

19 December 2018

Circular 23/2018: Interdepartmental Competition for appointment as Senior Architect in the Office of Public Works

A Dhuine Uasail,

I am directed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to say that the Office of Public Works will hold an interdepartmental competition to set up a panel from which appointments will be made to fill up to 10 posts at Senior Architect level in Architectural Services Section in Estate Portfolio Management. The persons appointed will report to the Assistant Principal Architect.

Assignments to Senior Architect posts will be in line with the usual sequencing arrangements, in terms of external liabilities, and therefore not all posts can be filled from the panel

The persons appointed will be required to serve in the OPW's Headquarters in Trim, Co. Meath or in Dublin. No removal expenses will be paid.

Appointment to the post of Senior Architect will be at **100% Full Time Equivalent (FTE)** and will be subject to a one year probationary period. Applications to workshare at the end of the probationary period will be subject to the approval of the Head of the relevant Business Unit.

Please see below for a more detailed outline of the requirements for this competition.

Background

OPW promotes quality design in architecture, through the delivery of projects on time and within budget, to the highest quality and to the satisfaction of stakeholders. Through the development of the role of the State/Principal Architect, the OPW operates as a reference point for innovative and ground-breaking architectural standards in Ireland, while exercising a greater voice in relation to National and International policies and systems.

The OPW is committed to providing a first class service to its clients and to the many public users who experience the buildings and the environments that it creates. Architectural staff provide design, project management, conservation, maintenance and advisory services for Government and State Agencies' building and property needs. The OPW is responsible for the care of National Monuments and for the Heritage buildings owned and occupied by the State.

The OPW's Estate Portfolio Management function includes the following Divisions which provide architectural services; State Architect's Office, Major Projects, Intermediate Projects, Regional Offices and Conservation Services. Members of the Architectural profession work closely with other professions/staff within the OPW (including Civil & Structural Engineers, Mechanical & Electrical Engineers, Quantity Surveyors, Property Portfolio Managers, Valuers and staff of Property Management, Project Management and Property Maintenance Sections) ensuring that a

full in-house multi-disciplinary service can be provided.

The Role

The Senior Architect will work in a flexible multi-disciplinary team under the direction of the Assistant Principal Architect. The Senior Architect will report to an Assistant Principal Architect or State/Principal Architect. S/he will undertake a range of duties in design, construction and advisory projects and any other duties assigned from time to time as appropriate to the position. Depending on the size and complexity of the project s/he will be required to work as part of a team and/or under his/her own initiative.

All architectural staff working in OPW operate under the professional and technical direction of the State/Principal Architect who is responsible for the quality of work, technical and professional advice, CPD, the professional development, competency and professional technical review of staff. This direction is exercised through the development and application of standards, work practices, period review, all according to ISO 9001 and the architectural CPD system.

The OPW provides Architectural services across multiple locations including; Trim Co. Meath (OPW HQ), Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford and Sligo. There is an immediate requirement to fill a number of positions to be based in Dublin and Trim. A panel will be formed from this competition to fill any further vacancies which may arise in any of the OPW locations across the country.

Eligibility

Candidates for promotion must:

1. Have not less than two years' service in an established, unestablished or acting capacity in the Civil Service. Comparable public sector service in another EU Member State will count.
2. Hold a recognised architectural qualification and comply with the Registration of Architects as set out in Section 14 of the Building Control Act, 2007.
3. Have a minimum of five years' relevant post qualification (primary degree) experience.
4. Have obtained a rating of "Satisfactory" on their PMDS evaluation for 2017 and **have rating submitted by Line Manager on the ePMDS portal.**
5. Fixed-term workers are eligible to compete if they have 2 years or more service, either continuously or in aggregate, in the Civil Service.
6. Where an officer was acting or on contract on a Fixed-Term contract, eligibility may be based on the aggregate service, e.g. six months in an acting capacity or on contract and eighteen months in a substantive capacity, can be aggregated to give two years' service.
7. Officers on probation may apply, if that probation is as a result of a recent promotion to their current grade. However, if the probation reports are not satisfactory, the officer will be deemed ineligible.
8. Officers who are on special leave with pay, on loan or on secondment may apply, if otherwise eligible.

