



Director, Adult Literacy for Life (ALL)

Title: Director, Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) (Grade 4)
Office: National Programme Office, SOLAS
Location: *Block 1, Castleforbes House, Castleforbes Road, Dublin 1
Tenure: **Four Year Fixed-Term Contract
Salary: €91,609 to €113,313
Reference:

Background:

SOLAS (An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna), the Further Education and Training Authority of Ireland was established on 27 October, 2013. Its mission is to fund, co-ordinate and monitor a range of Further Education and Training (FET) provision to support economic and social wellbeing, while simultaneously playing its part in influencing and supporting the development of a FET sector that is more responsive to the needs of learners and employers. Set out in the Education and Training Act, 2013, the general functions of SOLAS are to:

- Prepare and submit to Minister a strategy in respect of the provision of further education and training.
- Promote an appreciation of the value of further education and training provision.
- Consult with Ministers for Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DSP) and Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DEBI), as relevant, to ascertain priorities as to which further education and training programmes should be the subject of grants.
- Fund Education and Training Board (ETBs) and other bodies engaged in the provision of further education and training.
- Provide, arrange, and coordinate training and re-training for employment.
- Promote, encourage, and facilitate the placement of persons belonging to designated social welfare categories, as set-out by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection.
- Promote cooperation between ETBs and other bodies involved in the provision of further education and training.
- Promote equality of opportunity within further education and training;
- Develop and facilitate new and existing further education and training programmes, including the design of systems to monitor the quality of the provision; ensuring that it is fit for purpose.
- Conduct or contract relevant research.
- Provide or assist in the provision of training to persons charged with the delivery of further education and training (CPD).
- To give leadership for equality and human rights in the field of adult literacy, ensure an alignment with SOLAS equality and human rights benchmarks in planning and policy development, and promote the capacity to address equality and human rights issues in the design and delivery of adult literacy.

See <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2013/en/act/pub/0025/index.html> for the full text of the Act.

SOLAS is an agency of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS). It works in close collaboration with Education and Training Boards (ETBs) on provision of high-quality further education and training, equipping learners with relevant skills and knowledge, providing a pipeline of talent into employment and to the Irish economy and society. Working with sister agencies of the DFHERIS, SOLAS leads actions in key policy and strategy documents including the most recent Further Education and Training Strategy 2020 – 2024 [Future FET Transform Learning](#) , and the Adult Literacy for Life [Adult Literacy for Life 10 Year Strategy](#).

The Adult Literacy for Life Strategy identifies a range of commitments and actions across four identified pillars and the Further Education and Training (FET) sector will play an integral part in realising these commitments and ambitions.

The Role:

Through the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy and the Future FET: Transforming Learning The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy set ambitious targets to be achieved. A National Adult Literacy for Life Strategy Programme Office will be established to operate as a central, coordinating body across Government departments & other relevant stakeholders. A key element of this office will be to serve as a driver of collaboration & overall strategy implementation through the national network of Regional Literacy Coordinators.

The **Director** will be an integral part of the senior leadership team, reporting directly to the Executive Director, Transformation. The successful candidate will play a major role in the establishment and implementation of the National Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Programme Office, to deliver on the Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy 10-Year Strategy for Ireland; the strategy was launched in late 2021 by the Minister of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (MFHERIS). The ALL Strategy aims to ensure every adult has the necessary literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills to fully engage in society and realise their potential and the successful candidate will ensure the delivery of the key targets identified in the strategy, as documented in the ALL implementation plan.

S/he will be an innovative individual with extensive senior leadership experience in a multi-function, complex organisation, with the capacity to drive change, implement the actions from the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy, and lead the development and establishment of the National ALL Programme Office to provide high quality strategic insights, planning and funding approaches. S/he will also possess the technical and personal competencies required to successfully bring about transformational change within an organisational context.

The role will offer a unique opportunity to be part of the SOLAS senior team in an established Public Service Agency with a substantial sphere of influence across the FET sector and within further education and training provision in Ireland, an agency with substantial funding and a remit to help develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet national and global economic challenges.

Key Responsibilities:

The Director will have senior leadership accountability and management responsibility for the following, through the establishment of the National ALL Programme Office

- Develop and monitor delivery against an overall ALL strategy implementation plan, and key ALL strategy targets and indicators, producing quarterly progress reports
- Analyse baseline provision and gaps in existing literacy learning & support available
- Develop templates and guidelines to create regional literacy plans and monitor progress, and ensure the plans align with national ALL strategy priorities and the implementation plan
- Support and act as Secretariat to the Cross-Government Implementation Group, producing analysis and relevant material to highlight progress, identify issues and seek solutions in ALL implementation
- Convene and act as Secretariat to the National Literacy Coalition and Thematic Networks / Working Groups that may be established to progress specific issues
- Develop guidelines and manage disbursement / impact analysis for collaboration/innovation fund
- Support the 16 Regional Literacy Coordinators based in the Education and Training Boards, including coordinating training, development and networking opportunities
- Liaise with Government Departments & other key stakeholders on their contribution to implementation of the strategy
- Co-ordinate and monitor promotion / awareness activities and develop adultliteracyforlife.ie as a one stop shop.

