



Policy and Research Coordinator

Applications are now invited for the post of Policy and Research Coordinator with the Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT). This is a key function within the IPRT team, developing and coordinating our comprehensive body of evidence-led research and policy outputs to influence public and political debate. It is an opportunity to work in a small impactful organisation, driven by a shared passion for social justice, equality and human rights and where your contribution has the potential to really make a difference.

About IPRT

The Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) is Ireland's leading non-governmental organisation campaigning for human rights and best practice in the penal system, and for progressive penal policy in which prison is a sanction of last resort. We have a track record of achieving big impact for a small organisation. We do this through a combination of research, advocacy, engagement, public affairs, events and working in alliance with others.

Our work is evidence-based, informed by 30 years of experience, extensive research and proactive engagement with people affected by the penal system. Our aim is to shift the focus of our penal system away from its current emphasis on punishment towards approaches based on prevention, diversion, rehabilitation, and the integration of criminal justice policy with wider social policy. A more effective and humane penal system, which combats social injustice and has safer communities at its heart, also benefits communities and wider society through its emphasis on crime prevention, rehabilitation, and a reduction in reoffending.

Our model of change is that effecting reforms at the highest level will have the greatest impact for the largest number of people. To this end, we focus our efforts on generating evidence-informed policy research and recommendations, underpinned by human rights, while also working constructively with decision-makers to deliver effective penal policy in Ireland.

About the Role

The post-holder will have well-developed skills and experience in policy analysis and research programme delivery and planning, including project management and mentoring of volunteers. A core aspect of the role is leading on the research and delivery of IPRT's flagship project, '*Progress in the Penal System*'.

The Policy and Research Coordinator will also provide key policy functions including engagement with domestic consultation processes and international human rights monitoring mechanisms. These advocacy activities require a consistent ability to respond to opportunities to influence policy makers at short notice and a current knowledge of both the penal policy context and the work of the organisation.

IPRT is an equal opportunities employer, and we welcome applications from people from diverse backgrounds as well as people with criminal records. We don't ask for information about convictions during the recruitment process.

This position is full-time for a fixed-term contract of three years with a view to extension subject to funding.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Monday 13 January 2025.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview, which will take place as soon as possible thereafter.

Any queries about the role should be directed to director@iprt.ie

Terms of Employment

Hours of employment:	Full time (35 hours per week, exclusive of breaks) for a fixed-term contract of three years with a view to extension subject to funding. Requirement to work flexibly within the role, and occasionally attend evening events as appropriate to the role. IPRT's time off in lieu policy applies.
Probation period:	Six months.
Salary:	€40,000 - €45,000 per annum pro rata, commensurate with skills and experience.
Annual leave entitlement:	25 days per annum pro rata.
Pension contribution:	Five per cent match-funded employer contribution after successful completion of probation period.
Place of work:	Usual place of work is the IPRT Office in Dublin 7 but IPRT is currently trialing a more flexible hybrid working model. There may be occasional travel, as appropriate to the role.
Post-holder responsible to:	Legal Policy & Public Affairs Manager

IPRT is committed to supporting staff to identify and undertake training and development opportunities relevant to the role.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Key responsibilities of the position will include:

