



## Policy and Research Coordinator

Applications are now invited for the post of Policy and Research Coordinator with the Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT). This is a key function within the IPRT team, developing and coordinating our comprehensive body of evidence-led research and policy outputs to influence public and political debate. It is an opportunity to work in a small impactful organisation, where your contribution has the potential to really make a difference.

### **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 almost 30 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**

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 Policy and Research Coordinator 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.

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

This position is full-time for a fixed-term contract of two years with a view to extension subject to funding.

**The closing date for applications is 5pm on Monday 26 September 2022.**

**Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview, which will take place online as soon as possible thereafter.**

**Any queries about the role should be directed to [director@iprt.ie](mailto:director@iprt.ie)**

### **Terms of Employment**

Hours of employment: Full time (35 hours per week, exclusive of breaks) for a fixed-term contract of two years with a view to extension subject to funding.

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: Six months.

Salary: €40,000 - €45,000 per annum pro rata, commensurate with skills and experience.

Annual leave entitlement: 25 days per annum pro rata.

Pension contribution: 5% match-funded employer contribution after successful completion of probation period.

Place of work: Usual place of work is the IPRT Office in Dublin 7 but IPRT is currently trialing a more flexible hybrid working model. There may be occasional travel, as appropriate to the role.

Post-holder responsible to: Legal & Public Affairs Manager (Deputy Director)

IPRT is committed to supporting staff to identify and undertake training and development opportunities relevant to the role.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Key responsibilities of the position will include:

- Working with the Executive Director and Legal & Public Affairs Manager to develop research and policy priorities for the organisation, in line with the new strategic plan.
- Implementing the policy and research programme of the organisation, in line with the IPRT strategic plan, including:
  - Leading on the design, research and delivery of substantive content of IPRT's annual flagship project, *'Progress in the Penal System'*;
  - Production of high-quality briefings, submissions, research and policy/position papers as required;
  - Proactively monitoring and analysing relevant developments in Irish and international penal policy, and ensuring the wider IPRT team is updated and informed;
  - 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;
  - Coordinating all external research projects commissioned by IPRT from tendering to completion; and
  - Coordinating, delivering and reporting on research project grants as required.
- 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;
- Playing an active role in IPRT's advocacy and engagement with policymakers and other stakeholders;
- Management of the IPRT Volunteer Programme, including recruitment, induction, training and mentoring;
- Management of information queries, referrals and correspondence received by IPRT in conjunction with IPRT's Children and Families Coordinator and the Governance and Administration Officer; and
- Creating opportunities for former prisoners, family members and key service providers to regularly feed 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.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Essential Skills and Experience**

- A relevant third-level qualification, preferably in the area of social science, criminology, human rights or law;
- Knowledge of Irish penal and/or social policy and the particular human rights frameworks which apply to people in the penal system;
- Minimum of two years' experience in a senior policy or research role;
- Demonstrable understanding of relevant policy-making processes and a proven ability to engage a policy audience;

- Strong decision-making, critical judgment and analytical skills;
- Excellent writing skills, with an ability to write quickly, concisely and accurately;
- Excellent organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to manage multiple projects at once;
- Evidence of published policy papers and submissions;
- Experience in research project management (planning and delivery);
- High level of attention to detail;
- Strong inter-personal skills and an ability to establish strong working relationships with a range of stakeholders;
- Ability to work on own initiative as part of a small team;
- Ability to work flexibly within the role, and occasionally attend evening events as appropriate to the needs of the role; and
- Strong commitment to human rights, equality and social justice.

### **Desirable Skills and Experience**

The successful candidate may also have:

- Qualifications or experience in a range of research methodologies (quantitative/ 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; and
- Knowledge of ethics and standards for a charity.

### **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; and
- Commitment to and understanding of a working environment that promotes equal opportunities and has regard for the health and safety of others.

### **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 two A4 pages** demonstrating experience of the essential criteria detailed in the job description and as outlined above;
- Two writing samples, of no more than 1,500 words each; and
- Contact details of two referees (referees will not be contacted without the applicant's consent).

**Please send your curriculum vitae along with additional supporting statement and writing samples (as set out above) to [director@iprt.ie](mailto:director@iprt.ie) by 5pm on Monday 26 September 2022.**

**Please write POLICY AND RESEARCH COORDINATOR in subject line of the email.**

**Shortlisted applicants will be contacted for interview shortly after the closing date with interviews to take place online as soon as possible thereafter.**