

CENTRE FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICES

Connecting science, policy and practice to improve outcomes for children and communities

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Ireland

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Job Specification: Principal Fellow – Knowledge and Communications

Centre for Effective Services, Dublin 1, Republic of Ireland

Salary in the range €80,000 to €100,000 *pro rata*
Full time, fixed term contract to 2013 in the first instance
(applications for part time employment at 80% fte will also be considered)
Relocation assistance for overseas appointees

Who we are

It is recognised across the world that there is a need to apply evidence of 'what works' to increase the success of services whose role is to improve the lives of children and communities. Organisations that provide services to children, families and communities are working with the encouragement and investment of the Irish Government and philanthropy to improve their services by using evidence-based best practice to deliver more effective and sustainable services. The strategy of the Irish Government in this regard is set out in the [National Children's Strategy](#). The children's strategy for Northern Ireland is set out in [A 10-Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland](#).

In response to this, the **Centre for Effective Services (CES)** is a recently formed, independent, not-for-profit organisation. It has been funded for five years in the first instance by a partnership of the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Office for the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, and the Department for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. A unique and ground-breaking initiative, the Centre has been set up to work with service providers, policy makers and researchers to provide specialist assistance to child and family/community services across the island of Ireland. It is currently in 'start-up' mode but aims to have a staff of 15 or so highly skilled employees when it reaches maturity, with offices in Dublin and in Belfast. Staff and Associates will come from multi-disciplinary backgrounds in science, practice and policy making, supported by a small team of administration, resources and communication experts.

The Centre will fill an internationally recognised gap: that is, the need to increase the success of services in improving the lives of children and communities by connecting the design and delivery of human services with scientific and technical knowledge of 'what works'. It aims to provide the technical and organisational expertise required to support full implementation of evidence-based services. CES's daily business will be to provide advice, information and other specialist assistance to service agencies and service commissioners (our 'client' services). It will aim to catalyse existing expertise within organisations, and act as a conduit to new, external sources of expertise in Ireland and elsewhere. It will therefore work directly with services and agencies, and also at a strategic level to influence thinking and practice in the sector as a whole. Our web site can be found at: www.effectiveservices.org.

Who you are

As one of our key appointments at senior level within the Centre's Resources team, we are seeking a senior professional with a strong background in the field of knowledge and information management, external relations, communications, and dissemination. The post is central to our ability to build and disseminate the evidence base on best practice in child and community services. It will involve developing the Centre's reputation nationally and internationally for effective partnership with individuals and organisations across the sector – including those in academia and science, policy making, service planning and commissioning, and front-line delivery of community-based services. The successful candidate will need to be confident in moving between these multiple audiences and leading the Centre's interface with them.

You will lead the Centre's work in this area both internally and externally, working alongside our Resources Manager, and a Knowledge and Communications Assistant whom you will be involved in recruiting. *Internally*, you will manage our in-house knowledge and information needs. You will manage and develop our specialist library facilities and grow an internal 'evidence bank', ensuring that practice development staff are kept up to date on all the latest international developments and thinking in our field. You will manage the provision of a tailored service to staff, learning their specific knowledge needs and interests and ensuring they are alerted to relevant information resources. You will also supervise data resources and database maintenance, and will hold responsibility for data protection, legal compliance, and good practice in all matters relating to data within CES. You will also design and deliver or procure training for all staff in information management/ technology and communications skills. *Externally* you will lead on external relations, reporting to the Director/Chief Executive. Working with professional consultants, this will include development of a website and on-line resources; contributing your expertise to the production of publications of all types; writing summaries, digests and press releases based on work produced by the Practice Development teams; media relations; and organising a programme of dissemination and other public events. You will also be responsible for managing access to library and information facilities by our client services and stakeholders, including the development of evidence search and retrieval services in digested formats.

