

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

IRC234745

**Education Officer – Part Time
12 months – Fixed Term**

Armagh Observatory and Planetarium

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to
HRConnect no later than 12
noon (UK time) on**

Friday 14th December 2018

Armagh Observatory and Planetarium

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account (including junk mail folder) to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

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BACKGROUND

OVERVIEW

The Armagh Observatory was established in 1790 by Archbishop Richard Robinson as part of his dream to see a university in the City of Armagh. It is the oldest scientific institution in Northern Ireland and the longest continuously operating astronomical research institute in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The Armagh Planetarium was founded in 1968 by Dr Eric Lindsay, the seventh Director of the Armagh Observatory. It was the first Planetarium in Ireland and has been the public face of astronomy in Northern Ireland for over 50 years.

The Observatory and Planetarium are located within approx. 14 acres of landscaped grounds known as the Armagh Astropark, in close proximity to Armagh City centre. Together the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium (AOP) deliver internationally recognised research in astronomy and related sciences and vibrant educational and outreach programmes for all ages. AOP's mission statement is:

“To advance the knowledge and understanding of astronomy and related sciences through the execution, promotion and dissemination of astronomical research nationally and internationally in order to enrich the intellectual, economic, social and cultural life of the community”.

AOP is grant funded by the Northern Ireland Executive with the Department for Communities (DfC) acting as sponsor department. It is classified as an executive Non-Departmental Public Body and has charitable status.

Further information

Further information on the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium can be found on our website, www.armagh.ac.uk

JOB DESCRIPTION

There is currently 1 fixed term, part time vacancy. This vacancy is initially for a fixed term period of 12 months, with the possibility of extension for a further 12 months.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should AOP positions become vacant which require the same eligibility criteria and have similar duties and responsibilities. This may include shorter fixed term contracts.

Location

The post holder will be based at the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium, which is located at College Hill, Armagh, Northern Ireland, BT61 9DB.

Salary

Salary will be within the range £20,692 - £22,739 (under review) pro rata per annum within which pay progression will be performance related.

Applicants can expect to be placed at the minimum of the scale.

Hours of Work

The normal conditioned hours of work are 20 hours per week Monday to Saturday (5 days out of 6). A typical rota will be either be 10.00 am – 2.00 pm or 12:00 noon – 4:00pm. Hours on Saturday's rota may vary and could include a longer day.. Rota'd hours are subject to change.

Holidays

In addition to the public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance will be 30 days (pro-rata for part time staff). The leave year runs from 1 February – 31 January.

Travel and Transport

The Post Holders will be required to travel on office duty. This will include regular travel throughout Northern Ireland and on occasion to the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain.

As the Post Holders will be required to drive AOP vehicles, the successful candidates must hold a full current driving license enabling the license holder to drive in Northern Ireland.

Pensions

The post holder will be enrolled in the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Scheme (full details available at www.nilgosc.org.uk).

Vetting Requirements

The level of vetting required for this post is an Enhanced Access NI Check.

Probation

Confirmation of your appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1 year. If your performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory your appointment may be terminated. All appointees will be expected to demonstrate a track record of effective service within this period.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone Anne Bittle on 028 3751 2942 or email anne.bittle@armagh.ac.uk

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on +44 (0)800 1 300 330 or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall Job Purpose

The Post Holders will be part of an education and outreach team delivering a range of education, training and skills development services to schools, community groups and the wider public within Armagh Observatory, Planetarium and Astro Park.

Main Duties

1. Engage with schools, groups and general visitors, adapting style and content to suit the needs, requests and/or learning objectives of a diverse range of audiences.
2. Create, prepare and deliver astronomy based interactive workshops in an engaging and interactive way that is appropriate to the age and ability of the group.
3. Present tours of the exhibition area, showcasing and informing visitors about the various exhibits and relevant topical information.
4. Make recommendations for, plan and deliver special events and programmes, to include use of the grounds, Astropark and Observatory.
5. Keep up to date, through workshops, briefing and self-directed learning, with developments in the Planetarium software and developments in astronomy.
6. Research and write articles for 'Astronotes' for publication on the Planetarium blog
7. Operate the digital theatre equipment, troubleshooting problems and dealing with software issues that arise during presentations and carrying out monthly alignments.
8. Deliver outreach events including operation of the inflatable Star Dome.
9. Front of house duties including telephone and email enquiries, organising and recording bookings and operating tills, assisting in the café, reconciling takings at the end of the day and maintaining a clean and customer friendly environment.
10. Work and communicate as part of team and act on initiative to resolve issues with groups and scheduling to maintain the smooth running of the centre.
11. Ensure that all operating guidance, health safety rules and procedures are complied with.

