

Information Booklet

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants on behalf of the Ombudsman for Children will hold a competition for the purpose of recommending a person for appointment on a temporary fixed-term contract (26 weeks) to the position of:

Senior Communications Officer in the Ombudsman for Children's Office

Grade: Higher Executive Officer (HEO)

Closing date: 12.00pm Monday, 07 December 2020

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. is committed to a policy of equal opportunity. Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. will run this campaign in compliance with the Codes of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and which are available on www.cpsa.ie

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Title of Position: Senior Communications Officer in the Ombudsman for Children's Office
Grade: Higher Executive Officer (HEO)
Employing Authority: Ombudsman for Children
Location: Dublin 1

BACKGROUND

Ombudsman for Children's Office

The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) is an independent statutory body, which was established in 2004 under the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002, as amended (2002 Act). The Ombudsman for Children is independent and directly accountable to the Oireachtas in relation to the exercise of his statutory functions under the 2002 Act. These functions are:

- to promote the rights and welfare of children
- to examine and investigate complaints made by or on behalf of children in relation to the administrative actions of public organisations that have, or may have, adversely affected a child.

Further information about this work is available on the OCO's website at www.oco.ie.

OCO's Communications Unit

The OCO Communications team works closely with all units within the OCO to fulfil our statutory obligations and to deliver on the both the Business Plan and the Strategic Plan set out by the OCO Management Team.

The Communications unit is responsible for all media engagement, social media and public affairs output. The Communications unit leads on all OCO publication, design, launches and media promotion, we are responsible for OCO brand management and stakeholder engagement. The Communications team attend events to promote the work of office and to raise awareness of children's rights. Internal communications, the OCO Irish Language Scheme and the OCO Plain English Policy also sit with the OCO Communications unit.

THE ROLE

The OCO is seeking a Senior Communications Officer on a six-month (26 weeks) fixed-term contract at Higher Executive Officer level to join the Communications team. The successful candidate will play a key role in increasing awareness of the Ombudsman for Children's Office, as well as awareness of children's rights. They will be expected to effectively network, build relationships and engage with and influence stakeholders at all levels of seniority and to apply judgement and flexibility.

Key Responsibilities:

The successful candidate will be expected to undertake the following principal duties as part of the Communications team:

- Working with the Communications Manager, the Senior Communications Officer will plan media activity including PR campaigns at national and local level, OCO publications and events. They will work with the Communications team to develop and implement media

relations strategies in line with the OCO's Communications Strategy and the current Business Plan.

- Media Relations, including preparation of Press Releases, handling of enquiries from journalists and other media contacts via telephone calls and email; management of comprehensive media list and proactive media relationship building as required by the organisation's business priorities.
- Arranging and organising events, interviews and press conferences.
- Monitoring current affairs and media coverage of the organisation. Dissemination of this information in a manner that provides utility to relevant internal stakeholders.
- Development and implementation of the organisation's digital and social media strategy, including related content calendars based on the organisation's communications priorities. Creating content that can be leveraged across all of the organisation's platforms.
- Providing support and briefing to spokespeople in preparation for media engagements and coordination of training if required.
- The Senior Communications Officer will lead on specific OCO projects expanding the reach of the Office and growing awareness in all parts of the country. These projects will be allocated specific budgets and will be designed in line with the OCO Strategic Plan.
- The successful candidate will manage and provide guidance to the Communications and Social Media Executive, as well as to the Communications Project Officer.
- The Senior Communications Officer will provide support to the Communications Manager with any other tasks assigned.

Experience And Personal Qualities Required

We are looking for someone who is dynamic, enthusiastic, solution-oriented and passionate about communications.

You will be:

- Interested in working in a diverse environment potentially working with cross-functional and cross-organisational teams;
- Someone who takes a thorough and structured approach to organising tasks and solving problems and who can deliver on time against project deadlines;
- Someone who can establish and maintain good working relationships with others, identify their needs and be receptive and responsive to their queries;
- Someone who keeps up to date with emerging technologies and is always eager to learn new skills;
- Driven by an ambition to be part of providing the best possible communications services to your organisation, its customers and to members of public.

