

AONTAS: Policy and Advocacy Officer **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/108870>)**



Policy and Advocacy Officer

Publication date: 11th June

Closing Date: 1st July 2024 at 5:00pm

Interview schedule: Interviews will take place on Monday 8th July 2024

About AONTAS

Established in 1969, AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation, is a non-governmental membership organisation that promotes that value of adult learning and advocates for the rights of all adults to quality learning across the tertiary education system. We have an unwavering commitment to educationally disadvantaged adults. We offer solutions-focused advocacy that is evidence-based, drawing on research and our extensive initiatives that engage with adults who have returned to education. AONTAS is a highly respected and connected non-governmental organisation at national and international levels.

AONTAS is committed to providing a voice for adult learners based on our vision of learning as being truly lifelong, and takes account of the myriad benefits of learning to health, personal development, social engagement and community development. AONTAS advocates for an inclusive, learner-centred lifelong learning system that enables adults to have a meaningful learning experience.

Purpose of this role:

- To support AONTAS' policy work, in collaboration with the Head of Advocacy and Policy and the CEO
- To contribute to evidence-based policy and advocacy campaigns to address inequalities in adult and community education.
- To engage with members, learners, and key stakeholders in order to stay informed of sectoral issues, policy changes and legislative developments.
- To effectively advocate AONTAS' positions to policy makers and political representatives
- To collaborate with the Advocacy Team and the AONTAS Team on adult and community education initiatives and events.

Key Responsibilities

- Monitoring and staying informed of activity in the Oireachtas and NI Assembly related to adult education, community education and Further Education and Training.
- Building and maintaining relationships with internal and external stakeholders including key stakeholders, political representatives, parliamentary staff and civil servants.
- Undertaking primary and secondary research to formulate findings and recommendations that shape AONTAS' representation and advocacy work
- Analysing and communicating key adult learning policies in Ireland and the EU, to the AONTAS Team and AONTAS Members
- Informing and developing AONTAS policy submissions in collaboration with the Head of Advocacy and Policy, and the CEO Representing the organisation and members at consultation sessions and on suitable representative committees
- Supporting the delivery of projects that seek to achieve AONTAS' Strategic Plan
- Playing a key role in the development and delivery of advocacy campaigns
- Supporting colleagues on the Advocacy Team with other tasks and EU project work when required.

- Actively engaging with a range of working groups and steering groups as a representative for adult and community education.
- Attending political party events with preparation and follow up work to engage with representatives on issues related to AONTAS' work

Requirements

Core Requirements:

- A bachelor's or master's degree in social policy, education, human rights, equality or a relevant area, or ability to demonstrate relevant work experience in given areas.
- Has successfully shown their ability to work collaboratively within and across teams and manage multiple programmes of work.
- Experience in policy analysis, and representing equality-focused issues at regional, national, or European level.
- A good knowledge of the Irish policy landscape particularly the adult and community education sector
- Experience in developing strategic approaches to engaging with representatives and official, developing policy papers, and engaging in national consultations.

Preferred Experience:

- Experience in developing strategic and mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders.
- Experience in the Oireachtas, NI Assembly or other parliamentary monitoring and engagement.
- Experience in engaging with department officials and elected representatives on policy
- A good understanding of policies and activities led by DFHERIS, SOLAS, QQI, ETBI, and other key stakeholders.
- Experience working in a non-government organisation.
- Access to a vehicle and a full clean driver's license.
- A strong knowledge of adult and community education in Northern Ireland.

Personal Characteristics:

- A strong commitment to goals of educational equality, social justice, and empowerment
- High level of professional responsibility and integrity
- Ability to deliver work on time and to a high standard
- Ability to communicate effectively with colleagues and stakeholders in a constructive and approachable manner
- Capacity to work in partnership with colleagues and stakeholders
- Curious and open-minded, with the ability to listen, and explore new ideas and alternatives.

Points of Information:

- It is expected that the successful candidate will represent the organisation at meetings and events across the island of Ireland.
- This is not a new role. The successful candidate will join an established team.
- AONTAS has been in operation for over 50 years. We have more than 400 members across the island of Ireland including community education providers, Education and Training Boards, Higher Education institutions, NGOs, academics, learners, and others.
- AONTAS is a highly collaborative organisation, and all staff support AONTAS' activities and work in a collaborative manner.

Contributing to AONTAS:

This list of responsibilities is not exhaustive and may vary from time to time, to provide for change. You will be required to perform such other duties as may reasonably be required of you by AONTAS. At all times, employees must operate to the highest professional, ethical, and performance standards.

Measures of Success:

- Contributing to the success of policy changes that result in improved conditions for learners, staff, and adult education providers.
- Ensuring all projects and activities are delivered to a high standard and on time.

- Supporting and implementing a strategic advocacy approach with clear communication that is supported by staff and members.
- The AONTAS Team recognise this team member as a key source of information and knowledge and engage with them for key updates on advocacy and policy areas.
- A highly effective and collaborative team that works to the best of their ability.

The Policy and Advocacy Officer reports directly to the Head of Advocacy and Policy.

The salary scale for this role is €35,000 - €36,555 - €39,700 - €42,800 - €44,370 - €46,900 - €49,110 - €50,216

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Interview activity: Candidates invited for interview will be asked to prepare a presentation. This must be sent in by the indicated deadline.

Please submit a detailed cover letter that outlines your relevant experience and potential contribution to this role, a curriculum vitae, and answer the questions posed below in full.

If these three parts are not submitted, it will be considered an incomplete application.

Please click here to apply. (<https://apply.workable.com/aontas/j/A817AED9B0/>)

AONTAS is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Please let us know if we can provide you with further information or make reasonable adaptations to this process, to suit your needs.

Benefits

- Hybrid Working Policy
- Attractive pension and income protection scheme for staff, after a successful probation period
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
- Equipment provided by AONTAS (laptop and phone for work use)
- Flexibility and support (for example, persons with additional/different needs, caring obligations or other)
- Funded professional development opportunities
- Opportunities to engage with and travel for EU programmes
- Funded conference fees
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- AONTAS office is easily accessible by public transport and has free on-site parking

Region

Dublin 6 / Hybrid

Date Entered/Updated

11th Jun, 2024

Expiry Date

1st Jul, 2024

Source URL: <https://www.activelink.ie/vacancies/civil-liberties-human-rights/108870-aontas-policy-and-advocacy-officer>