

Job Title:	Research & Information Officer	Post Holder:	New position
Reports To:	Head of Advocacy & Communications	Location:	Limerick or Dublin
Salary:	This role is attached to a defined salary scale which ranges from €35,800 to €43,860 and appointments are made depending on qualifications and experience.		

Purpose of the Job

The role of NOVAS Research & Information Officer is vital to the provision of support to our clients and tenants and advocating for their needs.

The role will be based in Limerick or Dublin but will require travel as needed, to other locations where NOVAS services are located and for other work purposes. The post holder's usual schedule will be to work Monday to Friday during office hours, with a high degree of flexibility and adaptability required. This role may include attending occasional planned events outside of office hours and at weekends.

The Research & Information Officer will be expected to work within, and represent the values and mission of the organisation.

This job description is a guide to the general range of duties assigned to the post holder. It is intended to be neither definitive nor restrictive and is subject to periodic review.

Environment of the Job

NOVAS is a not-for-profit organisation and Approved Housing Body, we work with single adults, couples and families and who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. We provide a range of services and accommodation. Our first service was established in Limerick in 2002 which was a temporary low-threshold emergency homeless accommodation, and we have grown from there. We now have over 300 staff, and more than 30 services in Limerick, Dublin, Clare, Kerry, Cork and Tipperary including emergency homeless accommodation, transitional homeless accommodation, social housing and community-based services for tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention, mental health and recovery.

NOVAS is a Trauma Informed Practice Organisation, and the principles of collaboration, diversity, respect and trust are embedded in our way of working together.

Our services are provided through support of our partners in local government through the Local Authorities, HSE, and other donors and funders.

Delegation and Reporting

The Research & Information Officer will play a crucial role in gathering, analysing, and disseminating information related to housing and homelessness. You will support households who seek information relating to housing, homelessness, addiction and other related matters. The successful candidate will support evidence-based advocacy, contribute to policy development and ensure that internal and external stakeholders have access to accurate and up-to-date information. This role will help to support people on the front line of the crisis and shape NOVAS policy developments and strategies.

The Research & Information Officer has decision making remit for tasks delegated to them in the areas of research, advocacy and communications by the Head of Advocacy & Communications. In the absence of the Head of Advocacy and Communications, or at other times, the Research & Information Officer may be required to consult with and take direction from the CEO, Head of Fundraising or another member of the Leadership Team.

Oversight for the work in this role is provided by the Advocacy, Communications and Fundraising Sub-Committee of the NOVAS Board of Directors.

The Research & Information Officer will at all times operate in a professional and respectful manner, maintaining high quality standards of work in accordance with the values and mission of NOVAS. Their decision-making will at all times be informed by the best interests of the clients and tenants and ensuring cost effective value for money, use of donations and public money.

Challenges

The nature of our work involves supporting the most vulnerable people who often have complex needs and may be survivors of trauma. As a result, during the course of your work you may engage with sensitive and confidential matters that require empathy, compassion and pragmatism. You may also encounter clients or tenants who are in distress, displaying challenging behaviours or struggle to regulate their behaviour. Patience, respect and an ability to remain professional and focused on deescalating is essential. Further training will be provided in Trauma Informed Practice or Crisis Prevention.

As an organisation that is largely funded by public money, effective use of resources is a continuous focus and challenge.

Key Accountabilities	
Accountability	Achieved by
Gathering and Providing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support people who seek advice and information relating to homelessness, housing, addiction and other related fields. • Manage and respond to all requests from clients, members of the public and other stakeholders relating to homelessness and related fields via email, phone and in-person. • Support the dissemination of relevant information to your colleagues in matters affecting clients and services as well as common advice requests. • Support the front-of-house function of NOVAS relating to requests for information and advice and in other aspects of the role as it arises.
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct research on homelessness trends and housing policies to support clients, service delivery and organisational advocacy and communications. • Support the Head of Advocacy & Communications with data analysis, policy development and representing the organisation in relevant advocacy, policy and communication matters. • Support the Head of Advocacy & Communications with publications such as research, annual reports, pre-budget submissions and other relevant documents as they arise. • Participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of NOVAS service provision, providing insights for continuous improvement. • Stay informed of relevant legislation, government policies, and sector developments, providing updates to staff and other key stakeholders. • Assist in securing research funding and managing research-related budgets where required.
Enhancing client participation in NOVAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the development of peer participation within the organisation, particularly relating to peer involvement in communications, events, research and other organisational representation. • Research best practice in peer participation and harnessing lived experience in the not-for-profit sector.

