important to note that the email address you provide when applying must be one that you can access at all times. The onus is on the applicant to inform Conscia of any change in email address throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing [ipa@consciatalent.com](mailto:ipa@consciatalent.com). The onus is also on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from Conscia. Conscia does not accept responsibility for communications not accessed or received by an applicant.

### **How to apply**

Conscia will be managing all aspects of the recruitment process on behalf of Institute of Public Administration. All information on the role can be found at <https://www.consciatalent.com/ipa>

Applications should be only made online through <https://www.consciatalent.com/ipajobs>

Applications must be made by attaching the following elements:

- A comprehensive CV.
- A short cover letter outlining why you wish to be considered for the post and where you believe your skills, experience and values meet the requirements for the position.

When outlining your application, accuracy is essential. The information you supply in your application will play a central part of the selection process. Only applications fully submitted online will be accepted into the campaign.

### **Closing Date**

Your application must be submitted on the <https://consciatalent.com/ipajobs> portal not later than **12 noon on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025**. **Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.**

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within 24 hours of applying, please email: [ipa@consciatalent.com](mailto:ipa@consciatalent.com)

You are advised to check your email on a regular basis as email notifications of updates/ tests/ Interviews etc issued to your address may sometimes be filtered into your Junk/ Spam email folders. You are also advised to check all these folders regularly.

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from Conscia Limited. Conscia Limited accept no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

### **Selection Process**

The Selection Process may include the following:

- Short-listing of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application;
- Competitive interview;
- Work sample/role play/media exercise, and any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

Please note that the Institute reserves the right to hold any part of the selection process by way of remote/video-call platform or other appropriate methodology.

### **Shortlisting**

The Institute reserves the right to shortlist applications. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop shortlisting process based on the information contained in the applications submitted or a shortlisting interview.

Where, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to the competition and the standard of knowledge, training or experience in general of such persons, the Institute considers that it would be reasonable not to admit all the persons to the competition, the Institute may admit to the competition only persons who appear likely to it to attain in the competition a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment.

The information you supply in your application will play a central part in the shortlisting process. The Institute's decision to include you on the shortlist of

candidates going forward to the next stage of the process may be determined based on this information.

## **Interview**

You will be contacted in relation to any interview dates and times. You may also be contacted in relation to the requirement to complete an on-line questionnaire should this be included in the selection process. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you are requested to bring photographic identification.

The interview is your opportunity to give evidence of your knowledge, skills and experience and the Institute's opportunity to assess your suitability for the role as advertised.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the Institute is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the role 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, the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview.

The Institute may at its discretion require candidates to attend a preliminary interview in which case admission to the competitive interview would be conditional on candidates reaching such a standard as the Institute considers appropriate in the preliminary interview.

Interviews shall be conducted by Board(s) set up by the Institute. The Board(s) will assess the merits of candidates (except insofar as they are assessed otherwise) in respect of matters referred to in the prescribed qualifications and any other relevant matters. Only candidates who reach such a standard as the Institute considers satisfactory in the competitive interview shall be considered for selection and placed on a panel. The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for interview.

The Institute reserves the right to vary the number and sequence of each stage of the selection process as the competition progresses

## **Panels**

A panel may be formed on the basis of the outcomes of the selection process. Placement on any panel from this competition is no guarantee that a position will be offered. The selection process will not be concluded until such time as references have been sought and clearance checks, i.e., occupational health, and verification of education qualifications, have been carried out.

## **Offer of Appointment**

The Institute shall require persons to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month, or as agreed. If they fail to take up the appointment within such period, or such longer period as the Institute in its absolute discretion may determine, the Institute may not appoint them.

## **Probationary Period**

All new employees are required to satisfactorily complete a probationary period, in accordance with the 'Terms and Conditions of Employment' in their employment contract. Employees will be required to serve an initial probationary period. During this period, the employee's performance on the job and potential abilities are evaluated to determine suitability for the position. At the end of this probationary period, a formal assessment will be carried out by the employee's line manager, resulting in a decision on whether the employee has completed their probation satisfactorily.

## **Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not complete and submit any assessments before the specified date or do not attend/undertake any stage of the selection process as requested or do not furnish such evidence as requested in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

## **Data Protection**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive. The personal information (data) collected on the application form, including any attachments, (which may include the collection of sensitive personal data) is collected for the purpose of processing this application and any data collected is subject to the regulations.

**Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify.**

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

**The Institute is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.**