



Irish Community Services
Keeping Our Community Connected

Job Application Guidance

Thank you for your interest in the Irish Community Services, which is a registered charity. We are a small organisation with a strong team of inter-dependent colleagues. The position you are applying for is key to our successful operation and we are looking for someone with the qualities, and experience, to add to our current range of talent.

To download an **Application Pack** please visit: www.irishcommunityservices.org. This consists of:

- Guidance Notes
- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Application Form & Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Application & Selection Process

- Your Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form should be completed and saved as Word Documents and (preferably) e-mailed to: projectsupport@irishcommunityservices.org.uk
- Alternatively, you can complete a hard copy and send it to our office at: **Irish Community Services, The Irish Centre, 2B Devonshire Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 8DS.**
- Your application form **must arrive by 5:00 p.m. on the closing date** (shown on the job advertisement).
- A CV (Curriculum Vitae) is **not** required.
- Receipt of your application will be acknowledged (ideally by e-mail).
- Your application and the appointment process are completely confidential.

Job Description & Person Specification

The basic duties and requirements of the job are set out in the Job Description, which explains what the successful candidate is expected to do in the job.

The Person Specification outlines the skills and experience the successful applicant will have. An understanding of the skills and experience required is essential. An ability to show and confirm, that you have the necessary skills and experience, is critical to the success of your application. You will show how your skills and experience match, or closely match, those of the Person Specification when you write your General Comments/ supporting statement.

Many people fail to appreciate the importance of the Job Description (JD) and the Person Specification (PS) and the essential requirement to show how their own skills and experience meet with the outline of the JD and PS. So, carefully read both the JD and PS and ensure that you address the individual requirements when you draft your General Comments. Simply listing a series of points from your current job description, is not good enough. Cover the requirements, individually, as best you can and give some brief examples of challenges you have faced and achievements you accomplished, in your current or previous roles.

If you fail to cover the requirements of the JD and PS, in a succinct and legible way, then you will not show your best and, most likely, you will not move on to the next stage of the selection



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process. A very simple example to consider – if the PS states that ‘knowledge and experience of certain software packages, such as WORD, is essential’, then make sure that you mention your level of skill and experience in your General Comments.

Completing your Application Form

The application form has a number of different sections, clearly shown under relevant headings. You are asked to complete all sections, honestly and in a way which makes your application clear, interesting, easy to read and grammatically correct. Please complete all sections. Don’t ignore specific questions but, please, do not write a lengthy essay.

Enter your **personal details** fully and clearly so that we may contact you about your application. Confirm your current **Driving Licence** status. List **any restrictions on you taking up employment** in the UK.

It is important, in respect of ‘**Education**’ (schools and colleges attended), and previous work or voluntary experience, that you give dates (month and year) when you started and moved on. Please list all your educational and professional qualifications and examinations. The JD/ PS will say which qualifications are essential to the post that you are applying for. Wherever possible, please add what your qualifications may be equivalent to: e.g. a CSE Grade 1 is the equivalent to a GCSE Grade C. We will take full note of any education or qualifications gained overseas, or as part of an employment training scheme.

Under the heading of ‘**Employment History**’, briefly outline your main duties (in current or most recent employed, or voluntary, role). Do not simply add a list from the job description for that role (or for the role you are applying for). Start by giving us the details of your current role and then add the details of all your jobs, working backwards, so that your first job is at the bottom of the list. All gaps in employment must be explained. For example, if you took a break from work, for whatever reason, please explain the circumstances. Please attach an additional sheet if necessary.

You may have gained professional knowledge, skills and abilities by undertaking further training and/ or personal development courses, or kept your skills up-to-date in other ways. Please use this section to let us know.

If **membership of a particular professional body** is required, or expected in connection with the job which you are applying for, you will be asked to bring your relevant membership documents to your interview. Please also, tell us about your **leisure activities**. This may be of real interest to many of our members.

All job offers are made subject to the receipt of two **satisfactory references**, one of which must be your current employer. If you are not employed, or are unable to provide an employment reference, please give the name(s) of someone you have known in a professional capacity, or in connection with any voluntary work. We do not accept references from members of your immediate, or extended family. Please state each referee’s relationship to you (current employer; previous employer; etc).



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Under the section marked '**General Comments**', it is critically important that you tell us about your:

- reasons for applying for this post;
- skills and relevant experience; and,
- achievements.

This is your 'supporting statement', your opportunity to shine and to show why you, rather than any other candidate, should be appointed to this role. This is the critical information which we will look at when deciding whether to select you for the next stage. You will need to make this interesting, brief and be able to substantiate any statements that you make, if you progress to interview stage. You may have 'transferable skills', which can be applied to the post. For example, if the Person Specification says; 'able to organise self and others to complete projects within deadlines', you should do more than say: 'I am a very organised person and can work to deadlines'. Also, remember that voluntary work, unpaid work, or work at home, can be just as valuable, and valid, as being in a paid job. You should give an example, by describing something that you have done, which proves that you can do it, e.g. 'I organised a fund-raising event for the local playgroup with a group of parents', or give details of a work-related experience.

Any **Criminal Record**, except those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 must be provided. If 'none', please confirm. In certain circumstances, employment is dependent upon obtaining satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Certificate from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS). We will assist with the necessary arrangements, if you are appointed.

In accordance with **General Data Protection** legislation, all information given on the application form will only be used to determine an applicant's suitability for the post and will be kept only for this purpose.

Please make sure that you have **signed and dated** the application form, to confirm that your details are correct and complete. If you email your application to us, type in your name and if you are shortlisted for interview, you will be asked to sign your form at your interview.

Please note that **applicants who conceal, or misrepresent relevant information, at any stage, will be disqualified from appointment, or if appointed, may be dismissed without notice.**

If you have any queries that are not answered in the information that we have provided, or you would like assistance in filling in the form (or to apply in an alternative format), please do not hesitate to contact: Alice Smith, assistant to the team on:

Email: projectsupport@irishcommunityservices.org.uk or Telephone: 0208 854 4466

Selection for Interview

The selection process of applicants is measured on each individual's own merits and abilities. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments where, compared to a non-disabled person, a disabled person is substantially disadvantaged by either the working arrangements (which include the recruitment process) or the working environment. If you have a disability, please let us know so that we can make suitable arrangements throughout the selection process.



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Candidates who are selected to move to the next stage of the application process, may be asked to complete a 'case study' scenario. This may not apply to all posts, but we have found this to be a helpful stage of the process, for a number of roles, to finalise our interview shortlist.

If you are selected for interview, we will write to you with all the details and explain what you need to bring to your interview (including any essential certificates). Please note, you will also have to bring certain documents, such as; proof of National Insurance Number, birth certificate and/ or passport etc, which confirms your identity and your eligibility to work in the UK.

Due to the high volume of applications received, it is not always possible for us to respond to every unsuccessful applicant. Therefore, if you do not hear from us within four weeks of the closing date, this will mean that you have not been successful on this occasion.

Before you submit your application, please read it through to ensure that you have covered all sections and to confirm that you are happy with your statements. Finally, check spelling and grammar.