Essential Requirements

Candidates must have:

- At least a Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Journalism, Multi Media, Communications, Marketing, Public Relations or related discipline

And

- Demonstrable experience in two or more of the following:
 - Working on communications campaigns
 - Working in or for the media

Using and updating digital/social media in a professional capacity, including Mobile Journalism (MoJo)
Working in Event Management
Developing content across a range of platforms
Website management
Stakeholder management

- Proven experience in delivery of public relations/public awareness campaigns for an organisation
- Experience of leading a team and/or taking the lead on key projects
- The ability to work closely with senior management and their teams to devise, design and implement communications strategies / programmes for their organisation and to lead and drive public relations, including media-relations and stakeholder engagement and provide expertise and advisory services for major events
- Experience of using and updating social media in a professional capacity;
- Excellent writing skills and/or creative skills with the ability to present material in a clear, concise and comprehensive manner;
- A commitment to achieving quality results and ensuring all tasks are completed to a very high standard;
- The ability to work calmly under pressure and deal with multiple demands and competing priorities to tight deadlines;
- Strong judgement, problem solving and decision making skills;
- Excellent interpersonal skills demonstrating an understanding and sensitivity in dealing with others and ability to explain, advocate and express facts and ideas in a convincing manner,
- A proven ability to develop and maintain networks effectively,
- Be motivated, flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change and be capable of using own initiative as and when appropriate
- A strong interest in public affairs and be committed to the concept of public service

Desirable Requirements

- Experience in acting as media spokesperson for an organisation
- Experience in Non-Linear Editing Systems i.e. Final Cut Pro or Premiere Pro
- Experience in the use of Photo Shop and Creative Cloud
- A good understanding of children's rights and the workings of the Oireachtas

Key Competencies for effective performance as Higher Executive Officer

Team Leadership

- Works with the team to facilitate high performance, developing clear and realistic objectives and addressing and performance issues if they arise
- Provides clear information and advice as to what is required of the team
- Strives to develop and implement new ways of working effectively to meet objectives
- Leads the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required
- Places high importance on staff development, training and maximising skills & capacity of team.
- Is flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change

Analysis & Decision Making

- Gathers and analyses information from relevant sources, whether financial, numerical or otherwise weighing up a range of critical factors

- Takes account of any broader issues and related implications when making decisions
- Uses previous knowledge and experience in order to guide decisions
- Makes sound decisions with a well-reasoned rationale and stands by these
- Puts forward solutions to address problems

Management & Delivery of Results

- Takes responsibility and is accountable for the delivery of agreed objectives
- Successfully manages a range of different projects and work activities at the same time
- Structures and organises their own and others work effectively
- Is logical and pragmatic in approach, delivering the best possible results with the resources available
- Delegates work effectively, providing clear information and evidence as to what is required
- Proactively identifies areas for improvement and develops practical suggestions for their implementation
- Demonstrates enthusiasm for new developments/changing work practices and strives to implement these changes effectively.
- Applies appropriate systems/ processes to enable quality checking of all activities and outputs
- Practices and promotes a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service, for internal and external customers

Interpersonal & Communication Skills

- Builds and maintains contact with colleagues and other stakeholders to assist in performing role
- Acts as an effective link between staff and senior management
- Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues
- Projects conviction, gaining buy-in by outlining relevant information and selling the benefits
- Treats others with diplomacy, tact, courtesy and respect, even in challenging circumstances
- Presents information clearly, concisely and confidently when speaking and in writing

Drive and Commitment

- Strives to perform at a high level, investing significant energy to achieve agreed objectives
- Demonstrates resilience in the face of challenging circumstances and high demands
- Is personally trustworthy and can be relied upon
- Ensures that customers are at the heart of all services provided
- Upholds high standards of honesty, ethics and integrity

Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development

- Has a clear understanding of the roles, objectives and targets of self and team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department and effectively communicates this to others
- Has high levels of expertise and broad Public Sector knowledge relevant to his/her area of work
- Focuses on self-development, striving to improve performance

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

General:

The appointment is to a Higher Executive Officer post on a temporary fixed-term contract and is subject to the *Protection of Employees (Fixed-Term Work) Act 2003, Terms of Employment (Information) Acts 1994-2014, and Employment Equality and Equal Status Legislation*, the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil or Public Service.

The selection process will include competency based interviews.

Pay:

Higher Executive Officer salary will be €49,845 per annum (pro rata for the term).

