

JOB DESCRIPTION

<u>Job Title:</u>	Community Link Workers (Traveller and Roma Education Strategy)
<u>Contract Type:</u>	Ongoing subject to funding
<u>Responsible To:</u>	SCP Project Coordinator
<u>Location:</u>	Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.
<u>Hours:</u>	35 hours per week minimum
<u>Annual Leave:</u>	29 days per year (pro-rated)

About Foróige

Foróige is an independent, non-profit national voluntary youth organisation engaged in out-of-school youth development and education. The organisation aims to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and the development of society.

Foróige employs over 600 staff and involves thousands of volunteers in the creation and delivery of high-quality services to young people through the operation of Foróige Clubs, Youth Services and Youth Support Projects. These community-based and supported initiatives are run across Ireland, in rural and urban environments, in partnership with various voluntary and statutory agencies. The organisation is a registered charity and is supported by statutory, philanthropic and corporate funding. Foróige is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to a policy of Equality of Opportunity in its employment practices.

Background to the post:

The Community Link Worker positions have been established as a result of a key action under the Traveller and Roma Education Strategy (TRES). The evaluation of the NTRIS Supporting Traveller and Roma (STAR) pilot found that the additional resources provided to each of the four pilot areas, including the community education worker played a valuable role in building the link between the families, communities and the schools. The establishment of the community link worker roles are also based on the recommendations of the OECD Education for Inclusive Societies project Review of Resourcing Schools to Address Educational Disadvantage in Ireland.

The community link worker will work with both DEIS and non-DEIS schools, children, families and the wider community to enhance the learning experience and outcomes for children and young people from Traveller or Roma communities or those at risk of educational disadvantage.

The positions are of a fixed duration of 18 months to pilot the initiative.

The community link worker posts are funded by the Department of Education through Tusla Education support Services (TESS) under the School Completion Programme (SC

Roles and Responsibilities:

The successful candidate will work as part of a TESS integrated approach to support attendance, participation, retention and progression. The community link worker will be responsible for building relationships with Traveller, Roma and school communities and will work with a number of stakeholders to identify need and supports. This will include supporting children and young people and their families at key transition points, promoting a culture of inclusion in schools and facilitating positive communication and engagement between schools, families and communities to support the learning environment for Traveller and Roma children and young people and those at risk of educational disadvantage to improve their educational outcomes.

The successful candidate will report directly to the SCP Coordinator in the local SCP project and will also have reporting responsibilities to the TESS TRES team.

The community link workers will engage with existing organisations and services such as Traveller and Roma organisations, youth services and projects and community organisations, Home School Community Liaison (HSCL), School Completion Programme (SCP), Educational Welfare Service (EWS) and National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) as relevant to implement local responses to the needs of Traveller and Roma children, young people and families. This will include supporting activities that are relevant to the implementation of the Traveller and Roma Education Strategy in line with national targets and timelines.

The responsibilities of the Community Link Worker will include but are not limited to the following:

- Building trusting relationships with Traveller and/or Roma children, young people, families, organisations and communities.
- Working in partnership with key stakeholders including the whole school community, local Traveller and /or Roma organisations and community workers, including those under education or related disciplines, to identify local needs and provide linkages to available supports and initiatives.
- Supporting children, young people and their families at key transition points e.g. moving from early years to primary, from primary to post-primary and between years moving from Junior cycle to Senior cycle with a specific focus on increasing retention to Leaving Certificate and transition to further education, training and employment opportunities.
- Working with the integrated services operating under TESS which includes SCP, HSCLs, EWOs, at a local level to achieve progress on local education concerns and the priority education actions contained in the TRES which includes improved participation and retention in school.
- Promoting and supporting positive participation, communication and engagement between home, school and the community to enhance attendance, participation and engagement, retention, progression and educational outcomes for children and young people.
- Monitoring school attendance and other relevant indicators and engaging with the appropriate supports to plan for improved attendance.
- Increasing awareness amongst the communities of the rights and obligations of parents/guardians and schools.

- Supporting schools and communities to foster an inclusive and ambitious culture with an anti-racism and intercultural approach in and out of school through initiatives that have been successful in the STAR Pilot project.
- Providing feedback and input to team meetings and evaluations, preparing progress reports for the SCP Coordinator and TESS TRES team which feed into the overall reporting on TRES progress and objectives including improving access, participation and outcomes.
- Following policies and procedures prescribed by Foróige in relation to child safeguarding and other matters.
- Participating in continuous professional development and training as required for the role

Professional Qualifications and Experience (E) = Essential, (D) = Desirable

- A minimum of three years direct work experience with Travellers and/or Roma in an education or youth setting **or** a relevant qualification in Youth Work, Community Work, Education, Social Care, Psychology or a related field (QQI Level 7 minimum). **(E)**
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills (written, verbal and listening), with the ability to engage young people from diverse backgrounds. **(E)**
- Good knowledge of the Irish education system and understanding of working within a school environment with a proven interest in youth work or community development. **(D)**
- Experience of working with Travellers and/or Roma with a good knowledge of the issues and concerns faced by these communities. **(E)**
- Second relevant language beneficial e.g. Romani, Czech. **(D)**
- Applications from members of the Traveller and Roma communities are especially welcome.

Person Specification (all **Essential requirements)**

- Empathy, approachability and an ability to relate to young people
- Understanding of and Commitment to the purpose of TRES
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with children, young people and adults.
- Excellent standards of accuracy and attention to detail
- Ability to be proactive, use own initiative and work effectively within a pressurised environment
- Positive and flexible approach to working as part of a team
- Excellent written communication, including strong report writing skills.
- Ability to implement and follow organisational guidelines and processes
- Good computer skills, including experience of MS Word, Excel & Internet use

Requirements of all Foróige staff (all **Essential requirements)**

- Commitment to the purpose of Foróige and to work within the values, policies and procedures of the organisation
- To act consistently in a professional manner at all times

- To participate in regular supervision with your line manager
- Flexibility in relation to hours of work to meet the needs of the work. Work during unsocial hours may be required.
- Identify training needs with your line manager and participate in training opportunities appropriate to the role
- To undertake other duties as may be requested by the board of Foróige and /or the Chief Executive Officer of Foróige or their nominee from time to time

Additional Considerations for the Role

Funding:	It must be understood that if the funding for the post is discontinued the post holder's contract may be terminated. (18 months initial funding to pilot the initiative)
Garda vetting:	As our work involves contact with children and young people, candidates under consideration for employment in Foróige will be subject to Garda Vetting.
References:	The successful candidate will undergo 2 reference checks before commencing employment with Foróige.
Annual Leave:	The Community Link Worker will be entitled to 29 days annual leave pro rata plus public holidays. The needs of the job must be considered when applying to take this leave.
Hours of work:	The Community Link Worker will be expected to work a minimum of 35 hours per week. Please note this position will require flexibility in relation to working hours. It is expected that the Community Link Worker will work before, during and after school hours.
Salary:	The salary for this position will be based at point 1 on the CDYSB Youth Worker Scale.
Travel:	This post will involve some domestic travel within Ireland and occasional meetings. Travel and expenses will be paid in accordance with appropriate Foróige rates.
Base:	The employment base for this post will be Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.
Applications:	Applications should be made by way of the <u>Foróige job application form</u> which is available here .