



Candidate Information Booklet

Competition for the appointment to the position of:

Head of Connected Hubs and Digital Innovation

**Temporary Specified Purpose Contract (covering secondment, up to
3 years)**

Closing date: **Monday 18th May 2026 at 5pm**

Key Contact Information:

Head of Corporate Services, Western Development Commission, Dillon House, Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon.

Email: wdc@collinsmcnicholas.ie

The WDC is an equal opportunities employer
Canvassing will disqualify
Ba bhuntáiste é líofacht sa Ghaeilge

JOB & PERSON SPECIFICATION:

About the WDC:

The Western Development Commission (WDC) is a statutory body whose role is to promote the social and economic development of the western region of Ireland. The WDC works with a range of stakeholders to support sustainable and inclusive growth in the region and has a strong track record of delivering impactful initiatives and programmes.

Culture of the WDC:

At the WDC, we are committed to creating a positive and supportive work environment where employees can thrive and make a difference. Our culture is defined by teamwork, innovation, and a deep sense of purpose. We value diversity, respect for different perspectives, and a willingness to learn and grow. If you are passionate about making a difference in the western region of Ireland and want to be part of a dynamic and collaborative team, we encourage you to apply for this role.

Purpose of Role:

The successful candidate will be appointed on a **Temporary Specified Purpose Contract** to lead the ongoing development of the Connected Hubs programme (National Hub Network) during this defined period. The role will ensure continuity, strategic direction and effective programme management for this national initiative. The role will also contribute to the Western Development Commission's (WDC) work in digital innovation, supporting regional development through digital adoption.

The person appointed will be responsible for the governance, management and development of the Connected Hubs programme (National Hub Network), liaison with the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) and engaging with state, community and private stakeholders to deliver on strategic outcomes. The successful candidate will have demonstrable project management experience. Experience in the development of remote working policy, peer network development involving coworking, enterprise, remote and community led hubs. Experience in digital transformation and digital innovation is also a requirement.

The successful candidate will report directly to the Chief Executive of the WDC and form part of the WDC's senior management team.

Key Responsibilities:

The Head of Connected Hubs and Digital Innovation will be responsible for the development and growth of the Connected Hubs programme (National Hub Network). This work will align with the strategic goals of the WDC strategy, 'Unlocking Potential, Driving Change' and Our Rural Future, the Government plan for Rural Development, led by the Department of Community and Rural Development and the Gaeltacht, and the pending National Hub Strategy which is nearing final approval.

The job holder will

- Provide leadership for the further development of the Connected Hubs Programme (National Hub Network) by building on existing growth opportunities and identifying new opportunities.
- Manage the hubs budget and team (currently four direct reports) and associated deliverables.
- Liaise with the Department of Community and Rural Development and the Gaeltacht and the Hubs Network representatives.
- Lead external and internal stakeholder communication and manage engagement to ensure effective delivery of the project objectives.
- Be responsible for the identification and tracking of project risk and risk management.
- Ensure on-time delivery of specific outputs, reporting and project templates.
- Contribute to WDC digital innovation projects and strategic priorities.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen digital ecosystems and regional innovation.
- Support policy development and research related to remote and hybrid working and digital inclusion.
- Ensure compliance with public sector governance, procurement, and reporting requirements.
- Work as part of the WDC's senior management team.

The above is not, and does not purport to be, a comprehensive list of all duties involved and consequently, the post holder may be required to perform other duties as appropriate to the post which may be assigned to them from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post.

Eligibility Criteria and Experience:

Experience:

Essential Criteria:

Applicants must by the closing date of application have the following:

- Proven track record in the management and delivery of complex projects and associated budgets across IT and business-related projects (five years' experience).
- Demonstrable experience of strong stakeholder engagement and partnerships skills.
- Proven track record in successfully delivering fixed price contracts and public sector procurement.
- Knowledge of remote, blended and hybrid work policy or practice as it applies in regional development.
- Knowledge of digital innovation, digital policy, or technology-led initiatives.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

Desirable Criteria:

The following requirements are desirable:

- Level 8 qualification in a relevant discipline.

- Experience in community and enterprise development initiatives.
- Strong team leader with experience of building and leading a team of both direct reports and non-direct reports.
- Project management qualification (e.g., PRINCE2 / PMP or equivalent).

