



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

Assistant Business Advisor – Local Enterprise Office

Information for Candidates

February, 2023

1. The Position

The Council is seeking applications from suitably qualified candidates with relevant experience for the position of Assistant Business Advisor.(Analogous to Staff Officer Grade)

The Donegal Local Enterprise Office (LEO) is a first stop shop for any small business looking to start or grow across the country. The vision for the LEO is to develop and sustain a positive enterprise ecosystem at local level throughout the country that will drive new added-value start-ups, facilitate further growth of micro and small businesses and enhance local economies.

The position of Assistant Business Advisor is key core staff member within the LEO and drives the development and delivery of an integrated range of actions and programmes to promote entrepreneurship and increase the number of new business start-ups, grow existing small and micro firms through a range of supports aimed at assisting small businesses to innovate, embrace digital transformation and adopt more environmentally friendly practices, become first-time exporters and achieve ambitious development objectives.

This is a key role that will require the successful candidate to work directly with core LEO clients to improve the management of business processes, introduce innovation that will impact results, enhance performance and assist start-ups and small businesses across the County to grow and create employment.

It is proposed to form a panel of qualified candidates from which vacancies both permanent and temporary will be filled during the lifetime of the panel.

2. Role, Duties & Responsibilities

The LEO assistant business advisor will perform such duties as may be assigned from time to time and which will involve the facilitation, implementation and promotion of the policies and objectives of Donegal County Council for the advancement of the Local Enterprise Office and in particular the aims and objectives as set out in the LEO Local Enterprise Development Plan 2021-2024 and the Donegal 2030 Strategic Enterprise Development Plan.

The Assistant Business Advisor will report to the Head of the Local Enterprise Office, or any other officer as designated by the Chief Executive.

Such duties include inter alia:

- The provision of one to one business advice and guidance to anyone thinking about starting a business or any existing business in Donegal. This will include making monthly presentations on the supports available through the Local Enterprise Office.
- Pro-actively engaging with local businesses, especially the Local Enterprise Office portfolio clients - providing advice, evaluating their plans and strategies, recommending actions and engaging in regular review meetings.
- Evaluating and processing applications for grant aid. This will include meeting clients, evaluating their applications, preparation of written appraisals, presentation of appraisals to the Evaluation Committee, and the oversight and management of the subsequent grant drawdown process for approved projects and client progress review
- Development and assisting managing the delivery of new and existing training and management development programmes in response to the needs of small businesses including preparation of programmes specifications, processing of tenders/quotes, client recruitment and engagement, ensuring the recording of all outputs and deliverables and managing the allocated budgets.
- Development and assisting the delivery of sector and cohort specific programmes, e.g. food, creative industries, female entrepreneurship, youth entrepreneurship.
- Assisting in the delivery of the Local Enterprise Office Mentoring programme – engage with clients, assess their need, liaise with mentors, manage the mentor panel, manage the budget and ensure the full recording of outputs and deliverable.
- Managing the delivery of the Second Level Schools Enterprise Programme on an annual basis, including the recording of all outputs and outcomes.
- Contributing to the content and delivery of the events such as the Local Enterprise Week, Business Awards and other pilot events, both internal and external to the Local Enterprise Office.
- Assisting in the delivery of national programmes and supports such as Student Enterprise Programme, Trading Online Vouchers, LEAN for Micro, Green for Micro and Digital Start.

- Assisting with new initiatives designed to support microenterprises increase performance and competitiveness including programmes such as Digital Transformation and Green which will help to build resilience.
- Engage with portfolio companies who are growing, to support them to reach their potential and increase market share by maximising uptake of the full range of LEO supports.
- Develop and identify initiatives that will help LEO clients with their exporting activities and work in collaboration to ensure clients are directed and can have access to the most appropriate support as it pertains to their stage of export.
- Encourage and support LEO clients to invest in R&D and begin a process of incorporating RD&I into their commercial activities'
- Assist in the delivery of and providing executive support to the implementation of the 10 Year Strategic Enterprise Development Plan for Donegal and the delivery of the LEO Local Enterprise Development Plan
- Contributing to the on-going awareness campaign of the Local Enterprise Office and working with any appointed delivery agent to achieve this aim.
- Assisting in the development, resourcing and delivery new initiatives and programmes within the Local Enterprise Office in support of enterprise and economic development in Donegal.
- Engage on cross border and EU programmes as required by the Head of Enterprise.
- Promote and implement innovation and continuous improvement in the processes and programmes of the Local Enterprise Office.
- Contribute to the delivery of national initiatives within the Local Enterprise Network and participating on national committees.
- Representing the views of Donegal Local Enterprise Office and Donegal businesses at stakeholder meetings both regionally and nationally
- Such other duties as the Head of the Local Enterprise Office may assign to the role so as to promote the objectives of the office

