



Post Doctoral Researcher - Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years (LINC) Programme

GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION Duties and Terms & Conditions of Employment

1. PREAMBLE

Mary Immaculate College is an autonomous, university-level, Catholic College of Education and the Liberal Arts. Founded in 1898, and linked academically with the University of Limerick, MIC is the oldest higher education institution in Limerick. Significant expansion in recent decades has seen the College's menu of educational programmes expand across two impressive campuses, one based in the heart of Limerick City and one in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The diverse student community is made up of more than 5,000 learners, participating in twelve undergraduate degree programmes and a wide range of postgraduate programmes up to and including doctoral level. Academic staff members engage in professional academic research activities, and research underpins all teaching and learning at the College.

MIC seeks to prepare its students for professional excellence and to nurture their capacity to lead flourishing lives.

2. CANDIDATE PROFILE & SCOPE OF THE POSITION

The Higher Education Authority on behalf of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), the Department of Education and Skills (DES), and the Department of Health (DoH) requested proposals from higher education providers for a specialist programme, to start from early 2016, aimed at the development of a Level 6 Special Purpose Award (Higher Education), which was required for staff in Early Years settings to perform the role of Inclusion Coordinator Mary Immaculate College in partnership with Early Childhood Ireland and Maynooth University – Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, was awarded the tender to provide the National Higher Education Programme for Inclusion Co-ordinators in Early Years Settings. This programme was subsequently delivered as the Leadership for Inclusion on the Early Years (LINC) Programme. This programme concluded in 2020.

A further invitation for the submission of proposals to continue the work commenced by the LINC programme was made by DCEDIY in 2020. The LINC consortium was again awarded the tender for the development and delivery of a Specialist Level 6 Special Purpose Award (Higher Education) and Continuing Professional Development programme, aimed at the development of staff in Early Years settings to perform the role of Inclusion Coordinator.

In order to support this important programme, Mary Immaculate College now wishes to appoint a Post-Dctoral Researcher - Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years (LINC), on a full-time fixed term basis. It is expected that the contract will be completed in October 2025.

In order to be considered for this post, applicants must have:

1. A relevant postgraduate qualification at doctoral level;
2. A high level of expertise in qualitative and quantitative data analysis and synthesis;
3. A thorough knowledge of mixed-methods research methodologies and techniques (including survey design and administration, interviewing and participant observation);
4. Excellent organisational and problem solving skills with the ability to prioritise, manage and complete tasks to established deadlines at times of high pressure with a capacity to work effectively on own initiative and as part of a team;
5. Excellent interpersonal, written and verbal skills, with the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, students, clients and external stakeholders;
6. Full and clean Driving Licence, with suitable access to a car.

In addition, it is desirable that candidates will also have;

1. Expertise in the use of NVivo and SPSS software.
2. Expertise in engaging in research methodologies involving children.

Candidates must indicate clearly in their applications how they meet each of these pre-requisites. Candidates will be shortlisted on the basis of both essential and desirable criteria.

Cuirfear fáilte roimh iarratais ó dhaoine go bhfuil dearcadh dearfach acu i leith na Gaeilge. Applications are welcome from people who have a positive outlook to Irish.

3. JOB DESCRIPTION

Reporting Relationship

The appointee is required to carry out the duties attached to the post, under the general direction of the Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years (LINC) Programme National Coordinator, and Head of Department, Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies to whom he/she reports, and to whom he/she is responsible to for the performance of these duties in the first instance for the achievement of LINC programme objectives.

The appointee will report through the Dean of Education and Head, Department of Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies to the College President and/or to other such College Officers as the President may designate from time to time. He/she will liaise with the Vice-Presidents, Dean of Education, Head, Department Reflective Pedagogy, Early Childhood Studies, Heads of Departments, Course Leaders, Heads of Professional Services functions, the Consortium Steering Committee and other College personnel and with relevant College bodies in carrying out the duties attaching to the post. The appointee will have a relationship of accountability to the Consortium Steering Committee for the achievement of programme objectives.

The reporting relationship may be subject to review from time-to-time, in line with service needs and developments in the College.

Duties and Responsibilities

The LINC Post-Doctoral Researcher will support with all research and evaluation matters related to both the Specialist Level 6 Special Purpose Award (Higher Education), and Continuing Professional Development programme. They will have a central role in ensuring that the Specialist Level 6 Special Purpose Award (Higher Education), and Continuing Professional Development programme remain responsive to current legislative, policy, practice and research developments in the ELC sector.

The post holder will have duties and responsibilities related to the LINC programme as follows:

1. Engage in qualitative data analysis and synthesis;
2. Engage in mixed-methods research methodologies and techniques (including survey design and administration, interviewing and participant observation);
3. Produce publications from data collated for the LINC Programme (evaluations, journal articles, presentations)
4. Work independently, including work with diverse groups in a variety of fieldwork sites;
5. Manage the workflow of the LINC Level 6 and LINC CPD Programme research projects,
6. Prioritise, manage and complete tasks to established deadlines at times of high pressure with a capacity to work effectively on own initiative and as part of a team;
7. Liaise with the LINC Steering Committee and their respective staff, Tutors, the Administrative Team, the Academic Team, the Review and Evaluation Team, the Information and Communication Technology team and the Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Team as required to ensure that the research projects outcomes are being achieved.
8. Attending in-service training and evaluation sessions, and attending LINC Team Meetings which will take place in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

The duties and responsibilities as listed are broadly defined and are not exhaustive. The performance of the entire range of duties is not necessarily confined to any one individual, as the work requires that staff function in a flexible manner and work together as a team. The College retains the right to assign new duties and/or to re-assign staff to other areas of the College, in response to service needs.