9. Officers on special leave without pay (e.g. to serve with the EU) may be eligible. Personnel & Development Services will check cases not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91 with the Department of Finance, upon request.
10. Officers who are on career break may apply if their career break conforms to the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and/or Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 4/2013 if they are otherwise eligible.
11. Candidates must be suitable from the point of view of sick leave, having regard to Circular 12/2015.

Candidates should note that (i) eligibility for the competition and (ii) health and the level of sick leave are not verified by the Office of Public Works until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. Admission to the competition or any of the selection stages of the competition does not therefore imply acceptance by the Office of Public Works. If candidates have doubts about any aspect of their eligibility, they are advised to clarify their position with their HR department before proceeding with the application..

The HR Manager of a department will be required to certify to the OPW that the successful candidates fulfil the conditions of eligibility specified above

Selection Process

Candidates are advised to complete the application form in the manner requested. Please note that incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration in this competition. **Please provide the relevant word count by section on your application. Applications which exceed the maximum word count per competency will be excluded from further consideration in this competition. MS Word count applies.**

The Selection Process may include short-listing of candidates, on the basis of the information contained in their application. Following the short-listing process, this competition will be decided following an interview process. This process will be through the semi-structured interview format.

Candidates will be randomly allocated interview dates and times. It is the responsibility of candidates to make themselves available on the date and time that will be notified to them. While Human Resource Management will make every effort to accommodate applicants who, for genuine urgent or unavoidable reasons are unable to present themselves on the dates and times selected, there can be no guarantee that a suitable alternative will be offered.

Applications for the post will involve the completion of the Application Form (Appendix 1) attached.

Intending applicants should therefore ensure that the completed application form (Appendix 1) is emailed to HRM **by 3pm on 21 January 2019**, viz: ann.bourke@opw.ie and cc to mairin.lydon@opw.ie. **Four** hard signed copies of all the competition documentation should be sent to Ann Bourke, Human Resource Management, OPW, Jonathan Swift Street, Trim, Co. Meath. An acknowledgement will issue from HRM within one working day of receipt of the application by e-mail. It will be the responsibility of the applicants, to ensure that the properly completed documentation is forwarded by the due date and to inform ann.bourke@opw.ie and cc to mairin.lydon@opw.ie if no acknowledgement is received.

Requirements of Commission for Public Service Appointments

As a public body, the OPW is subject to the requirements of the Commission for Public Service Appointments and, in this regard, the document “*Code of Practice Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service*” is particularly relevant. **Complaints/requests for review will be considered in accordance with the procedures set out in the Codes of Practice which may be accessed on the CPSA website at www.cpsa-online.ie or by contacting the Commission for Public Service Appointments, 18 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2.**

Preface

The forthcoming competition will be conducted on an open and transparent basis with full prior disclosure of all relevant competition documentation and procedures and retrospective access to any documentation created through the process.

1. Competency/Key Achievement Areas Assessment

The competition will be based around the Competency assessment principle. The competencies/key achievement areas relevant to the competition are set out later in this document.

2. The Interview Board

Candidates should expect that up to 3 Interview Board members will actively participate during any one interview.

3. Interview Structure & the Weighting process

The competition will be held through the semi-structured interview format. Candidates will be aware that the discussion at the interview will be heavily directed towards those competencies/key achievement areas that have been identified in the competition documentation and the candidate's response to them, expressed through their application documentation. A copy of their application documentation will be available to the candidate throughout the interview for ease of reference. In general, the length of interviews will vary, at the discretion of the Interview Board, but on average will last around 50 to 55 minutes.

During the interview, the Candidate is expected to present a portfolio for 15 minutes to demonstrate the skills and competencies identified in Appendix 1 of the competition documentation.

Although the interview will, in general, follow these lines, the Interview Board may also decide to pursue such relevant topics or issues as they see fit during the course of the discussions.