Key Competencies:

For effective performance at this level, the candidate will need to demonstrate that they possess the key competencies for effective performance at Assistant Principal Officer level:

- Leadership
- Analysis & Decision Making
- Management & Delivery of Results
- Interpersonal & Communication Skills
- Specialist Knowledge, Expertise & Self Development
- Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values

Further details on the Civil Service Competency Framework is available here.

https://www.publicjobs.ie/documents/PAS_CS_Competency_Models_2017.pdf

General Information

This competition will be used to fill specific posts in the WDC. Please note, this role is a full time fixed term post and the successful candidate will be required to take up assignment on a full time basis. Discussion regarding flexible working arrangements can be undertaken once the successful candidate is out of probation.

Health & Character:

Candidates must be in good health, capable and competent of carrying out the work assigned to them, and they must also be of good character. Those under consideration for a position may be required to complete a health and character declaration. References will be sought.

In the event of conflicts of interest, candidates may not be considered for certain posts. It is important that candidates list their previous civil or public service employment if they have availed of a voluntary redundancy or retirement scheme and/or are in receipt of an ill-health retirement pension. Failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

Eligibility to Compete:

Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway; or
- (b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- (c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or

- (d) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and has a stamp four visa: or
- (e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp four visa or
- (f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp four visa.

To qualify candidates must be eligible by the date of any job offer.

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

This is a competitive competency-based selection process to appoint the most suitable candidate to fill this specific position. A panel for this position may be formed as part of the recruitment process.

How to Apply:

As part of the application process, applicants are required to submit the following documentation:

- a) A comprehensive curriculum vitae (CV), detailing experience relevant to the position (maximum of three pages);
- b) A short cover letter or personal statement (maximum of two page) outlining the applicant's motivation for applying for the post and demonstrating how their skills and experience meet the requirements of the position.

Both documents should be combined and submitted as a single Word document or PDF, saved using the format FirstName.Surname.

Applications stored on personal online storage sites (e.g., OneDrive, Cloud, DropBox, etc or applications in other file formats (e.g., Google Docs) will not be accepted.

Please note that omission of any or part of the two requested documents, in a single document, will render the application incomplete. Incomplete applications will not be considered for the next stage of the selection process.

Please email your application to wdc@collinsmcnicholas.ie

Requests for Reasonable Accommodations:

The WDC, in line with the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015, will ensure that it does all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person who has a disability and will ensure that its services are accessible across the range of disabilities. If you require reasonable accommodations made, please indicate this during the application process by emailing wdc@collinsmcnicholas.ie

Any requests for reasonable accommodation needs to be accompanied by a medical/psychologist's report, the purpose of which is to provide the Western Development Commission with information necessary to make the decision on reasonable accommodation as promptly as possible. The Western Development Commission will consider each request on a case-by-case basis. All information provided will be treated as strictly confidential.

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The WDC is committed to attracting, recruiting, developing, and retaining the highest calibre of staff to build a diversified, supportive, innovative, and inclusive workforce reflective of the wider community. We aim to attract the best people who have the experience, knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies to support WDC's Strategy Statement.

We are dedicated to promoting equality of opportunity, diversity, and inclusion. We encourage applications from underrepresented groups and accommodate candidates with disabilities. Recruitment, selection, and appointment are conducted in compliance with the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and WDC's Diversity & Inclusion policy, which are the fundamental principles underpinning this approach.

We are committed to implementing best practices in our recruitment, selection, and appointment procedures to ensure they are free from inherent or potential bias, open and transparent, and regularly monitored, analysed, and reviewed. This ensures a strategic and professional approach at all times.

We ensure that our employment policies and practices are of the highest standard. All appointments are made on merit through fair and transparent recruitment processes.

Closing Date:

The closing date and time for applications is stated on the cover page of this booklet. Applications received after the specified deadline will not be accepted. All correspondence should be sent to wdc@collinsmcnicholas.ie and clearly state the title of the position that you are applying for in the subject line of the email.

Selection Methods:

Depending on the number of applications received, the selection process may include:

- Shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application.
- A preliminary telephone / video conferencing call which may include a questionnaire.
- A competitive, competency focussed, interview.
- A second-round interview (if applicable).
- A presentation; work sample or other exercise that may be deemed appropriate; and
- Reference and online checks.