4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

General

All persons employed will sign an appropriate contract, which will contain terms and conditions of the employment. A job description is given to all applicants for employment and this will form part of the contract documentation.

Place of Work

The appointment will be home based. The successful candidate will be required to meet/agree to a number of conditions prior to appointment including a requirement to maintain a suitable designated work area at home which meets the College's health and safety requirements and which has suitable broadband access.

Exclusivity of Service and Outside Work

The person appointed will be required to devote his/her full-time attention and abilities to his/her duties during his/her working hours in the College, and to act in the best interest of the College at all times. Therefore, for as long as the successful applicant is employed by the College, he/she may not, without the prior written consent of the College, be actively engaged or concerned in any way, either directly or indirectly, in any other business or undertaking where this is or is likely to be in conflict with the College's interests or the performance of the employee's duties.

The appointee will not, during his/her tenure of office, undertake paid outside work unless he/she has received the permission of the Vice President Academic Affairs (VPAA) to undertake such work on the terms and conditions as agreed for the particular undertaking in question. In every case, it is the duty of the appointee to seek in writing the prior permission of the VPAA. It is also the duty, in every case, of the appointee to inform the person or body for whom the work is being undertaken, that the work is being conducted in a private capacity and that the College cannot in any circumstances be responsible for such work.

Probationary Period

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of the standard 6 month probationary period. The probationary period may be extended at the discretion of the College but will not in any case exceed 11 months. Absences during the period of probation will extend the probationary period. Performance and conduct during the probationary period will be monitored through a process of assessment meetings. Termination of appointment during the probationary period will be at the discretion of the College. An abridged version of the disciplinary procedure will apply to employees on probation who have been employees of the College for less than 12 months.

Hours of Attendance

This is a full-time appointment. Working hours may vary from week to week but should not on average exceed 39 hours per week (7.8 hours per day on average). There is a requirement for the LINC Researcher to be flexible in their hours on a weekly basis in order to meet the needs of the programme.

The College reserves the right to adjust starting and finishing times or days of duty to meet service needs. Academic staff members are required to supply students with an MIC e-mail address and MIC phone number at which they can be contacted. They must also provide the College Authorities with a telephone number at which he/she may be contacted during non-semester times. However, under no circumstances will personal contact telephone numbers be given to students by College Authorities

Salary

The Salary scale for this position has been approved by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Higher Education Authority in line with Government Policy on Public Sector remuneration. The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. 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.

This appointment will be made at Post-Doctoral grade. With effect from 1st June 2024, the annual full time

salary scale for this grade is:

€52,193; €53,661; €55,188; €56,765 (4 points)

For employees working less than whole time hours or who are employed for less than a full calendar year, salary will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

Increments are awarded in line with national pay agreements.

Salary will be paid on a monthly basis on the 25th of each month, or the previous Friday if 25th falls on a weekend, using the Paypath facility. Payment of salaries and wages are subject to statutory deductions, i.e. Income Tax (PAYE), Superannuation Contributions, Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) and Universal Social Charge (USC).

Superannuation

New entrants to the public service will be required to participate in the Single Public Service Pension Scheme and pay Superannuation contributions at the appropriate rates in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012. Details of this scheme can be obtained from the College's website.

All other eligible appointees are automatically included in the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme on taking up appointment. In compliance with the Colleges of Education Pension Scheme, deductions amounting to 6.5% are made from salary. Details of the regulations concerning the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme may be obtained from the College's Human Resources Office.

The appointee will be required to pay Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) under the provisions of the Public Service and Pensions Act 2017.

Appointees who commenced employment in the public service between 1st April 2004 and 31st December 2012 and have not had a break in employment of greater than 6 months will have no mandatory retirement age. All other appointees will have a mandatory retirement age of 70.

If an appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and that appointee is entitled to or in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during the appointee's re-employment that pension will be subject to abatement in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012.

Please note: In applying for this position you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Department/Office/Body will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position

Annual Leave

The annual leave entitlement for this grade is 20 working days per leave year. Annual leave should be taken when students are off campus and the taking of leave must have the prior approval of the relevant Line Manager.

Public Holidays are granted in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

Sick Leave

Employees who have a minimum 3 months continuous employment with the College may be granted sick pay subject to the terms of the Public Service Sick Leave Scheme. Sick pay is contingent on full cooperation and compliance with the Colleges absence management procedures.

