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E109/7/02

25 January 2002

Circular 8/2002: Confined competition for temporary appointment as Higher Executive Officer (Human Resources) in the State Laboratory

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to announce the holding of confined competition to establish a panel from which a temporary appointment as Higher Executive Officer in the State Laboratory will be made. Only one appointment will be made from the panel initially. The eligibility requirements for the temporary appointment are set out in paragraphs 5 to 8 below and the selection procedures are set out in paragraph 11. The competition will be held by the State Laboratory.

Nature of work

2. The State Laboratory is the Government's principal analytical chemistry laboratory which provides an advisory and analytical service to Government Departments. It has a staff of approximately 90 who are mainly professional and technical staff. The administrative staff comprises one Assistant Principal, three Higher Executive Officers, one Staff Officer and nine Clerical Officers. The Laboratory is currently located in Abbotstown, near Blanchardstown in west Dublin, and it is scheduled to move to new premises at Backweston (between Lucan and Celbridge) within three years. Further details about the State Laboratory can be found on our website <http://www.statelab.ie>.

3. The officer appointed will be expected to carry out all or any of the following duties, alone or as part of a team, for the duration of the period of the loan:

- ensure that all Human Resources services and systems operate smoothly
- assisting in the development and implementation of Human Resources policies
- acting as Official Side Secretary of the Departmental Council and Secretary to the Partnership Committee
- carrying out such other duties as may be assigned by management.

Relevant extracts from the current PMDS Role Profile Form are at Appendix 1.

TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

[For Department, read Department/Office throughout this circular]

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Personal Requirements

4. The position requires a person of great versatility and resourcefulness with significant experience in a large variety of relevant civil service procedures and practices. It is essential that candidates have the ability and initiative to work on their own, that they communicate effectively and have good interpersonal skills. Knowledge and experience of the duties outlined in paragraph 3 above would be an advantage.

Eligibility

5. The Civil Service is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

Candidates for the posts must, on 1 February 2002, be serving in an established capacity in the Civil Service as:

(a) a Higher Executive Officer,

or

(b) on the date they apply for the competition, be serving in an established capacity in the civil service as an Executive Officer or a Junior Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas or an Executive Officer on secondment to FÁS from the civil service,

and

(c) on 1 February 2002 have not less than three years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of three years' service in eligible grades or not less than five years' total service of which not less than two years was in an eligible grade (set out above). Service in the former grades of Officer and Indoor Officer of Customs & Excise in the Office of the Revenue Commissioners will count as service in an eligible grade.

6. Officers on probation are ineligible unless they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and they have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a probation period; special leave without pay does not break continuity of service for this purpose.

7. Officers on special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. Officers on special leave without pay (e.g. to serve with the EU) may be eligible; Personnel Sections should check cases not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91

with this department. Officers on career break may apply if their career break conforms with the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible.

8. The eligibility of any particular grade or group for appointment under the present competition applies exclusively in the context of this competition.

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Conditions of appointment

9. If the successful candidate is not already serving as a Higher Executive Officer he or she will be offered appointment to that grade. Such appointment will be in an acting capacity for at least one year and will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. The appointee will be on loan to the State Laboratory for a period of four years. The period of loan may be extended by agreement between the officer, the parent Department and the State Laboratory. On expiry of the loan, the officer will return to fill a normal Higher Executive Officer vacancy in the parent Department. If there is no suitable vacancy at that time, the return will be deferred until one arises. The officer's return to the parent Department will be offset against the next liability that the Department would have under the interdepartmental scheme of promotion to Higher Executive Officer level posts.

10. An officer whose service is not satisfactory may, at any time up to the end of twelve months, be returned to his or her parent Department/Office or duties in their former grade. The payment of the higher salary will cease on the date of such return. In the event of an officer failing to remain with the State Laboratory for the duration of the four year loan period, the next eligible officer on the panel may be offered an appointment for a shorter period than four years.

The competition

11. Selection for temporary appointment will be by means of a competitive interview conducted by a board established by the State Laboratory. The interview board may, having examined the applications of all candidates, decide that not all of the candidates will be invited to attend before the board for interview. In addition, the board may, at their discretion, require that candidates undergo preliminary interview and invite only those who reach the requisite standard to attend for competitive interview to select the candidate best qualified for appointment.

