

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR CANDIDATES

Please Read Carefully Before Applying



## Researcher - Grade V

**Closing Date: 5pm on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

The Local Government Management Agency is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
35-39 USHERS QUAY  
DUBLIN 8  
D08 XKP7

[www.lgma.ie](http://www.lgma.ie)

Telephone: (353) 1 633 2200  
Email: [jobapplications@lgma.ie](mailto:jobapplications@lgma.ie)  
[www.lgma.ie](http://www.lgma.ie)

## The Organisation

The Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) is a state agency that provides a range of services and supports to the local government sector. We are an agency of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, primarily funded by local authorities.

Through our work with local authorities and other stakeholders, we support co-ordinated and effective delivery of local government services and policy.

Our work is guided by the local authorities and geared towards helping them to improve efficiency across services; to implement change; and, to make use of leading practice from inside and outside the sector.

Working for the LGMA gives you the opportunity to gain experience at the heart of local government and to make a real difference for local authorities and citizens in Ireland.

## What we do

The LGMA's work extends across a number of diverse areas in order to meet the changing needs of the local government sector.

- We drive, monitor and maintain shared services projects across the local government sector.
- We advise and support on strategy and policy development across the local government sector.
- We provide professional Human Resources (HR) and Industrial Relations (IR) guidance, advice and support to local authorities.
- The LGMA develops, procures, maintains, and provides support for several internal ICT systems in use in the local government sector.
- Our Libraries Development section is the national advisor and development agency for public libraries in Ireland.
- Our Water Services Transition Office (WSTO) supports the Water Services Reform Programme and the transition of services to Irish Water.
- The LGMA provides **research** and communications support to the local government sector.
- Local Government Programme Management and Innovation.

## LGMA Research Team

An exciting opportunity exists for a Researcher to join the LGMA Research Team. The team forms a key element of the LGMA's Local Government Strategy, Research and Communications Section of the organisation. The team is charged with assisting in the delivery of the **LGMA's Corporate Objectives**. Those most relevant to the research team include:

- Delivering high quality services to local government demonstrating value for money and continuously adapting to the changing needs of the sector.
- Actively supporting the development and implementation of government policy, utilising leading practice from inside and outside the sector using data as a key enabler.
- Creating an open and engaging work environment, seen as a prime organisation for developing the skills and experience to support career progression.

- Act as a centre of excellence in the areas within the advisory remit of the LGMA.

The LGMA Research Team seeks to achieve these objectives through the provision of an efficient, effective and quality research service which supports and undertakes research at a sectoral level, provides a broad and interesting research experience for staff and leads out in the development of a sectoral data analytics framework.

Our aim is to support and promote evidence informed decision making and policy development. This is realised through the provision of research, data analytics and technical assistance services to the various CCMA and LGMA Committees, involvement in the preparation of national sectoral performance indicators (in conjunction with the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC), and representing the local government sector at various national level and sectoral committees and events (e.g, the Office of the Planning Regulator National Planning Knowledge Group, DHLGH Housing Research Forum, etc.). The team actively supports the promotion of innovation and effective communications across the local government sector, in line with national policy objectives (e.g., OPS2020). We also support and align the work of the team to key national policy initiatives relating to use of data public service (e.g., PSI and Open Data Directives, etc.).

This is a unique opportunity to gain extensive research experience working across local government, engaging with all 31 local authorities, various government departments and key stakeholders. The Researcher will be involved in both qualitative and quantitative research while also gaining an understanding of the key strategic issues that need to be addressed by local authorities at a national and local level.

## The Role

This is a unique opportunity to engage in team research projects, undertake and publish research reports, supervise student researchers and work on a wide range of policy areas. The Researcher will be a key member of the research team. The successful person will work in cooperation with colleagues in the research team as well as LGMA staff responsible for managing the CCMA and LGMA Committees. They will engage with a range of external stakeholders but specifically staff in local authorities and senior officials in various government departments. The Researcher will also be required to work independently at times, leading on their own research tasks. There is some supervisory responsibility for Student Researchers that are recruited for short-term placements. This post reports directly to the Head of Research.