S/he will:

- Build a cross-Government and cross-society culture and approach within the office and in the wider delivery of the ALL strategy by working with sector leads and all relevant wider stakeholders
- Work with key partners, put the research tools and data infrastructure in place to effectively analyse baseline provision and gaps in existing literacy learning & support available and monitor delivery of the ALL strategy
- Develop and monitor an overall implementation plan and provide regular updates on progress to SOLAS, DFHERIS and the Cross-Government Implementation Group
- Ensure that the Adult Literacy for Life website is fully developed and serves as a one stop shop to access all relevant information and resources to help people identify and address unmet literacy needs
- Ensure that Regional Literacy Plans are developed by Coordinators and endorsed by Regional Literacy Coalitions in line with an agreed template and with the overall national ALL programme each year
- Support the network of Regional Literacy Coordinators by ensuring a collaborative peer working and professional development opportunities are available and regular information and guidance is issued to support their work
- Oversee the Office role as Secretariat and in support of the Cross-Government Implementation Group, National Literacy Coalition and Thematic Networks/Working Groups that may be established to progress specific issues
- Identify and seek collaborative solutions to any issues or barriers arising in implementation of the ALL strategy
- Oversee a strong communications strategy for the roll-out of the ALL strategy, including annual awareness campaigns
- Identification of practical means of cross-agency working; including referral protocols, learner data requirements, aligning strategies and responses and sharing data with relevant stakeholders.
- As part of the Senior Leadership Team, ensure compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.
- Represent the interests of the organisation to government departments, employers, union, providers and the public.

Core competencies:

The successful candidate will have demonstrated the following core competencies for the role of Director, Adult Literacy for Life (ALL)

- **Leadership**
Inspiring and energising self and others to achieve personal and organisational success.
- **Developing Self and Others**
Finding ways to keep skills current and maintain up-to-date knowledge of specific and broad-range topics; providing developmental opportunities to others and taking ownership for own learning and others.
- **Results Focused and Business Aware**
Maintaining a focus on the important issues to achieve and improve results and awareness of and applying sound business principles and effective operational practices to drive successful outcomes.
- **Learner & Stakeholder Focus**
Maintaining learner/ stakeholder focus, understanding their needs, providing realistic commitments and taking responsibility for delivering on those commitments.
- **Thinking Big**
Generating and implementing creative solutions to achieve ALL Strategy priorities, conceptualising and articulating future opportunities and trends.
- **Communication**
Exchanging information and ideas with others to promote effective discussion and decision making; promoting 2-way communication.

Effective Performance Indicators



Leadership	<p><i>Articulates and gives a sense of purpose and direction to the unit; delegates appropriately</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ gives the unit a sense of purpose by linking their efforts and contributions to the SOLAS overall vision, strategy and goals ✓ demonstrates a passion, high energy and accountability for achieving the desired future state ✓ listens without prescribing answers to ensure people feel comfortable voicing their opinions ✓ asks questions (rather than providing solutions) to help others make informed decisions ✓ delegates full authority and gives latitude to the individuals/team to do the job in their own way ✓ takes leadership responsibility for issues, inside and outside of his/her portfolio ✓ uses realistic but positive language to inspire others and make them feel part of a highly successful team.
Developing Self and Others	<p><i>Takes an active role in guiding others in their developmental activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ makes time to discuss career aspirations with team members ✓ identifies developmental opportunities for team members (e.g. cross-functional projects) ✓ acts as champion and sponsor for high performing team members ✓ volunteers individuals for organisational projects even where the team is disadvantaged in the short-term ✓ acts as a mentor to individuals at various levels within SOLAS.
Thinking Big	<p><i>Scans the environment for potential opportunities, engaging individuals in the development of innovative yet achievable goals and work plans</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ scans the economic, academic, business and/or technical environment to spot opportunities and plan for future needs ✓ analyses emerging trends and threats over the longer term and effectively interprets this information to demonstrate the potential for SOLAS ✓ focuses the team's attention on the importance of the bigger, longer term picture rather than the immediate ✓ challenges fundamental and traditional assumptions and encourages others to do the same.
Learner and Stakeholder Focus	<p><i>Juggles multiple resources to best meet the needs of students or clients</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ continuously updates the team with learner/stakeholder information enabling them to provide the most effective service ✓ reallocates resources as appropriate to best meet learner/stakeholder needs ✓ persuasively lobbies for additional resources where necessary to meet learner/stakeholder needs ✓ challenges individuals to look at issues through the eyes of the learner/stakeholder } considers the needs of both the learner/stakeholder and the overall organisation and finds mutually acceptable solutions.
Results Focused and Business Aware	<p><i>Keeps current, builds effective business cases and seeks opportunities to raise SOLAS performance to meet organisational goals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ keeps abreast of SOLAS's overall business and shares the information with his/her unit ✓ considers decisions from a business perspective to ensure economic viability ✓ uses financial information to evaluate options and opportunities ✓ builds effective business cases, separating the main issues, highlighting benefits, providing realistic cost and time estimations etc. ✓ pushes self and others for high value results, not just activity ✓ checks-in with individuals and asks them to do the same, holding people accountable for milestones and achieving results
Communication	<p><i>Proactively and consistently communicates within the unit, across SOLAS and with other stakeholders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ takes the initiative and makes consistent and regular two-way communication a priority in the unit ✓ finds reasons to walk around to talk to people, being visible and available ✓ prepares and delivers engaging and motivating presentations ✓ considers other peoples' opinions, adapting the message to demonstrate respect for the audience ✓ Considers internal and external stakeholders to ensure effective communication with all