- Working with the Executive Director and Legal & Public Affairs Manager to develop research and policy priorities for the organisation, in line with the new strategic plan.
- Implementing the policy and research programme of the organisation, in line with the IPRT strategic plan, including:
 - Leading on the design, research and delivery of substantive content of IPRT's annual flagship project, *'Progress in the Penal System'*;
 - Proactively monitoring and analysing relevant developments in Irish and international penal policy, and ensuring the wider IPRT team is updated and informed;
 - Identifying emerging trends or gaps in information to inform the production of high-quality briefings, submissions, research and policy/position papers;
 - Support the Legal, Policy & Public Affairs Manager in analysing proposed legislation, developing amendments and providing briefings in relevant areas.
 - Strengthening and maintaining links between IPRT and academia, developing IPRT's role as a conduit for high-quality research in relevant disciplines into public debate on penal matters;
 - Support the Legal, Policy & Public Affairs Manager in developing IPRT's evidence-base on sentencing;
 - Coordinating all external research projects commissioned by IPRT from tendering to completion; and
 - Coordinating, delivering and reporting on research project grants as required.
- Representing IPRT at events, on advisory or steering groups and on networks as required ensuring that the organisation is visible and advocating on penal reform issues;
- Playing an active role in IPRT's advocacy and engagement with legislators, policymakers and other stakeholders around specific programmes of work including the PIPS project and supporting Pre-Budget work;
- Supporting the Communications & Campaigns Coordinator with policy or research-related events and launches by contributing to briefings, developing agendas and speaker liaison;
- Supporting the Executive Director, Legal, Policy & Public Affairs Manager and the Communications & Campaigns Coordinator to develop accurate media and public messaging;
- Management of the IPRT Volunteer Programme, including recruitment, induction, training and mentoring;
- Management of information queries, referrals and correspondence received by IPRT in conjunction with IPRT's Children and Families Coordinator and the Governance and Administration Officer; and
- Working with other team members to create opportunities for former prisoners, family members and key service providers to regularly feed into IPRT's work including through the annual membership survey and stakeholder consultations.

Other

- Build strong working relationships with colleagues in the organisation;
- Develop networks within the broader civil society environment;
- Work in accordance with charity governance, ethics and standards;
- Support the Executive Director in the implementation of relevant IPRT policies, as appropriate;
- Undertake other duties commensurate with the role, in pursuit of the Strategic Plan, as agreed with the Executive Director.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Skills and Experience

- A relevant third-level qualification, preferably in the area of social science, criminology, human rights or law;
- Knowledge of Irish penal and/or social policy and the particular human rights frameworks which apply to people in the penal system;
- Minimum of three years' experience in a policy or research role;
- Demonstrable understanding of relevant policy-making processes and a proven ability to engage a policy audience;
- Strong decision-making, critical judgment and analytical skills;
- Excellent writing skills, with an ability to write quickly, concisely and accurately;
- Excellent organisational and time-management skills, with the ability to manage multiple projects at once;
- Evidence of published policy papers and submissions;
- Experience in research project management (planning and delivery);
- High level of attention to detail;
- Strong inter-personal skills and an ability to establish strong working relationships with a range of stakeholders;
- Ability to work on own initiative as part of a small team;
- Ability to work flexibly within the role, and occasionally attend evening events as appropriate to the needs of the role; and
- Strong commitment to human rights, equality and social justice.

Desirable Skills and Experience

The successful candidate may also have:

- Qualifications or experience in a range of research methodologies (quantitative/ qualitative);
- Strong data analysis skills;
- Experience in making oral submissions and presentations;
- Experience with grant applications, including EU applications and reporting to funders;
- Experience of managing volunteers and/or junior researchers; and
- Knowledge of ethics and standards for a charity.

Attitude

- A team player ready to work collaboratively with colleagues
- Respect for the values and mission of IPRT;
- Flexibility and adaptability in response to strategic opportunities;
- Commitment to ongoing professional development; and
- Commitment to and understanding of a working environment that promotes equal opportunities and has regard for the health and safety of others.

Application Procedure

Applications will be shortlisted by the interview panel only if fully completed, and must contain:

- A curriculum vitae;
- A supporting statement of **two A4 pages or less** demonstrating experience of the essential criteria detailed in the job description and as outlined above;

- Two writing samples, of no more than 1,500 words each; and
- Contact details of two referees (referees will not be contacted without the applicant's consent).

Please send your curriculum vitae along with additional supporting statement and writing samples (as set out above) to director@iprt.ie by 5pm on Monday 13 January 2025.

Please write POLICY AND RESEARCH COORDINATOR in subject line of the email.

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted for interview shortly after the closing date with interviews to take place online as soon as possible thereafter.