



An Roinn Leanai, Míchumais
agus Comhionannais
Department of Children,
Disability and Equality



YOUNG VOICES
IN DECISION MAKING



Job Title: Senior Development and Research Officer

Project: Hub na nÓg - Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE)

Contract Type: Fixed term to March 2028 (with a possible extension)

Responsible to: Hub na nÓg Manager, Foróige

Location(s): Negotiable

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 over 600 Foróige Clubs and over 180 General Youth Services and Projects. The organisation is a registered charity and is supported by a combination of 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.

Role Information

Foróige holds the contract to provide Children and Young People's Participation Support Services to the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) until April 2028, with the potential of an extension of up to two years. This will build on Foróige's previous record of the provision of these services since 2017.

Young Ireland: National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028 is DCDE's flagship policy for children and young people. Young Ireland seeks to improve outcomes for all children and young people and to ensure that children and young people are a central part of everyone's agenda by creating an enabling environment that places their rights and well-being as a core part of policy and decision making. The Participation in Decision Making Action Plan 2024-2028 aims to further embed children and young people's influence on decision-making. Succeeding the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making 2015-2020, the action plan is the second plan from the Irish Government to support children and young people's participation in decision-making.



The aim of Hub na nÓg is to be a centre of excellence and support Government Departments, State agencies and non-government organisations to ensure that children and young people can have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their lives, with a particular focus on seldom-heard children and young people.

The key outputs from Hub na nÓg are summarised below:

- Conduct consultations with children and young people on decisions that affect their lives, with a particular focus on those who are seldom-heard.
- Promote and drive implementation of the National Participation Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making.
- Support the implementation of the Participation of Children and Young People in Decision-Making Action Plan 2024-2028.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to promote the inclusion of child participation in decision making modules in programmes across early years, education, social services, health services and other sectors such as policing and justice, incorporating CPD programmes where applicable.
- Implement the dissemination plan to roll out the eLearning participation in decision making course across all sectors working with and for children.
- Develop and document innovative national and international best practice.
- Provide support services to the Creative Ireland work programme.
- Develop and promote the Hub na nÓg website for all those who work with children and young people and for government departments and agencies who make decisions that impact on the lives of children and young people.
- Continue to develop networks with key stakeholders to build capacity across a range of sectors pivotal to the lives of children and young people including mental health service providers, youth sector, social services, education sector, youth justice professionals, disability sector and more.
- Develop, monitor and report against a set of national-level participation indicators.
- Provide support for participation initiatives undertaken in preparation for or as part of Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The position of Senior Development and Research Officer will involve working with other staff members of Hub na nÓg, the DCDE Participation Unit and other stakeholders to achieve the aims and objectives and key deliverables of Hub na nÓg.

Key Responsibilities

The duties of the Senior Development and Research Officer in carrying out any functions, which may be involved in or arise out of the appointment, shall be as notified by the Manager of Hub na nÓg, the Board of Foróige and/or its Chief Executive. These duties will include, but are not limited to:

Values and Principles

- Apply the fundamental values and principles of children and young people's participation in decision making in all the operations, programmes and initiatives of Hub na nÓg



- Ensuring the implementation of the fundamental purpose and philosophy of Foróige

DCDE Liaison

- Establish close working relationships with the Participation Unit of the DCDE
- Providing regular verbal and written reports on the work of Hub na nÓg to DCDE as required by the Hub Manager, and feedback on the work programme
- Establish work plans in collaboration with the Hub Manager and the DCDE to achieve the aims and objectives of Hub na nÓg

National and international Best practice

- Develop and document evidence based innovative best practice on children and young people's participation in decision making
- Lead out on projects as required
- Keep abreast of, informed of and involved in all latest developments in national and international best practice in child and youth participation
- Oversee, develop and ensure updating of Hub na nÓgs library housed on the Hub na nÓg Website
- Disseminate Hub na nÓg best practice guidance nationally and internationally