SOLAS TRIBE Values:

The successful candidate will espouse the SOLAS values in all aspects of their work

- **Transparent:** *We are Transparent, Accountable and Work with Integrity*
- **Respectful:** *We Respect and Value our People*
- **Innovative:** *We Think Big and Encourage Innovation*
- **Brave:** *We are underpinned by Trust, Support and a Shared Purpose*
- **Effective:** *We maximise value through our Professionalism and Efficiency*

The Individual:

The successful candidate will have:

- A record of accomplishment at a senior management level, preferably in a large multi-function complex organisation, focusing on strategy development within in an education, training or analogous environment.
- Extensive leadership experience in a complex delivery environment demonstrating delivery of change and operational planning.
- Proven experience in a significant change programme at a senior level.
- Ability in relating effectively with a diverse range of people internal and external to the organisation, including government departments, Board members and staff representatives.
- Demonstrate an ability to take a system-wide approach and see connections, risk, and the potential for innovation in the wider environment.
- Ability to build and support complex cross-functional and inter-agency teams.
- Demonstrated achievement in the management of a variant and diversified portfolio in a devolved management structure.
- An excellent understanding of the strategic use and application of both quantitative and qualitative research.
- Broad understanding of continuous development, innovation and achievement of results against objectives in career to date.
- Capacity to create a vision for the sector and organisation and pulls together divergent and convergent requirements to deliver it.
- Knowledge of data governance practices and technology issues, regulatory requirements and emerging trends and issues.
- Exemplary public service values including the highest standard of professional integrity and operating with probity.
- Excellent written and spoken communication skills, as well as a working familiarity with information technology.
- Self-starter attributes possessing the necessary drive and resilience.
- A record of academic achievement that will include a relevant primary degree, or equivalent, at a minimum.

Principal Conditions of Service:

Probation

A probationary period of nine months applies to this role.

Remuneration

The rate of total remuneration for the post of Director, Grade 4X, effective 1st February 2022 is as follows:

The Grade 4X pay scale (PPC) is €91,609 to €113,313.

Candidates should note that the entry point will be at the minimum (1st point) of the relevant scale and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

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

A different rate may 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.

Location

The headquarters of SOLAS are currently based in Castleforbes House, Dublin 1. *SOLAS will be introducing a hybrid working policy for the organisation in the coming months. SOLAS reserves the right, at its discretion, to change the primary location to any other place within Ireland.

Tenure

This appointment will be on a fixed-term contract basis for four years. **Please note: a secondment opportunity is not excluded.

Hours of Attendance

Working hours will be in accordance with the standard arrangements for SOLAS.

Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance will be 30 working days a year. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave and it is on the basis of a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Superannuation and Retirement

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Public Service, at the time of being offered an appointment. Pensionable public servants (new joiners) recruited on or after 1 January 2013 will be members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme). Please note that the Single Scheme applies to all pensionable first time entrants to the public service, as well as to former public servants returning to the Public Service after a break of more than 26 weeks. In certain circumstances the 26-week rule does not apply. The legislation giving effect to this scheme is the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme for Public Servants please see the following website: <http://www.per.gov.ie/pensions>