As a basis for the interview, and for consideration as part of the decision making process, the Interview Board will have available to it the following:

- The candidate's application form – **Appendix 1**

In making its assessments of candidates, the Interview Board will consider the qualities of the candidate relative to the competencies/key achievement areas identified in the competition documentation, having regard to the information gleaned from the interview and, to the extent deemed appropriate by the Interview Board, the supporting documentation.

A copy of the rating scale to be used by the Interview Board, including the weighting to be attached to different competencies/key achievement areas, will be made available to candidates in advance. **Candidates must pass all competencies to be considered for appointment to the panel – regardless of the overall marks awarded.**

Acting collegially, the Interview Board will rank the candidates who have passed the interview and submit a listing in order of merit to HR section. In the event that the person

recommended for the post declines the offer of appointment, for whatever reason, the next most suitable candidate will be offered the post. **Intending candidates should note that the Interview Board will determine the suitability of any candidate. If no candidate is deemed suitable by the Interview Board, no recommendation will be made.**

4. Feedback

Human Resource Management will endeavour to ensure that the successful candidates and unsuccessful candidates are informed as soon as possible of the outcome of the competition, and will provide a mechanism whereby candidates can obtain feedback, on an informal and confidential basis, in relation to their performance at interview. Any notes of the Interview Board will be made available to candidates through this process. Arrangements for informal feedback to candidates is also included under the heading “The Interview Board and Freedom of Information” following.

5. The Application Process

The following document must be completed and lodged **within the time scales indicated in the competition notice and requests for extensions will not be granted.**

Application form (Appendix 1)

6. Candidates’ Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the competition process.

7. Special Requirements

Candidates should inform Human Resource Management, in advance, of any special requirements that need to be accommodated during the interview process.

Overview of the post of Senior Architect in the Office of Public Works

Selection and Appointment

The competition will be based around the Competency assessment principle. An Interview Board will assess the suitability of each candidate according to the following core competency areas:

- **Professional Experience & Capacity** - Professional experience of value; Creativity and innovation; Awareness of trends and developments in architecture and construction.
- **Management of Projects** - Leadership and strategic thinking; Judgement and decision making; Analysis and problem solving; Customer focus and delivering results.
- **People Management, Communication and Motivational Skills** - Building effective relationships; Influencing and negotiating; Managing performance through people.
- **Knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the duties of the post you are applying for.**

The individual competencies associated with each of the first three areas are outlined in greater detail later in this document. The fourth competency is specific to the post being applied for.

Duties and Responsibilities of a Senior Architect

The duties and responsibilities of the post may include any or all of those listed below and as may be assigned by the relevant Line Manager.

The candidate will be required to:

- Manage the in-house and/or external resources necessary for the delivery of a portfolio of projects;
- Carry out the role of Employers Representative and administer construction contracts including supervision of site construction, agreeing final account, managing client handover and the defects period;
- Carry out the role of Design Team Lead (DTL) and manage the design team from project inception to completion;
- Liaise directly with the client/end user to establish a brief of service requirements;
- Prepare developed scheme designs for client presentation and planning approval;
- Develop Tender Documents and input into Procurement Process;
- Carry out the role of the Design Certifier and Assigned Certifier in accordance with the Building Control Regulations 1997-2015 (or as amended);
- Carry out the role of the Project Supervisor for the Design Process (PSDP) for the project life cycle, i.e. ensuring compliance with the health and safety requirements in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2006-2013 (or as amended);
- Prepare Statutory Submissions including Planning Permission, Fire Safety Certificate, and Disability Access Certificate etc.;
- Providing architectural advice and assessments in the area of Estate Portfolio Management for OPW Government, Public Agencies and Clients on architectural, conservation, restoration, maintenance, design, construction and related matters;
- Undertake Building and Site Appraisals and development of client brief;
- Assist in preparing and developing P.P.P. (Public Private Partnership) procurement programmes;
- Comply with relevant legislative codes, public procurement requirements and keep up to date on latest trends appropriate to building design; and
- Support the State/Principal Architect and Assistant Principal Architects in relation to the following:

- The delivery of the OPW Statement of Strategy and corresponding Business Plans.
 - The delivery of assigned actions in the Government Policy on Architecture.
 - The setting and maintenance of professional duties and technical standards in all areas of Architecture.
 - The development and implementation of the Architectural CPD programme.
 - Providing technical guidance in the development of national architecture linked policies and systems in Ireland (e.g. Green Procurement, Form of Construction Contracts, Listing of protected buildings).
 - The development of masterplans and initial studies including the preparation of feasibility studies, reports, preliminary design concepts and presentation drawings.
 - Design Reviews.
 - The delivery of the Near Zero Energy Building (NZEB) Implementation Programme.
 - The management of BIM (Business Information Modelling) Implementation.
 - The development of a whole of life costing approach to property related services.
 - The promotion of excellence in Architectural Education.
 - The dissemination of knowledge, experience and research.
 - The effective management of risk.
- Support the State/Principal Architect and Assistant Principal Architects in the implementation and maintaining of ISO procedures and certification in the provision of architectural services.
 - Support the management of the OPW Architectural Graduate Training Programme including the mentoring and/or management of architectural graduates in preparation for examinations in Professional Competence, which provides eligibility for registration on the Register of Architects as set out in Section 14 of the Building Control Act, 2007.
 - Contribute to the overall management of the Section, including line manager duties in terms of staff reporting to him/her, preparation of operational plans etc.
 - Support the State/Principal Architect and Assistant Principal Architects in the effective management of risk within Architectural Services.
 - Manage and monitor Safety and Health issues in compliance with relevant legislation and undertake duties assigned from management.
 - Identify and implement initiatives to measure and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Section.
 - Contribute to the wider management and operation of the OPW.
 - Such other duties appropriate to the Senior Architect grade as may be determined from time to time by the Assistant Principal Architect and the State/Principal Architect.

Knowledge requirements:

- Strong technical and design skills (Candidates called for interview will be required to present a portfolio demonstrating these skills).
- A record of experience and achievement in the design of architectural and conservation projects.
- Experience in the management of architectural and conservation projects, including leadership, judgment, initiative and problem solving skills.
- Well-developed analytical, problem solving and operational skills and a proven record of achievement in their career to date.
- Sound judgement and decision making skills.
- An understanding of current and developing issues affecting architectural procurement and awareness of national and international developments in the construction process.

- A knowledge of current legislative requirements and familiarity with recent legislative changes affecting building design and construction.
- Ability to work effectively in a team situation.
- Self-motivation qualities.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- An ability to build effective relationships.
- Creativity and innovation skills.
- Good Technical skills.
- Good Project Management skills.
- Good organisational skills.
- Commitment to continuing professional learning and development.
- Proficiency in AutoCAD.

Desirable

- Proficiency in Revit.
- A current full driving licence (Category B) and/or have access to a car.

Salary

The salary scale for the position (rates effective from 1st October 2018) is as follows:

€65,115, €67,435, €70,705, €73,969, €77,423, €80,913(NMAX), €83,776 (LSI 1),
€86,642 (LSI 2)

This rate will apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6th April 1995 and is required to make a personal pension contribution.

Non-PPC Scale

€61,939,€65,140,€67,295,€70,402, €73,509, €76,993 (NMAX), €79,716 (LSI 1), €82,438 (LSI 2)

This rate that will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6th April 1995 and who is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after **3 (LSI 1)** and **6 (LSI 2)** years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Important Note: The terms of *Circular 34/77: Starting Pay on Promotion or Establishment* will apply, as appropriate, to appointments under this competition.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy.

Annual Leave

The annual leave for this position is 30 days. This leave is on the basis of a five day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Circulation and further information

HR 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, term time, contract, secondment and other relevant forms of leave.

The Civil Service is an equal opportunity employer. Promotion within the service is made on the basis of qualifications and the ability to carry out the responsibilities of the grade or post.

