



# CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

## Deputy Chief Electoral Officer Permanent Full-Time

Completed application forms must  
be returned to [jobs@fordemayconsulting.com](mailto:jobs@fordemayconsulting.com) (ref 1833DCEO)  
by  
**12 NOON on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022.**



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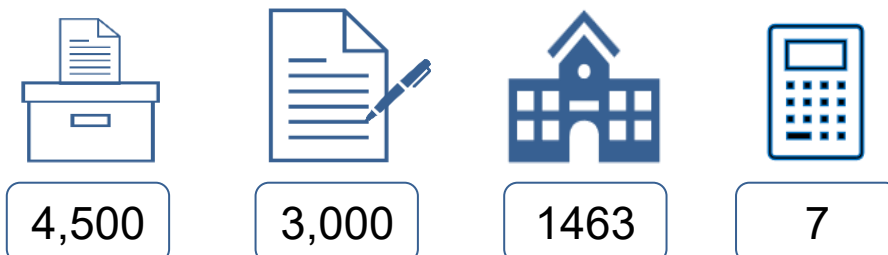
## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ELECTORAL OFFICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND (EONI)

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The electoral system in Northern Ireland is administered centrally by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) who is a statutory officeholder independent of Government. The CEO is assisted by the staff of the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (EONI), the administrative structure created to support them in the discharge of their duties. The CEO is both the registration officer and returning officer for all elections and referendums in Northern Ireland, meaning that they are responsible for both maximising the number of people eligible to vote on the electoral register, and for ensuring the accuracy of the register whilst ensuring compliance with EONI's statutory duties and other responsibilities. There are currently in the region of 1.36 million registered voters in Northern Ireland.

The overall aim of EONI is to serve democracy by maximising the electoral register and providing all voters with the opportunity to vote freely and conveniently, whilst ensuring that all legislative and other requirements are adhered to in order to protect the integrity of the voting process. EONI is responsible for administering both planned and unplanned elections during which there is a significant influx of temporary resource into the organisation. The nature of EONI's work means that it has to operate in an agile environment with appropriate systems and processes in place to be able to flex up and down according to operational need.

During a period of an election there are in the region of 4,500 ballot boxes, 3,000 polling booths, 1463 polling venues and 7 count venues in operation that all have to be managed extremely tightly, particularly given the political sensitivities of operating in Northern Ireland.





## Deputy Chief Electoral Officer Candidate Information Booklet

In recent years EONI has been through a significant amount of change and this continues to be a significant feature of the organisation. The operating structure of EONI has changed from a model of four area electoral offices located throughout Northern Ireland into one centralised structure based in Belfast. There has also been an increased focus on using online technology and digital advances with data analytics in all aspects of EONI's work in order to increase productivity and maximise efficiency.

Further information about EONI's offices, the work of the Chief Electoral Office and its staff is available on the website [www.eoni.org.uk](http://www.eoni.org.uk).



