



Candidate Information

Position:	Research Careers and Employability Officer
School/Department:	Research and Enterprise
Reference:	24/111691
Closing Date:	Monday 25 March 2024
Salary:	£37,841 - £45,148 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date:	Thursday 18 April 2024
Duration:	Available for 2 years

JOB PURPOSE:

As part of the Wellcome Trust funded Northern Ireland Research Culture Initiative, the Research Careers and Employability Officer will develop and manage key relationships with employers, especially within NI, to support the employability of postdoctoral and other research staff at Queen's and Ulster University. They will deliver high-quality career advisory services and guidance that optimise and enhance opportunities for researchers and will deliver a range of events, training and workshops including development programmes, employer engagement and career exploration events, and one-to-one and/ or small group support to research staff across disciplines.

This position is initially funded for two years by the Wellcome Trust through their Institutional Funding for Research Culture programme. The post holder will be based in the Research Strategy & Engagement Team in the Research & Enterprise Directorate at Queen's University Belfast and will work as part of an integrated team focusing on Research Culture, reporting directly to the Research Culture Manager.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. To identify, develop and manage a portfolio of key relationships with potential employers of research staff, particularly in the Northern Ireland research & innovation sector, identifying their staffing and recruitment needs.
2. To raise awareness of the unique skills, characteristics and value of postdoctoral and other research staff with employers, working collaboratively to develop initiatives to promote employment opportunities to research staff and advising/ supporting employers on recruitment strategies.
3. To design, develop and deliver a range of innovative employability and careers programmes and resources at research staff level. The programmes will be designed to support the training and development of key employability skills and provide further guidance to research staff exploring a range of career pathways, both in academia and other sectors.
4. To provide professional career guidance to research staff through a range of interventions, including face to face and online one-to-one consultations. This could include career advice or coaching, feedback on CVs, cover letters and job applications, as well as interview preparation and mock interviews.
5. To enhance the research staff experience and develop a range of work-related learning and networking opportunities to promote and support the diverse range of careers both in academia and other sectors, including career exploration events and other means to get exposure to a range of employment sectors and roles.
6. To work closely with postdoctoral and researcher development teams at Queen's and Ulster University to embed and sustain the above programmes and initiatives within their development offerings at each institution.
7. To plan and monitor the use of funding and resources, ensuring events and programmes are delivered on time and within budget.
8. To work collaboratively with key internal and external stakeholders, including professional services and support teams in both institutions, including research and innovation support, postgraduate schools and colleges, careers and employability teams, academic departments, and people, culture and HR departments, to ensure services are co-ordinated and promoted in the most effective way to support the broader employability agenda within and beyond higher education, while managing the demand on local employers and use of resources.

9. To work closely and collaboratively with teams leading Belfast Region City Deal Innovation Centres, identifying and understanding future recruitment and resourcing needs, and developing solutions that address these and optimise the career development opportunities for researchers.
10. To monitor and evaluate the delivery of workshops, events, one-to-one support and programmes across careers activities, producing evaluation and impact reports as relevant to managers, committees and funder.
11. To play a key role in the NIRCI programme team, supporting the Research Culture Manager in ensuring delivery of project milestones and objectives on time and within budget, and contributing project updates and reports as required.
12. To keep aware of current trends, developments and challenges related to research staff careers and recruitment.
13. To undertake any other duties that might arise and that are in keeping with the grade and remit of the post, including contributing to activities involving the rest of the team.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. An honours degree or equivalent qualification, or substantial recent relevant experience.
2. Substantial relevant experience to include:
 - Successful development and delivery of innovative employability and careers-related programmes, events and initiatives.
 - Identifying career management and development needs, and developing and delivering programmes, courses, events or initiatives to address the needs.
 - Successful event and project management including team and budget management.
 - Experience of networking and building successful relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and delivering a high-quality service to meet their needs.
 - Working with individuals to advise on and support their professional and career development.
3. Coordinating communications and engagement with internal and external stakeholders, including management of print and online materials, developing and managing networks and groups, and proactive relationship management with key stakeholders.
4. Collating and analysing a range of qualitative and quantitative data and information, and developing resulting evidence-based reports, findings and recommendations.
5. Strong IT skills, with proficiency in Microsoft Office applications, and web content management systems and/ or Microsoft Sharepoint.
6. Excellent communication and presentation skills with both internal and external audiences.
7. Ability to confidently present reports and findings to committees and working groups of senior colleagues.
8. Excellent project management, negotiation and influencing skills.
9. Excellent interpersonal skills in working with a diverse range of individuals.
10. Ability to work independently and plan own workload with a high level of self-motivation, whilst also working in a wider team.
11. Willingness to work irregular hours on occasion, and to work flexibly and able to travel in the UK, Ireland and abroad.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. A relevant professional qualification.
2. Experience of working with researchers in a higher, further education or other research performing organisation.
3. Experience using Customer Relationship Management Systems for key account management and engagement activity.
4. Knowledge and understanding of local labour market and trends in employment specific to the HE environment.
5. A demonstrable understanding of the academic context and career pathways for researchers and/ or postgraduate research students.
6. Demonstrable experience of managing and planning annual budgets and/ or line managing junior staff.
7. Ability to design and deliver learning and development workshops and training.
8. Experience in coaching and mentoring individuals and groups, and providing constructive feedback.