The remuneration shall be deemed to accrue from day-to-day and be payable by equal two-weekly instalments on the agreed day of every two weeks in arrears by bank credit transfer.

Tenure:

The fixed-term contract will be for a period of 26 weeks to cover maternity leave. There is a possibility of an extension up to 16 weeks, if the maternity leave is extended.

The provisions of the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977 to 2015 will not apply to the termination arising only from the expiration of the fixed term. A probationary period shall also apply as will the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973 to 2005.

Location:

The appointee for this role will be based in the Ombudsman for Children's Office at 52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1.

When absent from home and place of employment on official duty, the appointee will be paid appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances, subject to normal civil service regulations/public sector regulations.

Hours of attendance:

Hours of attendance will amount to not less than 37.5 hours gross. The appointee will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.

Rest Periods:

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 will apply to this appointment.

Annual Leave:

In addition to the standard 9 public holidays and Good Friday, the annual leave for this position is 29 days per annum (14.5 days pro rata).

Sick Leave:

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 sick leave circulars.

PRSI:

Officers who will be paying 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 OCO. 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.

Superannuation and Retirement:

Where applicable the terms and conditions of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme will apply. If the applicant has previously been employed by the Civil or Public Service other schemes may apply.

Retirement Age: will be determined in accordance with the relevant government Departmental circulars. Retirement age is currently 66, rising to 68 by 2028.

Further Conditions of Service

Further Conditions of Service will be laid out in the Fixed Term Contract of Employment together with relevant governmental department circulars.

The Selection Process

How to Apply:

All candidates should visit www.ocojobs.com where there is a full list of available positions in the OCO with the corresponding downloadable information booklet for each position. There will also be a link to the online application portal to where all applications must be submitted.

To apply, candidates must provide an up to date application form and submit their application form via the online application portal.

Only Application Forms fully submitted online will be accepted into the campaign. Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

It is an absolute requirement that candidates declare any potential conflict of interest at the application stage of the recruitment process. Failure to declare such conflicts of interest which later come to light may result in the candidate being disqualified from the competition or, if the candidate is offered and takes up a role with the OCO on the basis of misleading information, may result in immediate dismissal from the OCO.

Closing Date:

Your application must be submitted on the online application portal by midday Monday, 07 December 2020. Applications will not be accepted after this time.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within 24 hours of applying, please contact OCO@sigmar.ie.

Campaign updates will be issued to your registered email address as entered on the online application portal.

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. You are advised to check your 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.

Sigmar Recruitment accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. and should make sure that the contact details specified on their application form are correct.

Selection Process:

The Selection Process may include the following:

- Submission of Application Form
- Shortlisting of candidates based on the information contained in their Application Form
- Initial/preliminary interview
- Presentation or other exercises
- A final competitive interview
- Any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate

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, Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. may decide that a smaller number of applicants will only be called to interview. In this respect, Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. 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 interests to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience on the application form.

Confidentiality:

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 applications will be treated in strictest confidence.

Security Clearance:

Garda vetting will be sought in respect of the successful candidate. The successful candidate will be invited to complete a Garda vetting form via the eVetting portal. This form will be checked by An Garda Síochána. The Garda vetting disclosure will be kept on file with the OCO. It is expected that an eVetting policy will be in place in the near future, which will set out the frequency of vetting within the OCO.

Other Important Information

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. 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 Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. 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 Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. 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

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. will consider requests for review in accordance 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 (where the selection is managed by Sigmar Recruitment) they can seek feedback from Sigmar Recruitment. An initial review will be carried out internally by the candidate's recruitment contact 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 Sigmar within 5 working days of receiving notification of the decision on their application. Sigmar 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.
- Should the candidate not be satisfied with the outcome of the initial review, it will be referred to the Account Director who acts as the decision arbitrator.
- 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 position
 - Be passed 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 Sigmar Recruitment, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as Sigmar Recruitment require 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.

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, certain information you provide will be forwarded to the employing organisation. Such information held by Sigmar 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 our Privacy Statement, which includes instructions on their right to withdraw consent at any point:

<https://www.sigmarrecruitment.com/privacy-statement>.

To make a subject access request under the Data Protection Act 2018, please submit your request in writing to: Data Protection Officer – Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd., 13 Hume St., Dublin 2 or



email privacy@sigmar.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.