12. Any other duties consummate with the nature and level of the post.

The above list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the main duties of the post. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

1. At least a second class honours degree;

AND

2. Demonstrable experience of having developed and delivered presentations to groups;

AND

3. Demonstrable experience in the use of Microsoft Office packages to include, Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint;

AND

4. A full current driving license enabling the license holder to drive in Northern Ireland.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

Relevant or equivalent qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc so that a well-informed decision can be made.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition, applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to the next stage of selection, the following shortlisting criteria will be used. The shortlisting criteria will be applied incrementally and it may therefore not be necessary to use all listed.

1. One year's full time equivalent and demonstrable relevant experience in at least 3 of the following;
 - Leading and supervising workshops
 - Leading and supervising groups
 - Customer service experience
 - Researching and writing articles (e.g. blogs, magazines, websites)
 - Cash handling

Please note:

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.**

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the eligibility criteria *and shortlisting criteria (if applicable)*. In addition, they will also be required to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competency framework at Level 1 for the purposes of personal and professional development.

Education Officer is analogous to Administrative Officer Grade in the NICS.

What is the NICS competency framework?

The competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results. Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

How does the NICS framework look?

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed through www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of the assessment / interview criteria as outlined below.

INTERVIEW CRITERIA

Presentation

As part of the selection process candidates will be required to deliver a presentation lasting no longer than 7 minutes, the subject of which will be provided to candidates in the invitation to interview letter.

Candidates should fully prepare their presentation in advance of the interview as no preparation time will be provided on the day of interview.

Following the presentation there will be an opportunity for the panel to ask questions based on the presentation.

Further details regarding the presentation will be provided to candidates in the invitation to interview letter. The presentation will be marked against the Leading and Communicating competence.

Marks available: 20

Minimum standard: 12

Interview

The following competences will be assessed at interview.

1. Seeing the Big Picture

Marks available: 20

2. Making Effective Decisions

Marks available: 20

3. Collaborating and Partnering

Marks available: 20

5. Delivering Value for Money

Marks available: 20

6. Managing a Quality Service

Marks available: 20

Total Marks Available: 120

Overall Pass Mark: 72

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the above areas and award marks accordingly.

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Armagh on the 24th and 25th January 2019.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Merit Principle

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. The order of merit is valid for one year.

Making your application:

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet, eg an organisational chart.
- Should an organisational chart be required this must be submitted to HRConnect by the closing date for applications.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.
- **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

- Please note, in Part 1: Personal Details section, candidates who do not have a UK national insurance number are not required to complete this field. For international candidates, Town and Postcode can be interpreted as State and Zip code.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is also the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect. HRConnect will not accept any application where they are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications. However, requests for hard copy application packs are accepted. All applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are submitted hard copy or online.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- Please note that the session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account (and junk folder) to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

Transgender Requirements

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration in confidence to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

Disability Requirements

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact HRConnect.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 public bodies are required to report on equal opportunity monitoring.

It is the policy of the Governors of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium to ensure that all eligible persons have equal opportunities for employment and advancement in the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude. The Governors of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium select those suitable for appointment solely on the basis of merit without regard to an individual's religious belief, political opinion, trade union membership, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, colour or ethnic origin.

In order to ensure that the equal opportunity policy of the Governors of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium is effectively implemented, the equal opportunity information provided on application forms will be monitored. **Please note, as the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium report on Gender and Community Background, these questions on the Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form are mandatory and must be completed. Failure to complete these questions will result in disqualification. All other questions on the Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form are optional.**

Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria (*if applicable*) and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

There are no nationality restrictions on this post: however, before an offer of appointment can be made to an overseas candidate, AOP will need to be sure that all UK visa and immigration requirements are met.

Vetting Procedures

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For the Education Officer post in the AOP the level of vetting is an Enhanced Check. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- a) Your passport OR
- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) AND your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- d) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

Enhanced Disclosure Certificate

Barred List Checks

The Disclosure and Barring Service keeps two barred lists:

- people who are unsuitable for working with children
- people who are unsuitable for working with vulnerable adults

People on these lists are barred from regulated activity with children and vulnerable adults. It is a criminal offence for anyone who is included on a barred list to work or seek work, in regulated activity.

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made.

For more information, the address of the AccessNI website is: <http://www.accessni.gov.uk/>. Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment. Failure to complete the application form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

The Post Holder will be enrolled in the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Scheme (Full details available at www.nilgosc.org.uk).

If you are unable to access the website, please contact Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Scheme as follows:

NILGOSC
Templeton House
411 Holywood Road
Belfast
Northern Ireland
BT4 2LP

Email: info@NILGOSC.org.uk

Feedback

AOP is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All requests for feedback are welcome.

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF THE
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Completed application forms should be sent to the HRConnect Recruitment Team:

HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW

NOTE: Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted.

Contact Details:

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address above or by:

Email: Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net
Tel: 0800 1 300 330
Fax: 028 9024 1665