The researcher is required to support the further development of an on-going research programme on local government policy and practice including:

- To contribute to evidence-based research of relevance to the local government sector across a wide range of policy areas that are relevant to local authorities.
- To undertake, quantitative and qualitative research assignments, including design, implementation and report on findings.
- To manage and assist in the compilation and reporting on National Performance Indicators annually.
- To engage directly with practitioners in the local government sector and to participate in committees of the County and City Management Association (CCMA) and the LGMA.
- To work with staff of the LGMA to maximise the effectiveness and relevance of the research programme and increase linkages and relationships with other research and policy stakeholders.
- To be responsible for data collection and maintenance of accurate files and records, both computerised and manual and advance the development of a suite of software research tools to maximise the efficiency of the team.
- To attend and provide comprehensive administrative support to relevant meetings, including preparation of minutes and ensuring that the necessary follow up action is taken.
- To work with staff of the LGMA in prioritising and implementing the work programme of the Agency.
- To undertake such other duties as may be assigned from time to time.

### Key Tasks and Responsibilities:

The objective of the research team is to actively support the development and implementation of government policy, utilising leading practice from inside and outside the sector using data as a key enabler.

The tasks listed below relate to the current programme of work but is subject to change and expansion in the future. Under the direction and supervision of the Head of Research, the Researcher will be required to:

- Prepare submissions or position papers for CCMA/LGMA Committees through desk research, surveys, consultations, etc. The Researcher is responsible for defining the scope of the work and adhering strictly to timelines and ensuring a high quality, comprehensive and well-structured report is produced. The objective is also to maximise the impact of these submissions.
- Participate, as primary or co-author, in major research projects carried out by the LGMA Research Team.
- Work closely with NOAC to gather the data and prepare the annual NOAC Performance Indicators report.

- Provide technical assistance to a variety of stakeholders.
- Provide administrative support to Research Advisory Groups established to manage commissioned research projects.
- Participate in groups, networks, training, and events in order to upgrade and enhance technical expertise and skills relating to research methods, research tools and relevant policy developments.

**Key relationships or interpersonal contacts:**

(a) Within the organisation:

<b>Level</b>	All Staff and all CCMA and LGMA Committee members
<b>Type of contact</b>	All types – in person, meeting, telephone, video conferencing, e-mail, written
<b>Frequency</b>	Daily, weekly, monthly and as and when required
<b>Purpose</b>	Multi-purpose connected with the functioning of the Agency.

(b) External (including other bodies, the media and the general public):

<b>Type of Organisation/ Person Contacted</b>	Senior personnel in Local Authorities, Central Government Departments, State Agencies, National Public and Private Sector Bodies and suppliers of products and services to the Local Government sector and the LGMA.
<b>Type of contact</b>	In person, meetings, conferences, video conferences, telephone, e-mail, written.
<b>Frequency</b>	Daily, weekly, monthly as and when required.
<b>Purpose</b>	Support, advice, knowledge/information sharing, influencing and negotiation.

## Knowledge, Experience and Skills

This position will suit candidates with a strong focus on meeting the needs of customers and a keen interest in advancing their research careers. In addition, these are some essential and desirable skills and competencies required for the position:

### 1. Essential Requirements for Researcher - Grade V:

- Hold an Honour's Degree in Social Science, Policy Analysis, Economics, Environment, Planning or another relevant discipline
- Have evidence of ability to carry out qualitative and quantitative research projects
- Have a minimum of two year's work experience in a research environment
- Be capable of building and maintaining good working relationships with a wide range of people, both at national and international level.
- Proficient use of relevant software and in interest in learning new technologies (e.g., Excel, Survey Monkey, Power BI, SPSS, Word, PowerPoint, SharePoint, Tableau, etc.).
- Have excellent analytical, numerical, report-writing and presentation skills.
- Be self-motivated and an effective communicator.
- Be able to work effectively on own initiative and as well as part of a team.
- Be highly organised and able to manage and progress multiple projects and work activities successfully, under the pressure of competing deadlines.
- Have an awareness of key policy issues relevant to local government and an understanding of the structure and functions of local government.