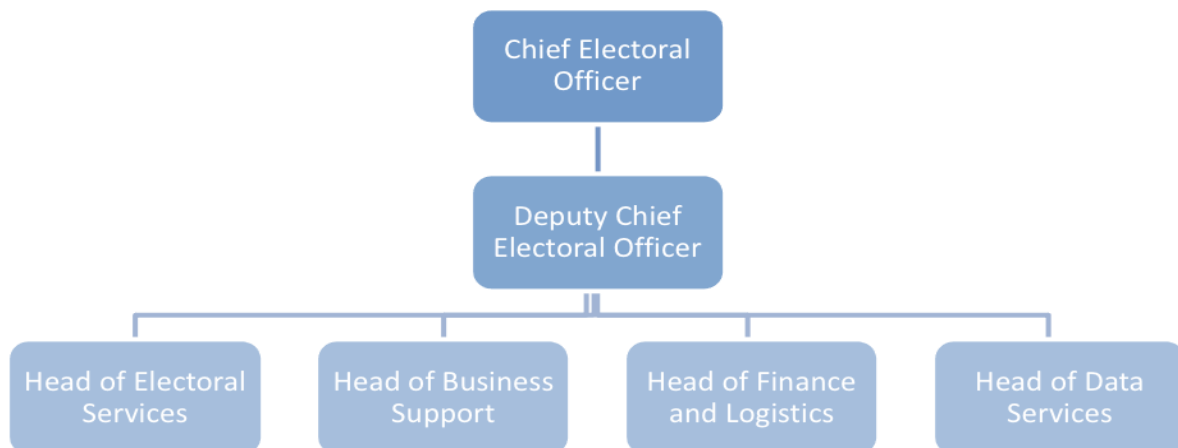
## THE ROLE IN CONTEXT

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The senior team of the Northern Ireland Electoral Office currently consists of the Chief Electoral Officer and Heads of Function in the areas of Electoral Services, Business Support, Finance and Logistics and Data Services. The Chief Electoral Officer role is a fixed term contract which has recently been renewed until 2026.

In order to allow the organisation to continue to progress it has been identified that there is a need for a new role, that of a Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, to work closely with the Chief Electoral Officer and the wider Electoral Office team.

The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer will take on immediate line management responsibility for the senior team to allow the Chief Electoral Officer to be more outwardly focused. The role will have a particular focus on reviewing the Electoral Office's governance arrangements and continually improving its systems and processes to increase productivity through the use of data analytics.



To be successful in this role the post holder will have strong political awareness, excellent judgement and people skills, have experience in project management and analysing business processes, and an aptitude for developing organisations through providing digital solutions.



## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

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### **LOCATION:**

The role is based in Headquarters in St Anne's House, Belfast but the post holder must be willing to travel throughout the Province and further afield when necessary.

There will be some opportunities for home working but the role would not be suitable for full time home based working.

### **PURPOSE:**

To provide operational support to the Chief Electoral Officer in the day to day running of the electoral office to enable them to maintain an outward focus, and to take a lead role in relation to governance, efficiency and continuous improvement.

### **MAIN ACTIVITIES:**

#### **Strategic Planning & Delivery**

- To take a lead role in organisational strategic planning including development of Corporate and Annual Business Plans.
- To take primary operational responsibility for ensuring that the organisation (through its teams) meets its strategic objectives and delivers against its stated aims and objectives.
- To have overarching responsibility for coordinating election planning and delivery.

#### **People Management**

- Act as the immediate line manager for the 4 Heads of Department on day to day business activities.
- To develop and coach immediate reports and other staff to achieve their business objectives.
- To deputise for the Chief Electoral Officer, as appropriate.

#### **Governance & Risk**

- To review and continuously develop the corporate governance, audit and risk and other quality assurance arrangements of the organisation.



- To take primary responsibility for ensuring that the organisation's systems and processes operate within high standards of corporate governance and expose the organisation to the minimum levels of risk.
- To ensure that EONI fulfils all its statutory obligations including, but not limited to, oversight of Section 75 and implementation of the organisation's equality scheme.

### **Business Process Review & Innovation**

- To lead on the review of existing business processes and to ensure that the working systems utilised in the EONI to deliver elections are as efficient as possible.
- To scrutinise and subject business processes to continuous review and seize opportunities to develop as appropriate.
- To lead on innovation with a particular emphasis on using technology and data analytics to create maximum efficiency.

### **External Relationships**

- To act as a spokesperson for the organisation and to deal with media enquiries, as and when required.
- Along with other senior staff, to maintain and progress relationships with key stakeholders including the NIO, Cabinet Office, political parties, Council leaders and the Electoral Commission.
- To network and develop relationships to progress the work of the Electoral Office.



## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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### **ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE (tested on application form)**

- A minimum of 3 years' experience gained in the last 6 years at middle to senior management level<sup>1</sup>.
- Demonstrable experience of coaching and developing a team of staff in different functional areas.
- Excellent working knowledge of Corporate governance and identification of risk.
- Previous experience of interpreting data analytics to seize opportunities to improve business performance.

### **ESSENTIAL SKILLS (tested during selection process)**

- Strong political awareness whilst being able to remain entirely neutral in approach to dealing with all stakeholders.
- Ability to exercise sound judgement and to adhere to the highest standards of probity.
- Strong communication skills and an ability to act as a spokesperson and to inspire confidence in others.
- Strong evidence of analytical and problem solving aptitude.
- Demonstrable attention to detail.