Shortlisting:

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the WDC may decide that a number only will be called to interview.

In this respect, the WDC provide for the employment of a short-listing process to select a group of candidates for interview who, based on an examination of their application, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An experienced interview board will examine the application against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position.

This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application.

Interviews:

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communications from the WDC. As much notice as possible will be given to candidates being called for interview, but usually five working days. Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the WDC and should make sure that their contact details specified on their application are correct.

Interviews may be held in person, online via Microsoft Teams, or through another video conferencing platform, at the discretion of the WDC.

The WDC will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates for attendance at interview.

References:

As part of the selection process, candidates may be asked to provide names and contact details of people who would be suitable referees. The WDC will only collect the details and contact referees should you come under consideration for the post.

Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed, a final determination on suitability of a candidate for appointment to this position cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Panel:

Should the candidate recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it relinquish it, the WDC may at its discretion, select and recommend another candidate for appointment on the results of this selection process.

The WDC may also establish a panel of successful candidates following the results of the selection process. Should a panel be established, candidates will be placed on the panel in order of merit. Any panel created will expire after a designated period from its establishment or when it has been exhausted, whichever is sooner. Placement on a panel is not a guarantee of appointment to a post, and candidates not appointed at the expiry of the panel will have no claim to a post thereafter.

Candidates' Obligations:

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

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process. Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. Where a person is found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where an individual has not been appointed to a post, they will be disqualified as a candidate and

- where an individual has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, they shall forfeit that appointment.

Service & Feedback:

The WDC take all necessary steps to ensure a fair, open and transparent appointment process that produces a quality outcome and commands public confidence. The WDC also abides by the core recruitment principles of probity, merit, transparency, consistency, best practice and appointments promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. All appointments made will also comply with relevant employment and equality legislation, and all candidates will be treated fairly, to a consistent standard and in a consistent manner.

If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the WDC's attention. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

Meaningful feedback is available to candidates upon request by emailing wdc@collinsmcnicholas.ie

Review Process:

A request for review may be taken by a candidate should they be dissatisfied with an action or decision taken by the WDC. The WDC will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of Section 7 & 8 of the Code of Practice Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (Commission). You can either request a review of a decision made during the selection process, under section 7 of the relevant Code, or you can make a complaint that the selection process followed was unfair, under section 8. For more information on the Review Process including timeframes, [click here](#).

PRINCIPAL CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**Tenure and Probation:**

All appointments are subject to the Western Development Commission Act 1998 and staff must agree to the WDC Code of Business Conduct under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

Contract Type:

Temporary (Fixed-Term and Specified-Purpose) Duration: Up to 3 years. This contract is linked to the secondment of the substantive post holder. The appointment will terminate upon the return of the substantive post holder to their role, or on 10th May 2029, whichever is earlier.

Probation:

The appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a 6-month probationary period.

Notwithstanding the above, this will not preclude an extension of the probationary contract if performance dictates the same. The probationary period stands suspended when an employee is absent due to Maternity or Adoptive Leave.

- In relation to an employee absent on Parental Leave or Carers Leave, the employer may require probation to be suspended if the absence is not considered to be consistent with the continuation of the probation, and
- Any other statutory provision providing that probation shall
 - stand suspended during an employee's absence from work, and
 - be completed by the employee on the employee's return from work after such absence.

Where probation is suspended the employer should notify the employee of the circumstances relating to the suspension.

Duties of Post:

The duties and responsibilities set out in this job description are indicative of responsibilities related to this role. As with all posts, the nature of WDC business is evolving and flexibility is required to adapt to changing business needs.

Remuneration:

Based on 40 hours gross per working week (or 35 hours net), the successful candidate will be paid on the ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL STANDARD SCALE as of 1st February 2026

€82,290 – €85,320 – €88,393 – €91,475 – €94,553 – €96,329 – €99,433 LSI1 – €102,550 LSI2

¹ After 3 years satisfactory service at the maximum

² After 6 years satisfactory service at the maximum

In addition:

- A further general round increase of 1% will apply on 1st June 2026.

Please note: The starting salary for the person appointed to this post will be **the first point** on the above scale unless the successful application has previous public sector experience as per circular 08/2019.