Reporting

- Ensure compliance with all required Local Authority and Local Enterprise Office financial, management and governance reporting requirements.
- Collect, maintain and update relevant data.

Key Competencies

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate enough evidence within their application form of competence under each competency.

Management and Change	
Strategic Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates the ability to think strategically.• Demonstrates the ability to be effective in translating the mission and vision into operational plans and outputs.
Networking and Representing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates the ability to develop and maintain positive and beneficial relationships with relevant interests.• Demonstrates an ability to engage positively with businesses.• Demonstrates the ability to sustain a positive image and profile of the local authority and in particular the Local Enterprise Office.
Delivering Results	
Problem Solving and Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates the ability to act decisively and make timely, informed and effective decisions.• Demonstrates an ability to work as part of a team to solve problems.
Operational Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates the ability to contribute to operational plans and develop team plans in line with priorities and actions for their area of operation, having regard to corporate goals, operational objectives and available resources.• Demonstrates the ability to establish high quality service and customer care standards.• Demonstrates the ability to deliver services in a timely and effective manner.
Communicating Effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates the ability to communicate effectively.• Demonstrates effective verbal and written communication skills.• Demonstrates good interpersonal skills.

Personal Effectiveness	
Personal Motivation, Initiative and Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is enthusiastic about the role and is motivated in the face of difficulties and obstacles. • Does more than is required or expected, anticipating situations and acting to pre-empt problems. • Creates new opportunities.
Resilience and Personal Well Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates appropriate and positive self-confidence. • Operates effectively in an environment with significant complexity and pace.
Knowledge & Understanding of the role of Local Enterprise and the needs of small businesses	
Knowledge & Understanding of Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the role of the Local Enterprise Office in the context of the wider local authority service delivery. • Demonstrates an understanding of the challenges and needs of small and micro enterprises. • Demonstrates knowledge & understanding of the policies, structures and supports for small and micro enterprises.

3. Qualifications

The qualifications for the position of Assistant Business Advisor shall be as set out below:

(a) Character

Candidates shall be of good character.

(b) Health

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Successful candidates will be required to undergo a medical examination carried out by the Council's Occupational Health Doctor prior to appointment.

(c) Education, Experience etc.

Each candidate must, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms –

- (i) (a) have obtained at least Grade D (or a Pass), in Higher or Ordinary Level, in five subjects (or four if Irish is included) from the approved list of subjects in the Department of Education Established Leaving Certificate Examination or Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme including Irish and/or English and one of the following: Mathematics, Accounting, Business Organisation or Economics

AND

- (b) have obtained at least Grade C (or Honours) in Higher Level (or Honours) papers in three subjects in that examination (or two subjects if Irish and/or one of the following is included: Mathematics, Accounting, Business Organisation or Economics)

OR

- (ii) have obtained a comparable standard in an equivalent examination

OR

- (iii) hold a third level qualification of at least degree standard,

Desirable Requirements

- Strong organisational and project management skills and experience and proven ability to manage a range of multiple projects and competing priorities at one time to meet demanding and tight deadlines is essential.
- Have the ability to influence, collaborate and connect across internal and external stakeholders to the benefit of clients is essential.
- Financial literacy skills to undertake evaluation and assessment of project proposals for financial assistance and other supports, including carrying out due diligence on funding requests.
- Excellent communications and business report writing skills with demonstrated evidence of robust IT literacy (i.e. MS Office skills including Outlook, Word, Excel and PowerPoint) is essential.
- Excellent research capability, analytical skills, writing and presentation skills
- Knowledge, understanding and comprehension of the key business growth sectors and client categories in which the LEOs operate and an ability to translate this knowledge and understanding into developing supports and initiatives to achieve effective business impacts and results.