### **DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE (tested on application form)**

- Previous experience of working in a highly scrutinised environment.
- An understanding of the legal and constitutional framework within which the Electoral Office operates and/ or previous experience of interpreting regulations and/or legislation.
- Previous experience of acting as a spokesperson and dealing with media enquiries.

### **DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS (tested on application form)**

- Prince II, 6 Sigma or other relevant project management or business process related qualification.
- An IT or other related technology based qualification.

### **OTHER**

Candidates must not be a member of any organisation or society which might be construed as a potential conflict of interest or have any employment background, or

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<sup>1</sup> Defined as being a minimum of DP or Grade 7 and above in NICS grading equivalency terms





personal connections, current or previous, which if successful might give rise to public speculation including:

- Obtained office as a MP, MEP, member of the N.I. Assembly, local Councillor or other political office.
- Stood as a candidate for one of the above offices.
- Spoken on behalf of a party or candidate.
- Acted as a political agent.
- Held office such as Chair, Treasurer or Secretary of a local branch of a party. Canvassed on behalf of a party or helped at elections.
- Work (either paid or voluntary) for any political party or candidate, or sign the nomination paper of any candidate(s).
- Applicants must not have been convicted of an offence under electoral law or have undertaken any other political activity which may be considered relevant.



## MAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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### **SALARY**

The salary range for the role is £52,026 - £55,685 (NICS Grade 7 equivalent).  
The starting salary will normally be at the minimum point of the scale.

### **APPOINTMENT**

This is a full-time permanent position. The appointment is subject to the receipt of two satisfactory employment references.

### **HOURS OF WORK**

The hours of work are full-time 37 net hours per week (42 hours gross). A flexible working hours scheme is in operation. The candidate will normally be expected to work outside of conditioned hours as dictated by business needs. This is particularly a feature during the period of elections.

### **PROBATION PERIOD:**

Confirmation of a candidate's appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a twelve (12) month probationary period. If a candidate's performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory their appointment may be terminated either during or at the end of the probationary period without recourse to the full disciplinary procedure.

### **HOLIDAYS:**

In addition to 12 recognised holidays, there is an annual leave allowance on entry of 25 days per annum, which increases to 30 days after 5 years' satisfactory service.

### **PENSION SCHEME:**

New entrants who join the Electoral Office for NI may be eligible to join the NICS pension scheme - the Principle Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI). Further details can be found at:

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni/index/new-members.htm>

If you are unable to access the website further details can be provided by telephoning Civil Service Pensions on 02871 319000 or by contacting [cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk).



## APPLICATION PROCESS

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Candidates are strongly advised to read all the sections of the Candidate Information Booklet and the other useful information and links before completing their application form.

### **Please note:**

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms cannot be accepted and will not be considered.
- Applicants must complete the application form in typescript font size 12.
- Candidates will be shortlisted for interview solely on the basis of the information given on the application form.
- Candidates should ensure that they provide evidence of experience giving length of experience, examples and dates as required. It is not sufficient to simply list duties and responsibilities. If you do not provide sufficient detail the selection panel will not short list candidates for interview.

Completed application forms and separate equality and diversity monitoring form should be sent to Forde May Consulting via the email address [jobs@fordemayconsulting.com](mailto:jobs@fordemayconsulting.com) Please do not send paper applications. Equality monitoring forms will be detached from application forms upon receipt and registered separately.

**All applications must be received by no later than Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 12:00 noon.** Applications will be acknowledged upon receipt.

### **Shortlisting and Appointment Panel**

The information provided within the application form will be used for shortlisting purposes to assess which candidates meet the required criteria to be brought forward to the next stage in the assessment process.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to clearly demonstrate how they meet the criteria specified with relevant examples where appropriate. The Appointment Panel reserves the right to enhance the selection criteria as it sees fit in the event of a large volume of applications.