The PPC (Personal Pension Contribution) scale applies when the individual is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6 April 1995 or are a new entrant to the civil or public service and are making a compulsory personal pension contribution. A different rate will apply where the appointee is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Important Note:

Interested applicants should understand that entry will be at the first point of the appropriate scale and **will not be subject to negotiation**. The rate of total remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Candidates should note that different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant.

Office Location:

The WDC is a remote-first organisation with its head office in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon, staff are also located in Galway, Letterkenny, and Sligo. The successful candidate may seek to be located in Ballaghaderreen, Galway, Letterkenny or Sligo in line with the remote working policy of the WDC. New staff or those on probation may initially work on-site more frequently until completing role induction, as decided by their manager or the CEO

Remote First:

At the WDC, we follow the Government's / our parent Department's guidance in extending remote working to all employees. In order to provide flexibility and opportunities for dynamic collaboration and work / life balance. We believe in harnessing technology to drive innovation and maximize efficiency, empowering our team to thrive in a flexible work environment. We promote in-person collaboration and attendance at our offices located in Sligo, Galway, Letterkenny and Ballaghaderreen, when it is required or warranted. New staff or those on probation may initially

work on-site more frequently until completing role induction, as decided by their manager or the CEO

Travel:

Due to the nature of this role, the successful candidate will hold a full driving licence and have access to transport as this post will involve travel nationally. When absent from home and your designated office location on official duty, you will be paid appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances, in accordance with Civil Service regulations.

The candidate may also be prepared to undertake occasional international travel in the undertaking of their duties.

Hours of Attendance:

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time but will amount to not less than 40 hours gross per week (35 hours net). The successful candidate will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of their duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations. The rate of remuneration payable covers any extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

Annual Leave:

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

Sick Leave:

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars.

Officers who will be paying Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts directly to the employing Organisation. Payment during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

Superannuation:

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil Service at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Full details of the Scheme are at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable (non-Single Scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or is currently on a career break or special leave with/without pay different terms may apply. The pension entitlement of such appointees will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

Candidates are also advised to refer to the following for further information:

- Circular 12/09 [Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement](#)
- [Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants](#)

Declaration: Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a civil or public service scheme of incentivised early retirement and/or a collective agreement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Civil or Public Service pension benefit (in payment

or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

Pension Accrual

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one pre-existing public service pension scheme (i.e. non-Single Scheme) as per the 2012 Act shall apply. This 40-year limit is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

Additional Superannuation Contribution

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017.

Note: ASC deductions are in addition to any pension contributions (main scheme and spouses' and children's contributions) required under the rules of your pension scheme.

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme please see the following website – www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

Secrecy, Confidentiality and Standards of Behaviour: Official Secrecy and Integrity

During the term of the probationary contract, an officer will be subject to the Provisions of the Official Secrets Act, 1963, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2014. The officer will agree not to disclose to unauthorised third parties any confidential information either during or subsequent to the period of employment.

Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour

The appointee will be subject to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.

Ethics in Public Office Acts

The Ethics in Public Office Acts will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

Prior approval of publications

An officer will agree not to publish material related to his or her official duties without prior approval by the CEO or by another appropriate authorised officer.

Political Activity

During the term of employment the officer will be subject to the rules governing public servants and politics.

All circulars are available on the website www.circulars.gov.ie

DATA PROTECTION & GDPR

The WDC will process any personal data provided by candidates in connection with an application for this role in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive.

The WDC is fully aware of GDPR requirements and all related data is managed in compliance with the relevant regulations. For successful candidates, their application and any related paperwork will be retained for the duration of their employment and as necessary for a period thereafter. For

unsuccessful candidates, applications and correspondence shall be retained for 6 months, or where panels are formed, 6 months after the panel expires. Where any data is retained, this will be managed by the Corporate Services / Careers Team. All data will be treated in confidence and all appropriate security measures will be applied.

The WDC may disclose the data that is provided in an application to external sources for the following reasons:

- where there is an external consultant / assessor assisting in managing the recruitment process.
- shortlisting or supporting interviews for the post which you have applied, and
- to internal and external auditors.

Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the GDPR. To make a right of access request under Article 15, please submit a request in writing to the Data Protection Officer, Western Development Commission or by email to dataprotection@wdc.ie describing the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable the WDC to identify the relevant records.

Important Notice

The foregoing represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the probationary contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.