Applications

12. There is no formal application form for this competition. Candidates should apply, enclosing a curriculum vitae (see Appendix 2), directly to the Personnel Officer, *State Laboratory, Abbotstown, Dublin 15* to arrive not later than **5.15 pm. on Friday, 15 February 2002.** This closing date must be strictly observed.

13. Eligibility to compete, and health and level of sick leave, will not be verified by the State Laboratory until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. Admission to the competition and placement on a panel, therefore, does not imply that a candidate meets the health and sick leave criteria. In considering a candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the State Laboratory will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76, as amended by Department of Finance Circular 32/91 and 33/99. Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

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Circulation

14. Personnel Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their departments and associated offices without delay, including officers on maternity leave, career break and other relevant forms of leave. If candidates have any queries about the circular they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed to the State Laboratory.

Mise le meas,

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary

Appendix 1

EXTRACTS FROM CURRENT PMDS ROLE PROFILE FORM

Job Title: Higher Executive Officer (Human Resources) State Laboratory

(1) General Description:

The job-holder is responsible for ensuring the smooth running on a day to day basis of human resources in the State Laboratory, and supporting the Assistant Principal (Corporate Services) in the operation of industrial relations procedures and the development of Human Resources policies for the State Laboratory.

(2) Key Functions/Responsibilities:

- Operational:

- ensure that all Human Resources services and systems operate smoothly

- Human Resources:

- assisting in the development and implementation of Human Resources policies (including staff development, mobility, training)
- acting as Official Side Secretary of the Departmental Council
- examining/anticipating claims and industrial relations issues
- acting as Secretary to the Partnership Committee
- staff recruitment

- Customer Service:

- pro-active development of HR services to internal customers

- Strategy/Planning:

- assisting in the development of the Human Resources function in the State Laboratory

- Additional responsibility:

- assisting with other Corporate Services functions as appropriate

The key long term objectives: (over the next three years)

- Increased professionalism of HR services and operations in the State Laboratory

Key Objectives for the year: (what elements should I focus on achieving this year? What are the key elements of my performance that I will be judged on?)

- Providing Secretariat for the development and implementation of Human Resources policies (including staff development, mobility, training)
- Operation of Industrial Relations and Partnership procedures
- Introduce new HRMS system to State Laboratory
- Clerical support to Laboratory - meeting internal client needs

- Operation of Recruitment to State Laboratory

Key Performance Indicators: specifically, what key results, qualitative and quantitative, am I expected to show and what are the benchmarks by which success will be judged?)

- Well researched working papers and draft policies presented to HR Sub-Committees
- -240Orderly conduct of Departmental Council – Official Side positions prepared, meetings serviced
- HRMS in place
- Fully trained clerical staff in place
- Staff vacancies filled promptly
- Partnership process serviced

Critical Success Factors: (what are the key elements which must go right / must be in place that will help me to achieve my objectives?)

- Support from MAC & AP
- Training development & deployment of own staff
- Development of HR Sub-committees

Identification of Competencies for the Job

Behaviours and Attributes required

1. Leadership
1. Networking/Influencing
1. Managing and developing people
1. Customer Service

Knowledge and Skills required

1. Knowledge of Human Resources policies and developments
1. Report writing skills
1. Staff supervision skills

Appendix 2

CV Format for applications for the post of Higher Executive Officer (Human Resources) in the State Laboratory

1. Name _____
1. Official Address _____
1. Home Address _____
1. Phone No.s: Office _____ Home _____

1. **Education** (in reverse chronological order – give dates, names of educational establishments and degree/diploma/certificate obtained; specify subjects studied and grades obtained)

1. **Employment History** (in reverse chronological order – give dates, names and addresses of employers, title of posts held, brief job descriptions where posts are not relevant to this application and more detailed job descriptions for posts which are relevant to this application)

1. State the relevant experience, qualifications and qualities you possess which you consider would make you particularly suitable for this post.

1. Please give two or three examples of specific achievements in your career to date which would demonstrate your suitability for this post.

1. General Interests

Signed: _____

Date: _____