You will need to have the expertise and experience to develop the knowledge and communications functions of the Centre from start-up. You will already have strong professional networks within the island of Ireland, or the confidence/expertise to develop these quickly. Though you may not have worked in the child and community services field before, you will share the team's commitment to developing best practice in the field based

on objective, evidence-based criteria. You will be strong team player, who will enjoy working alongside colleagues with expertise in scientific research and practice in child and community-based services. You will also be used to providing leadership and contributing strategic vision to an organisation, and delivering on commitments to tight deadlines without a large team of assistants.

Essential and desirable characteristics

Principal Fellow is our most senior grade of appointment and we are seeking a candidate with the strongest professional background and standing. We're looking for someone with the following *essential* attributes:

- An established professional reputation at a senior level in the knowledge and communications field
- Proven experience of deploying your skills to benefit a multi-disciplinary team of colleagues
- Skilled communicator in a variety of different modes and formats
- Skilled at the distillation of complex and/or sensitive messages into clear and accessible language for a variety of audiences
- Computer literate to an advanced level
- Sufficient familiarity with modern information resources to be able to develop and manage our specialist library /evidence bank
- Experience of handling external and media relations in a senior position
- Strong understanding of data protection requirements and best practice in data management
- Experience of event planning and organisation
- Willingness and availability to travel, including between our offices in Dublin and Belfast

In addition, *desirable* attributes include:

- Experience in database development and management
- Experience in design and development of web-based and on-line resources
- Previous experience of taking sole responsibility for an area of management and development within an organisation
- Familiarity with working in a service-oriented, client-focused environment to tight deadlines for demanding sponsors

What we offer

CES is a unique initiative with direct connections into the highest level of policy making, practice development and scientific research. As an organisation dedicated to building bridges between these three constituencies, we are aiming to develop widely-applicable models for developing and sustaining evidence-based practice in community-based services across the island of Ireland and beyond. We aim to be outward-looking and to develop a reputation for excellence and models of working that have international standing. CES therefore offers a most unusual opportunity for a senior knowledge and communications

professional to develop their skills and apply them in an environment where creative thinking and innovation are required.

As part of the start-up team, applicants also have a unique opportunity to contribute to shaping the new organisation. Other posts to which we have recently recruited include Principal and Senior Fellows in Practice Development, Principal and Senior Fellows in Research and Evidence, Principal Fellow in Community Development, and Principal Fellow in Organisational Development. An administrative team is already in place.

Commensurate with the degree of professional expertise we require, we offer a competitive salary in the range €80,000 to €100,000 pa *pro rata* depending on qualifications and experience. CES offers a contributory pension scheme, 25 days annual leave per year *pro rata* plus public holidays and congenial premises in centre of Dublin, close to public transport and within easy reach of the airport.

This post is offered on a full time basis, 37.5 hours a week, fixed term until 2013 (the Centre has funding until 2013 in the first instance). Applications from candidates wishing to work part time, 80% fte (equivalent to four days per week) will also be considered.

For high-calibre overseas candidates, we also offer assistance with work permits and with relocation expenses and arrangements.

How to apply

Prospective applicants may call the Director and Chief Executive, Dr Deborah Ghate in confidence, to discuss the role informally, on (01) 659 9214 within Ireland and +353 1 659 9214 outside Ireland. You may also email her via eyoung@effectiveservices.org.

To apply, in the first instance send a letter spelling out why you think you are suitable for the post, and a full CV, including previous publications. Please bear in mind that the appointments panel will come from a range of disciplines. Please also complete an application form, available on our website.

This post is available now and priority may be given to applicants who can start soonest. The deadline for receipt of applications is: Friday 2nd October 2009 at 5.00pm. Hard copies should be posted to our address at NCI, Mayor Street, Dublin 1, for the attention of Danyanne Quemper, Resources Manager. Electronic applications will also be accepted by the closing date / time to: dquemper@effectiveservices.org.

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence. Shortlisted applicants will be contacted on Monday 12th October, 2009 regarding arrangements for first interviews, which will be held on Thursday 15th and Friday 16th October 2009.

The Centre for Effective Services is a company limited by guarantee, established without share capital, Company Number 451580

We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer

September 2009