



Senior Policy and Research Officer

Applications are now invited for the role of Senior Policy & Research Officer with the Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT).

About IPRT

The Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) is Ireland's leading non-governmental organisation campaigning for human rights, equality and best practice in the penal system, and for progressive penal policy in which prison is a sanction of last resort. Our work is underscored by our strong commitment to combating social injustice. We have a track record of achieving big impact for a small organisation. We do this through a combination of research, advocacy, engagement, public affairs, events and working in alliance.

Our work is evidence-based, informed by over 25 years of experience, extensive research and proactive engagement with people affected by the penal system. Our aim is to shift the focus of our penal system away from its current emphasis on punishment towards approaches based on prevention, diversion, rehabilitation, and the integration of criminal justice policy with wider social policy. A more effective and humane penal system, which combats social injustice and has safer communities at its heart, also benefits communities and wider society through its emphasis on crime prevention, rehabilitation, and a reduction in reoffending.

Our model of change is that effecting reforms at the highest level will have the greatest impact for the largest number of people. To this end, we focus our efforts on generating evidence-informed policy recommendations and working constructively with decision-makers to deliver effective penal policy in Ireland.

About the Role

IPRT wishes to recruit a Senior Policy and Research Officer on a fixed-term contract of two years. The post-holder will have well-developed skills and experience in policy analysis and research programme delivery and planning, including project management and mentoring of volunteers. A core aspect of the role is leading on the research and delivery of IPRT's flagship project, 'Progress in the Penal System'.

The Senior Policy and Research Officer will also provide key policy functions including engagement with domestic consultation processes and international human rights monitoring mechanisms. These advocacy activities require a consistent ability to respond to opportunities to influence policy makers at short notice and a current knowledge of both the penal policy context and the work of the organisation.

The post offers an excellent opportunity for an experienced candidate interested in bringing about evidence-informed progressive policy reform, and contributing to the work of a high profile, dynamic and effective non-governmental organisation.

IPRT is an equal opportunities employer, and we welcome applications from people with criminal records. We don't ask for information about convictions during the recruitment process.

This position is full-time (35 hours per week) for a fixed-term contract of 2 years.

The closing date for applications is Monday 12th April 2021.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview.

Any queries about the role should be directed to Fíona Ní Chinnéide, Executive Director at director@iprt.ie

Terms of Employment

Contract:	Fixed-term contract of 2 years, with a possibility of extension. Requirement to work flexibly within the role, and occasionally attend evening events as appropriate to the role. IPRT's time off in lieu policy applies.
Probation period:	6 months.
Salary:	Region of €40,000 - €45,000 per annum, commensurate with skills and experience.
Annual leave entitlement:	25 days per annum.
Pension contribution:	5% match-funded employer contribution after successful completion of probation period.
Place of work:	IPRT Office in Dublin 7, with occasional travel, as appropriate to the role. (In line with public health advice, remote working is currently in operation.) This role requires applicants to have the right to work in the Republic of Ireland.
Post holder reports to:	Legal & Public Affairs Manager (Deputy Director)

Person Description

Essential:

- A relevant third level qualification, preferably in the area of social science, criminology, human rights or law;
- Knowledge of Irish penal and social policy and the particular human rights frameworks which apply to people in the penal system;
- Demonstrable understanding of relevant policy-making processes and a proven ability to engage a policy audience;
- Experience in a senior policy or research role;
- Strong decision making, critical judgment and analytical skills;
- Excellent writing and drafting skills, with an ability to write quickly, concisely and accurately;
- Evidence of published policy papers and submissions;
- Experience in research project management (planning and delivery);
- Ability to manage multiple projects and deadlines simultaneously;
- Strong inter-personal skills and an ability to establish strong working relationships with a range of stakeholders;
- Strong commitment to human rights, equality and social justice.

Desirable:

- Qualifications or significant experience in a range of research methodologies (quantitative and qualitative);
- Strong data analysis skills;
- Experience in making oral submissions and presentations;
- Experience with grant applications and reporting to funders;
- Experience of managing volunteers and/or junior researchers.

Attitude:

- A team player ready to work collaboratively with colleagues;
- Respect for the values and mission of IPRT;
- Flexibility and adaptability in response to strategic opportunities;
- Commitment to ongoing professional development;
- Commitment to and understanding of a working environment that promotes equal opportunities and has regard for the health and safety of others.

Role Description

Key tasks and responsibilities of the position will include:

- Leading on the design, research and delivery of substantive content of IPRT's annual flagship project, 'Progress in the Penal System'.
- Producing high-quality briefings, submissions, research and policy papers, and ensuring IPRT's portfolio of policy and research materials is consistently up to date.

- Proactive monitoring and analysis of relevant developments in Irish and international penal policy; developing internal systems to ensure the wider IPRT team is up to date and informed.
- Managing, delivering and reporting on research project grants as required, including co-ordination of relevant advisory groups and networks.
- Representing IPRT in conjunction with the Executive Director and the Legal and Public Affairs Manager, ensuring that the organisation is visible and advocating on penal reform issues.
- Developing and maintaining high-level relationships with key stakeholders, including government, agencies and statutory bodies; non-governmental organisations; and international monitoring bodies.
- Strengthening and maintaining links between IPRT and academia, developing IPRT's role as a conduit for high-quality research in relevant disciplines into public debate on penal matters.
- Management of the IPRT Volunteer Programme, including recruitment, induction, training and mentoring.
- Management of information queries and referrals received by IPRT, including tracking and responding to prisoner correspondence.
- Creating opportunities for former prisoners, family members and key service providers to feed regularly into IPRT's work.

OTHER

- Build strong working relationships with colleagues in the organisation;
- Develop networks within the broader civil society environment;
- Work in accordance with charity governance, ethics and standards;
- Support the Executive Director in the implementation of IPRT's sustainability strategy;
- Undertake other duties commensurate with the role, in pursuit of the Strategic Plan, as agreed with the Executive Director.

Application Procedure

Applications will be shortlisted by the interview panel only if fully completed, and must contain:

- a curriculum vitae;
- a supporting statement of no more than 2 pages demonstrating experience of the essential criteria detailed in the job description and as outlined above;
- 2 samples of writing, of no more than 1,500 words each; and
- contact details of two referees (referees will not be contacted without the applicant's consent).

Applications and queries should be submitted to director@iprt.ie

Closing date for all applications Monday 12th April 2021.

Interviews will take place as soon as possible thereafter.