Research and development

- Develop and implement a plan for research and development projects and collaborations with Hub na nÓg based on the Actions within the Participation of Children and Young People in Decision Making Action Plan 2024-2028.
- Design research specifications to be commissioned in collaboration with DCDE
- Co-ordinate and project manage collaborations between Hub na nÓg and researchers/research bodies/agencies
- Disseminate the findings of any such research and development
- Carry out desk-based research projects where needed as agreed with Hub Manager and DCDE
- Lead on consultations with children and young people on decisions that affect their lives, with a particular focus on those who are seldom-heard. Including the development of methodologies, facilitation, evaluations of these consultations and liaising with the commissioning body.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Engage bi-laterally with relevant stakeholders to provide support, mentoring and advice as required to support implementation of child and youth participation initiatives.
- Collaborate, as appropriate, with the Hub na nÓg Manager, Senior Education and Training Officer and Senior Participation Officer of Hub na nÓg.
- Collaborate with universities, educational institutions, and continued professional development bodies and other relevant stakeholders to develop accreditation for children and young people's participation in decision making education and training.
- Promote and represent Hub na nÓg across relevant structures and at events
- Collaborate with personnel from the National Participation Office to ensure the work of Hub na nÓg and the National Participation Office is closely aligned and work on joint projects
- Maintain and develop the Network of Practice alongside the Hub na nÓg team



Administration

- Contribute to the development of relevant annual work plans, written quarterly and annual reports for DCDE
- Lead on and attend, as required, meetings to plan and review specific pieces of work
- Use internal data management systems effectively
- Ensure adherence to child protection, GDPR, procurement and other compliance requirements

Any such other relevant duties as the Board and/or the Chief Executive or the nominee of the Chief Executive shall deem necessary for the effective implementation of Foróige's policy and programmes.

Professional Qualification, Experience

(D: Desirable; E: Essential)

- Education to National Degree standard (E) or postgraduate (D)
- Considerable understanding of child and youth participation theories and methodologies (E)
- A minimum of 4 years relevant work experience (E)
- Knowledge of national and international policy frameworks related to children and young people's participation in decision-making (E)
- Knowledge and experience of research methodologies and practice (E)
- Experience of developing external partnerships (E)
- Project management skills (E)
- Expertise in consulting, codesigning and facilitating with children and young people (D)
- Experience of report and academic writing (D)
- Experience in engaging with a range of Government Departments and Agencies (D)
- Access to a car and a full driving license (D)

Person Specification (Essential)

- Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships
- Good interpersonal skills, including ability to liaise with a wide range of contacts.
- Excellent organisational skills and high 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.
- Good written communications skills, including ability to draft summary information and correspondence.
- Ability to follow organisational guidelines and processes.
- Excellent computer skills



Requirements for all Foróige Staff (Essential)

- 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. Evening and weekend work will 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

Benefits

Salary: The salary for this position will be as per the Foróige Senior Youth Officer salary scale: €54,469, €56,496, €58,528, €60,556, €62,582, €64,606

Annual Leave: 29 days annual leave plus Good Friday. The needs of the job must be considered when applying for this leave.

Training and Development: Structured onboarding together with a 9-day Foróige induction Programme. Ongoing CPD.

Organisational Culture: Support and Supervision policy and practices that support your professional development.

EAP: 24/7 Employee Assistance

Flexible Work: Flexible work practices that support work-life balance.

Pension: Contributory pension benefits.

Bike to Work Scheme

Commuter Travel Tax Saver Ticket

Other Information

Garda vetting: Candidates under consideration for employment in Foróige will be subject to Garda vetting.

Hours of work: This is a full-time post and the successful candidate will be expected to work a minimum of **35 hours** per week. Please note that this position will require flexibility in relation to working hours.



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Travel: This post will involve domestic travel within Ireland for training, conferences and meetings. Travel and expenses will be paid in accordance with appropriate Foróige rates.

Funding: It must be understood that if the funding for the post is discontinued, the post holder's contract may be terminated.

Applications: Applications should be made by way of **CV and Cover Letter only** in a readable format [here](#).

Closing date: The deadline for returning completed applications is the 11th of June at 12 noon. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

All information related to Foróige, our annual report, our work, our projects and services is available on our website - please see www.foroige.ie for additional information on Hub na nÓg please see <https://hubnanog.ie/>