- Understanding of compliance and governance requirements as they relate to funding through the LEO.
- Experience of working with or in the business sector and having a strong understanding of the issues, challenges and opportunities facing the sector.

4. Particulars of the Post

(a) General

Donegal County Council proposes to create a panel of qualified candidates for the position of Assistant Business Advisor from which it will fill any permanent or temporary vacancy that may arise.

(b) Probation

Successful candidates shall be required to be on probation for an initial period, as determined by the Council.

(c) Remuneration

The current annual salary-scale is €46,411 minimum to max LSI2 €55,609 (as per Circular EL 05/2022).

Holders of the post will be paid at the appropriate point on the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Department Circular.

New entrants will commence on the minimum point of the scale.

(d) Base

The base for the post of Assistant Business Advisor shall be in the Local Enterprise Office. Currently the location of the Local Enterprise Office Donegal is the Enterprise Fund Business Centre, Letterkenny.

The role of the Assistant Business Advisor may involve work outside of normal working hours and some travel, with some involving overnight stays and associated costs covered by the appropriate allowances.

(e) Residence

Holders of the post shall reside in the district in which their duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

(f) Working Hours

The normal hours of work will be 35 hours per week. The Council reserves the right to alter the hours of work from time to time. Due to the nature of the work, attendance will be required outside of normal working hours, including evenings and at weekends.

(g) Requirement to Drive

Candidates shall be required:

- a. to possess a full current category B Driving Licence.
- b. to have their own vehicle available for use while performing their duties and the associated costs will be covered by the appropriate allowances.

5. Recruitment Process

A. Application Form

- Applications must be made on the official application form and all sections of the form must be fully completed.
- **Please do not submit a CV with your application.** Only information contained in the application form will be considered when assessing a candidate's suitability for the post.
- Applications must be submitted as an e mail attachment in either Word or PDF format only **by email only** to vacancies@donegalcoco.ie
- Applications must be received by the deadline specified on the form.
- Applications that are late, lost or delayed will not be considered unless official evidence showing that the application was sent within the timeframe can be produced.

B. Short Listing

Candidates may be short-listed for interview on the basis of information supplied. In the event of a short-listing exercise being required, an Expert Panel will convene to examine and assess the application forms against a set of pre-determined criteria, based on the requirements of the job. It is therefore in your own interest to provide

a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications and experience on the application form.

Where it is considered, by reason of the number and standard of applications received, that it would be reasonable not to admit all candidates to the interview, only persons likely to attain at the interview a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment shall be called for interview.

C. Right to Information and Review

The Council is committed to offering feedback and information to candidates. Any candidate who wishes to do so may request to have a decision or the process reviewed. Any such request must be submitted in writing, stating the grounds of the request and this must be submitted to the Human Resources Department, Three Rivers Centre, Lifford, Co. Donegal within five working days of the date of notification of a relevant decision.

D. Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

E. Other

Appointments to the Council are subject to satisfactory checks with regard to references, qualifications, medical examinations, and Garda Vetting, as applicable.

F. Canvassing Will Disqualify

Any attempt by a candidate (or by any persons acting on their behalf) to canvass or otherwise influence any officer of the Council (or persons nominated by it to interview or examine applicants) in the candidate's favour, either directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise, will automatically disqualify the applicant for consideration for the position.

G. General Data Protection Regulation

Donegal County Council is committed to protecting your personal data and we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 – 2018, and the General Data Protection Regulation.

- Basis for Processing your Personal Information

The basis for processing your personal data is to process your application for the position you have applied for with Donegal County Council under the Terms of the

Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources Department policies and procedures.

When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied on your application form. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. You are entitled to obtain at any time, a copy of information about you, which is kept on record.

- Sharing of Information

Outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated shortlisting and/or interview board.

If, following the competition, you are deemed a qualified candidate and offered a position; the information provided in your application form will form part of your Personnel File.

Furthermore, should you be offered a position and subsequently confirm your interest in the position, the information provided on your application form will be used to request service records and employment references.

- Storage period

Your application will be retained for two years from the date a panel for this position is formed. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition.

Donegal County Council's Privacy Statement can be assessed at:
www.donegalcoco.ie