Confidentiality

In the course of working in Mary Immaculate College, the person appointed may have access to or hear information concerning staff and/or students and/or the functioning and the business of the College. Such information acquired in the course of employment with the College, including any aspect of the College's responsibilities or operations, is considered to be confidential information. On no account must information concerning students, staff or other College business be divulged or discussed except in the performance of normal duties and, unless authorised to do so, this information shall not be communicated to a third party. In addition records must never be left in a manner that unauthorised persons can obtain access to them and must be kept in safe custody when no longer required.

Health & Safety

Mary Immaculate College attaches the highest regard to the safety, health and welfare of its employees. It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of themselves and of other people in the workplace. Each employee must comply with all health and safety policies and procedures in operation in Mary Immaculate College and familiarise him/herself with the Safety Statement.

Employees are obliged to wear any PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) that they may be provided with and no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing or other equipment provided in the workplace for health and safety purposes. Employees are statutorily/legally obliged to ensure that any accidents/incidents which may occur are reported promptly to the Health and Safety Officer on the MIC Accident/Incident Report Form.

College Policies, Rules and Regulations

The College is a Public Sector employer and is bound by National Agreements. It is also bound by regulations, circulars and directives issued on behalf of Government by the Department of Finance, the Department of Education & Skills and the Higher Education Authority.

Employees are at all times subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Staff, College policies, rules and regulations. These policies include but are not confined to Disciplinary & Grievance Policies, Dignity at Work, Examination Rules & Regulations, Policy on Responsible Computing and Use of Information Technology Facilities. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of Policies and Procedures, available on the College's Staff Portal.

Termination of Employment

At least two calendar months written notice is required to resign this post.

On the termination of employment but before departing from the College, staff members are required to return to the College all books, reports, memoranda, correspondence, papers, records, reports, files including data held on electronic files, computer disks, electronically recorded discs, and any other documentation, and

all other property, including office keys, belonging to the College or relating to its business or affairs which are in the possession of a staff member or under his/her control when the employment is terminated.

5. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Method of Selection for Recommendation

Shortlisting

An expert group will convene to conduct shortlisting of applicants, measured against pre-determined criteria.

The criteria that will be used to shortlist candidates for this appointment are:

- A relevant postgraduate qualification at doctoral level;
- A high level of expertise in qualitative and quantitative data analysis and synthesis;
- A thorough knowledge of mixed-methods research methodologies and techniques (including survey design and administration, interviewing and participant observation);
- Evidence of engagement in innovative research in an area relevant to early childhood education;
- Publications in recognised journals within a discipline related to early childhood/or cognate field;
- Full and clean Driving Licence, with suitable access to a car.

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill 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 College may decide that a limited number will be called to interview. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable to undertake the job, rather that there are some candidates, based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is incumbent, therefore upon the applicant, to ensure that all relevant information is included in their application and that they clearly identify how they meet the specified candidate criteria.

Interview

A recommendation for appointment will be made by an Interview Board. The appointment will be based on this recommendation, except where considerations of health or an unsuitable record in previous employment warrants a departure. A panel will be formed from which appointments for the position of Post Doctoral Researcher – LINC Programme will be filled during the life of the panel (12 months).

Medical Examination

For the purpose of satisfying requirements as to health, successful candidates, before being appointed, may be required to participate in pre-employment health screening.

Garda Vetting

Successful applicants may be required to participate in Garda vetting. Specific instruction on this process will be given at the appropriate time. Applicants who do not comply with the College's requirements in this regard will be excluded from consideration for appointment. Applicants who have resided outside Ireland for a cumulative period of 36 months or more over the age of 18 years must furnish a Foreign Police Clearance (FPC) from the country or countries of residence. Please note; any costs incurred in this process will be borne by the applicant.

Applicants Outside European Economic Area (EEA)

Mary Immaculate College welcomes applications from candidates outside the EEA, however such applicants should familiarise themselves with relevant Government policy before making an application. Further information from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is available here: [Economic migration policy - DETE \(enterprise.gov.ie\)](#)

Making of Applications

Applications must be submitted in typed format. Handwritten applications will **not** be accepted. Incomplete applications will **not** be accepted. The Human Resources Office will acknowledge receipt of your application by sending an email to the email address provided. Please be sure to check Spam and Junk folders as it may be redirected here by your account preferences. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of your application form within 2 working days please contact recruitment@mic.ul.ie.

Application forms for this post may be accessed on the Mary Immaculate College website www.mic.ul.ie/about-mic/vacancies. Please fully complete the application form and send it to recruitment@mic.ul.ie with the subject title – **Post Doctoral Researcher LINC** - no later than:

2p.m. on Tuesday, 2nd July 2024

Late applications will not be accepted.

The College will not be responsible for any expenses, including travelling expenses, which candidates may incur in connection with their candidature.

Canvassing will disqualify. Any attempt by a candidate either personally or through any other person, on their behalf, to canvass or otherwise influence the outcome of the selection/interview process in his/her favour will lead to disqualification from the competition. Any representations made on behalf of a candidate, without their knowledge will be ignored.

Mary Immaculate College is an equal opportunities employer. Mary Immaculate College holds an Athena SWAN Bronze Institution award in recognition of our commitment to advancing equality and opportunity for all in higher education.

June 2024