<p>Communications and Media Relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop accessible resources for diverse audiences. • Support the charity’s media endeavours, relating to the preparation of press releases, social media posts, media interviews and other engagements as they arise. • Work collaboratively with internal teams, external partners, academic institutions and government bodies to share knowledge and develop best practices. • Represent the organisation at conferences, policy forums and stakeholder meetings.
<p>Trauma Informed Practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Trauma Informed Practice Steering Group with research, event management, programme development and other matters as they arise.
<p>Supervision, Support & Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaging in regular one-to-one sessions with your line manager. ▪ Working under the direction of your line manager and the wider leadership team. ▪ Working to help the organisation achieve the aims and objectives of the strategic plan in line with our values and mission. ▪ Participating in team meetings as required. ▪ Familiarity and compliance with all relevant policies and standards. ▪ Participation in relevant and required training events.
<p>Health & Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attention to your own Health & Safety in the workplace. ▪ Vigilance of health & safety hazards and timely reporting of same to your line manager. ▪ Managing incidents and accidents in accordance with policies.
<p>Information Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring data and personal information relating to clients, tenants, staff, donors, volunteers and other members of the organisation are kept safe and secure using the correct systems and procedures, are collected for legitimate purposes and are safely destroyed when appropriate.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

Documentary evidence of qualifications and eligibility will be confirmed at the end of any recruitment process, candidates who do not possess the essential requirements, on the date of application will not be offered a position. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they meet the essential criteria of the person specification.

The Appropriate candidate will have:

- A minimum of Level 7 Ordinary Degree or higher (National Framework of Qualifications)
- Experience of working with marginalised groups in a signposting, information providing or data gathering capacity.
- Experience of communicating with people in a professional capacity with a reassuring and polite manner to answer questions, provide information or refer onwards.
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with experience of contributing to report writing or policy documents.
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to interpret data to inform policy and service development and delivery.
- Ability to manage competing deadlines and work in a fast-paced environment.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Excellent level computer skills.
- Criminal Record Self Declaration will be sought for this role.

Desirable Criteria

It would be an advantage for the candidate to have:

- A degree in social sciences, public policy, research methods, or a related field.
- Experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative research.
- A comprehensive understanding of the advocacy and public policy environment of Irish social care, housing or not for profit sector.
- Familiarity with research funding applications.
- Experience in public speaking and presentation.
- Familiarity with the National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services, or HIQA National Standards for Children's Residential Centres or Approved Housing Body Regulatory Authority Standards.
- Experience of designing and managing research work.
- Experience of writing, developing and revising press releases.
- Experience of working in, or a strong interest in the charity or not-for-profit, particularly in the field of housing or homelessness.
- Full driving licence and access to own vehicle.

NOVAS Employment Benefits

NOVAS is committed to attracting and retaining the best talent in service of our clients and tenants and values the hard work and commitment of our staff.

Detailed below are a range of benefits you receive as a NOVAS employee.

Support & Supervision	Every employee will have regular planned one-to-one meetings with their line manager as well and Team Meetings and Monthly All Staff Town Hall meetings in order to ensure you are connected to, and supported by your colleagues and the organisation.
Learning & Development	NOVAS will fully fund a wide range of training programmes required role specific including First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling, Trauma Informed Practice.
Career Progression	NOVAS believes in supporting the development and career path for our staff and develop skills for role changes, Leadership Preparation and Management Development.
Salary Scales	NOVAS has defined salary scales and has committed to awarding annual increments to staff depending on sustained funding.
Annual Leave	26 Days annual leave plus bank holidays.
Pension	A direct contribution pension with a 5% employer and employee contribution totalling 10%.
Employee Assistance Programme	Our Employee Assistance Programme provided by Inspire Wellbeing gives staff access to free confidential counselling and a suite of online mental health and wellness tools.
Further Education Support	With the help of your line manager you can apply for financial support, study leave or exam leave days to complete external professional qualifications to help further your career.
Sick Pay	2 Weeks full and 2 weeks half sick pay certified.
Maternity Leave	18 weeks full pay which can be pro rata across duration.