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David Cagney
Civil Service Chief Human Resources Officer



The Competency Approach

The competencies/key achievement areas to be used by the Office of Public Works as evaluation criteria for the competition for the Senior Architect in the Estate Portfolio Management are illustrated as follows:

1 Professional Experience & Capacity	
<i>Professional experience of value</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possesses a broad range of experience in his/her current area of work; • Is able to demonstrate an extent of experience and a portfolio of work which shows competence in both design and technical aspects; • Has a proven record of success in previous tasks and roles; • Demonstrates a consistent ability to use personal professional experience and ability effectively in support of work goals; • Shows continuing commitment to a goal-oriented approach and to the performance culture of the OPW; • Shows maturity in his / her approach to work. • Has an awareness of trends and developments in architecture and construction.
<i>Creativity and Innovation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to make design or project development improvements; • Creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, innovation and new ways of doing things; • Designs and implements new or cutting-edge solutions.
<i>Awareness of trends and developments in architecture and construction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has demonstrated an interest in and a commitment to the maintenance of excellence in the architectural service of OPW and in the profession in general. • Has demonstrated an interest in general developments affecting the profession and practice of architecture.
2 Management of Projects	
<i>Leadership and Strategic Thinking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to the shaping of strategy and policy development in own area of responsibility, consistent with the strategies of Estate Portfolio Management Division. • Takes a strategic perspective in developing, leading and informing a clear direction, taking into account the medium to long-term view. • Integrates vision and realistic goals within given parameters and acts as a catalyst for and leader of organisational change. • Clarifies how individual objectives/ strategies fit in with the broader picture. • Maintains a focus on achieving high standards of commitment to implementing the strategy.
<i>Judgement & Decision Making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can identify coherent solutions to complex issues. Is decisive. • Makes sound and well informed decisions bearing in mind past

	<p>experiences/events and future strategies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is willing to make timely decisions and stand by them or change them as appropriate. • Uses lateral thinking or generates ideas to identify a way forward. • Is not afraid to ask questions, break new ground/make new connections.
<i>Analysis and Problem Solving</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies and focuses on the core issues in dealing with complex information and is willing to challenge the information presented. • Quickly absorbs, critically analyses large amounts of complex information. • Demonstrates clarity of thought and anticipates and evaluates the consequences of different approaches.
<i>Customer Focus and delivering Results</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipates and is dedicated to meeting the expectations and requirements of internal and external customers; readily readjusts priorities to respond to pressing and changing demands. • Is responsive to customer needs, reacting quickly and delivering quality end products and services. • Is actively committed to and promotes the continuous improvement of service to deliver results to customers and stakeholders.
3	People Management, Communication and Motivational Skills
<i>Building Effective Relationships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops the capability within the team to achieve effective performance. • Builds on strengths and interests and actively manages those with different work patterns; • Engages in cross-functional activities and actively identifies, manages and maintains critical relationships; • Collaborates and finds common ground with a widening range of stakeholders. • Uses contacts to build and strengthen support bases and builds alliances towards potential outcomes • Creates an environment that promotes individual development and identifies development opportunities for others; keeps people informed and up-to-date with developments. • Builds strong team morale through fostering commitment, team spirit, pride, and trust. • Is willing to contribute and help out as appropriate.
<i>Influencing/ Negotiating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take, gains co-operation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals; • Calm and persistent in promoting key points and benefits using reasoned and rational arguments. • Manages/chairs meetings effectively to deliver on the proposed agenda; keeps things moving and, if necessary, will force the issue to a point where it is resolved. • Facilitates “win-win” situations in frequent difficult situations in both people management and political spheres.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes positively to the corporate agenda, working constructively with and influencing senior management colleagues to drive the agenda forward.
<p><i>Managing Performance through People</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a strong understanding and awareness of the management process in the particular OPW context, developing, defining and implementing to deliver results. • Builds systems and structures to track and monitor performance, gathering feedback, recognising and rewarding success, identifying gaps and challenging to rectify less than satisfactory performance at one-to-one level. • Sets high standards for others, monitors and supports in order to ensure delivery. • Delegates wisely, inspiring, motivating and challenging others to deliver and perform to their potential. • Manages and resolves conflicts/disagreements in a positive & constructive manner. • Treats mistakes as learning/coaching opportunities. • Provides people, internally and/or externally, with clear guidelines and indication of expectations.