### 2. Desirable Requirements for Researcher - Grade V:

- Have detailed knowledge of or experience in local government;
- Carried out research on policy areas relevant to local authorities;
- Hold a master's degree in Social Science, Policy Analysis, Economics, or another relevant discipline.

### 3. Demonstrate the competencies set out below:

<b><i>Understanding Purpose and Change</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowing Council Purpose and its Priorities</li><li>• Implementing Change</li></ul>
<b><i>Delivering Results</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifying Problems and Contributing to Solutions</li><li>• Delivering Quality Work and Services</li></ul>
<b><i>Performance Through People</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicating Effectively</li><li>• Leading and Directing</li></ul>
<b><i>Personal Effectiveness</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Qualifications and Knowledge</li><li>• Integrity</li><li>• Personal Motivation and Initiative</li></ul>

#### 4. Other Eligibility Criteria

##### **Former Public Service Employees**

Eligibility to compete may be affected where applicants were formerly employed by the Irish Public Service and previously availed of an Irish Public Service Scheme including:

- *Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER)*
- *Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010)*
- *Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants*

Applicants should ensure that they are not precluded from re-engagement in the Irish Public Service under the terms of such Schemes. This is a non-exhaustive list and any queries should be directed to the applicant's former Irish Public Service Employer in the first instance.

##### **Declaration**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement and/or the collective agreement outlined above. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a 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.

## The Application and Selection Process

### How to Apply

All applications should be emailed directly to [jobapplications@lgma.ie](mailto:jobapplications@lgma.ie) no later than  
**5pm on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2020.**

Applications must be made on the official application form and all sections must be completed in full. When completing the application form accuracy is essential. The information you supply in the application form will play a central part of the selection process.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within two working days of applying, please check your junk/spam folders as email notifications may be filtered into your junk/spam email folders. Any other queries regarding your application form should be emailed to [jobapplications@lgma.ie](mailto:jobapplications@lgma.ie)

### Shortlisting

The Agency reserves the right to shortlist applications based on the information supplied in the application form. In the event of a shortlisting exercise being employed, the Interview Board will examine the information provided in your application, assess it against the criteria based on the requirements for the position and decide if you will be shortlisted, relative to the other candidates applying for the position.

### Competitive Interview

Admission to the Selection Interview is conditional on receipt of a completed application form by the required cut-off date.

The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for the obligatory interview on the date specified by the LGMA and to make whatever arrangements are necessary to ensure that they receive communications sent to them at the address specified on their application form.

Interviews will be conducted by an Interview Board set up by the LGMA. The Interview Board will assess the merits of candidates. Only candidates who reach such a standard as the Interview Board consider satisfactory in the competitive interview will be considered for selection.

Virtual interviews are taking place over MS Teams. Instructions and guidance and links will be sent to you in advance of interview should you be shortlisted for interview.

Before being recommended for appointment candidates will satisfy the Interview Board that they possess the requisite knowledge and ability for the proper discharge of the duties of the position.

Candidates will be assessed under the following headings:

<b><i>Understanding Purpose and Change</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowing Council Purpose and its Priorities</li><li>• Implementing Change</li></ul>
<b><i>Delivering Results</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifying Problems and Contributing to Solutions</li><li>• Delivering Quality Work and Services</li></ul>
<b><i>Performance Through People</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicating Effectively</li><li>• Leading and Directing</li></ul>
<b><i>Personal Effectiveness</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Qualifications and Knowledge</li><li>• Integrity</li><li>• Personal Motivation and Initiative</li></ul>



**Panels**

Panels may be formed on the basis of such interview. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the LGMA that they possess the qualifications declared for the office and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may with the life of the panel be appointed as appropriate vacancies arise. The life of the panel will not be more than one year.

**Feedback & Review**

Candidates have the right to seek feedback from their interview. Should a candidate be unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their application for appointment, they have the right to seek a review of the process. This request must be made within 5 working days of receiving notification of the decision on their application.

**Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview as requested or do not furnish such evidence as requested in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

**Offer of Appointment**

The LGMA shall require persons to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month. If they fail to take up the appointment within such period, or such longer period as the Agency in its absolute discretion may determine, the Agency shall not appoint them. All appointments are subject to receipt of satisfactory references and candidates may be required to produce documentary evidence of qualifications or experience claimed in their applications.

**Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify.**

## Principal Conditions of Service

### General

The appointment is to a permanent post in the Local Government Management Agency and is subject to general terms and conditions in operation relating to appointments in the Agency.

### Remuneration

The salary scale applicable to this position is as follows:

Point No.	1	2	3	4	5
Salary	€42,777pa	€44,137pa	€45,499pa	€46,861pa	€48,221p
Point No.	LSI 1	LSI 2			
Salary	€49,798pa	€51,374pa			

The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time. The holder of the office shall pay to the LGMA any fees or other monies (other than his/her inclusive salary) payable to or received by him/her by virtue of his/her office or in respect of services which he/she is required by or under any enactment to perform.

### Important Note

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Different terms and conditions may apply if you are currently a serving civil or public servant. Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy. (See Haddington Road Agreement paragraph 2.19.)

### Tenure

The position of Researcher - Grade V is full-time and permanent.

### Hours of Attendance

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time. Typically, hours will be of the order of 37 hours per week. The position holder will be required to work a five-day week. The LGMA currently have a flexible working hour attendance scheme in operation.

### Location

An officer's headquarters shall be such as may be designated from time to time. At present the LGMA has offices at two locations in Dublin. When absent from home or headquarters on official duty appointees will be paid appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances, subject to normal regulations. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions you will be facilitated to work remotely until we return to office-based working on a phased basis.

### Annual leave

The Annual Leave allowance for New Entrants is 30 days. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the LGMA, is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

**Probation**

Where persons who are not already permanent employees of the LGMA are appointed, the following provisions shall apply:

- (a) there shall be a period after such appointments take effect during which such persons shall hold the position on probation,
- (b) such period shall be one year, but the Chief Executive Officer may at his or her discretion extend such period,
- (c) such persons shall cease to hold the position at the end of the period of probation unless during such period the Chief Executive Officer has certified that the service of such persons is satisfactory.

**Structured Training and Development Programme**

LGMA operate a Personal Development Programme linked to the Performance Management and Development System which will assist the individual in creating a Personal Development Plan.

## General Information

### **Confidentiality**

All enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone outside those directly involved in the recruitment process.

### **Freedom of Information**

Candidates can expect that all enquiries, applications, and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014.

### **Data Protection**

The information submitted with an application is used in processing the candidature and subsequent employment (if successful) and such information is held subject to the rights and obligations of the Data Protection Acts.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**The above 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 employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate(s).**

## Local Authority Competency Framework

### Front Line Managers (Grade V)

<i>Pillar One</i>			<i>Pillar Two</i>		<i>Pillar Three</i>		<i>Pillar Four</i>
<i>Understanding Purpose and Change</i>			<i>Delivering Results</i>		<i>Performance Through People</i>		<i>Personal Effectiveness</i>
1.1	Knowing Council Purpose and its Priorities	2.1	Identifying Problems and Contributing to Solutions	3.1	Leading and Directing	4.1	Qualifications and Knowledge
1.2	Understanding the Role of the Elected Council and the Representational Role of the Elected Members	2.2	Organising Work Programmes and Implementing Solutions	3.2	Performance Management	4.2	Resilience and Personal Well Being
1.3	Understanding and Adhering to the Code of Conduct for all Employees	2.3	Managing Resources, including Equipment	3.3	Managing Conflict	4.3	Integrity
1.4	Maintaining a Positive Image of the Council	2.4	Complying with all Council Rules	3.4	Communicating Effectively	4.4	Personal Motivation and Initiative
1.5	Implementing Change	2.5	Delivering Quality Work and Services				
1.6	Safety, Health and Welfare at Work						