Applications will be considered for shortlisting purposes by the Appointment Panel



which will be chaired by Virginia McVea, Chief Electoral Officer of the Electoral Office of Northern Ireland. The panel will also include the following members:

- Sarah Ling, Head of Registration Reform, Cabinet Office
- Cahir Hughes, Head of Electoral Commission

The panel will be assisted throughout the process by Joanne Kane, Director of Headstogether Consulting Ltd acting as an independent HR advisor to the Electoral Office of Northern Ireland.

### **Shortlisting Process**

Candidates will be shortlisted according to the candidate's responses to the criteria set out in this booklet and the accompanying application form.

### **Assessment Process**

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to participate in a psychometric assessment and debrief with an occupational psychologist. This will be followed by an assessment day which will include delivery of a presentation on a pre-advised topic, an unseen test and a competency based interview.

Further details will be provided to relevant candidates at the time. Those candidates who pass both parts of the selection process will be deemed suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first.

### **Equality Statement**

The Electoral Office for NI is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

EONI welcomes applications from all Section 75 groups regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, people with or without dependants, political opinion, religion, or sexual orientation. At this time we particularly welcome applications from men who are currently under represented in the organisation.

### **Disability Requirements**

**All disabled candidates who meet the essential experience criteria will be invited to interview.**



We ask on the application form if applicants require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable them to attend any part of the assessment process.

Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If an applicant has indicated on their application that they have a disability, are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, the applicant may be required to outline any adjustments they consider are necessary to enable them to fulfil the requirements of the role.

## **KEY DATES**

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>Date</b> | <b>May 2022</b>  |
| 16th        | Advertisement launch and applications open                                       |
| <b>Date</b> | <b>June 2022</b>   |
| 6th         | Applications close (12.00 noon)  |
| w/c 6th     | Shortlisting takes place   |
| w/c 13th    | Psychometric assessment takes place and candidates advised of presentation topic |
| w/c 20th    | Assessment Day takes place   |

## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

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### **Right to Work and Nationality Requirements**

If you are successful you will need to provide identification documents to satisfy the Nationality, Right to Work and security requirements of the post. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with a conditional letter of offer.

You should ensure that the required documents are readily available. Failure to provide the appropriate documentation when requested will result in your application being rejected.

EONI must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality requirements for appointment to the NICS. Please note all successful applicants for external recruitment will be subject to a Nationality validation check.

Applicants must be either:

- i. UK national; or



- ii. National of a Commonwealth country; or
- iii. National of the Republic of Ireland; or
- iv. EEA nationals with settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme; or
- v. Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service; or
- vi. Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or
- vii. Certain family members of the relevant EA & Turkish nationals.

For candidates applying under categories iv – vii you are required to provide the following information in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box of your application form. Failure to provide the requested information WILL result in your application being rejected.

Category iv – Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK.

Category v - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK.

Category vi - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. Alternatively please provide confirmation in the nationality response box that you hold indefinite or limited leave to remain in the UK and that this was granted prior to 31st December 2020.

Category vii - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. In addition, please provide evidence in the nationality response box to support your application for applying as a family member of a relevant EEA and Turkish nation. Further documentary evidence may be request from EONI to support this;

‘Family member of the relevant EEA or Turkish nationals’ means:

- i. That national’s spouse\*; or
- ii. A direct descendant (child, grandchild etc.) of that national or his/her spouse who is under 21 years of age or is their dependent; or
- iii. A dependent relative in the ascending line (parent, grandparent etc.) of the EEA national or his/her spouse.

\*Note: ‘Spouse’ does not include a party to a marriage of convenience and in the case of EEA national vocational students family members are restricted to spouses and dependent children only

- i. A UK national; or



- ii. an Irish or non-UK Commonwealth citizen who was in post in the NICS on 31 May 1996, or was appointed from a competition with a closing date on or before 31 May 1996, and who has remained in the NICS since that time.

Where a candidate has a right to work status which has a time limitation, ongoing checks will be in place to ensure the right to work is maintained.

Advice on entitlement to work and nationality requirements may be obtained from the Home Office website: [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

## **VETTING PROCEDURES**

The successful candidate will be appointed subject to holding or obtaining security clearance at SC level.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

EONI follows NICS Ex-Offenders Guidance. This information is available upon request.