

rural ACTION

MAKING
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RECRUITMENT PACK



PEACEPLUS
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



European Union



UK Government



Riadas na Míneann
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Northern Ireland
Executive
www.northernireland.gov.uk

MCS Project Officer (with Communications function)

October 2025



Contents

Introduction	3
Our Vision, Mission and Values	4
Our Work and Ambition	5
Why work for Rural Action	6
Benefits	6
Job Description	8
Our Organisational Values & Expectations	11
Employee Specification	12
Conditions of Service	14
Additional Information	15



Introduction

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of **Project Officer** at Rural Action. This recruitment pack is designed to give you a deeper understanding of who we are, what we do, and the kind of person we're excited to welcome into our team.

Rural Action is a registered charity (NIC108163) established to meet an identified need to support grassroots communities through meaningful, community-driven projects & programmes. We specialise in designing, developing, and delivering initiatives that respond directly to the challenges and opportunities faced by rural people.

Our mission is to inspire action and make a lasting, positive impact on everyday rural life. We believe in the strength of community, the value of shared spaces, and the potential of sustainable living. That includes supporting social enterprise as a vital tool for economic resilience, innovation, and inclusive growth in rural areas.

If you're passionate about making a difference and thrive in a collaborative, purpose-led environment, we'd love to hear from you.

Yours faithfully

Teresa Canavan
Founder and Chief Executive



Our Vision, Mission and Values

OUR VISION

We believe passionately about engaging people to build a better future. We work to support living, working, sustainable and shared communities.

OUR MISSION

We seek to inspire action and make a positive contribution to the everyday lives of rural people.

OUR VALUES





Our Work and Ambition

OUR WORK

We act as a Managing Agent for the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) managing the delivery in Northern Ireland of the IFI Personal Youth Development Programme (PYDP) and the Communities in Partnership (Cross Border) Programme.

We are working in partnership with Cooperation Ireland and East Border Region to animate and provide support to grassroots communities to access funding opportunities under the SEUPB/Pobal managed PEACEPLUS Small Grants Programme.

We are an Open College Network (OCN) accredited centre and deliver the OCN Level 1 in Developing and Managing Community Facilities.

We undertake various assignments and commissions for central and local government, other statutory bodies and the community, voluntary sector including pilot projects, evaluations, programme design, project assessments & appraisals.

We deliver our own 'Rural Action Awards' where we give back to communities each year. So far, we have invested nearly £30,000 in community action projects injecting the equivalent of £1,000 per month back into rural communities.

We have just recently secured two major PEACEPLUS initiatives: *RiSE* (Rural Innovation & Social Enterprise), which focuses on empowering rural communities through enterprise and innovation, and *MCS* (Maximising Community Space), aimed at enhancing shared, inclusive spaces. **This recruitment pack is specifically focused on recruiting new talent for the MCS (*Maximising Community Space*) programme.**

OUR AMBITION

To be the organisation of choice for rural delivery and the 'go to' organisation for ideas, innovations and solutions to rural needs.



Why work for Rural Action

At Rural Action, we believe that meaningful work starts with a meaningful workplace. Here's what you can expect when you join our team:

- **Purpose-driven impact:** We're passionate about creating real change in rural communities — and everything we do is rooted in that mission.
- **Supportive leadership:** Our managers lead with empathy, encouragement, and a commitment to helping you thrive.
- **Collaborative culture:** We work as one team, celebrating every achievement and learning together.
- **Employee voice matters:** We actively consult with our staff to shape decisions and drive our shared mission forward.
- **Strong foundations:** Every new team member receives a thorough induction to help them feel confident and connected from day one.
- **Growth and development:** We invest in your potential by offering opportunities to build skills, take on new challenges, and grow professionally.

Benefits

We pride ourselves in being a flexible, family-friendly employer and try to offer the best terms and conditions for our employees to enable them to achieve a healthy work/life balance.

Our benefits include: -

- 25 days annual leave (increasing to 30 after 5 years' service) plus 12 bank and public holidays (based on 35hrs per week, *pro-rata for part-time positions*)
- Enhanced sick leave policy
- Enhanced maternity/paternity/adoption/shared parental leave policies
- Paid compassionate leave
- Employer pension scheme
- Flexible working policy
- Mileage allowance at the prevailing HMRC Rate
- Time off in lieu (TOIL) policy for additional hours worked
- Training & development policy
- Free on-site car parking
- Early finish on Friday's



On successful completion of probationary period:

- Life assurance
- Health insurance
- Hybrid working model to enable working from home



Job Description

Job Title	MCS Project Officer (with Communications function)
Reporting to	Programme Manager
Grade	Staff Officer (NICS SO scale £37,694 to £38,990)
Hours	35 hours per week
Period	30 th September 2028 (subject to funding with possible extension)

Background

Maximising Community Space (MCS) is a newly developed innovative PEACEPLUS funded project which aims to prioritise the building of relationships, creating shared spaces where people can participate & collaborate regardless of cultural background or difference. Operating on both a cross-community and cross-border basis the project brings together a multi stakeholder partnership including Irish Rural Link and NI Rural Women's Network.

Working with 40 rural community organisations, the programme aims to support the development of more inclusive spaces by increasing the leadership capacity of participating organisations, increasing the involvement of women in leadership roles & governance structures and developing inclusive activities that promote shared spaces & build connections within & between people, working collaboratively on a cross community/border basis.

Purpose and Objectives

As the Project Officer and as part of a team, you will play a crucial role in ensuring the effective implementation and delivery of The Maximising Community Space programme. Additional to this, the role will entail a key communications function within the team.



Main Duties and Responsibilities

The Project Officer's detailed activities will be agreed annually with the Programme Manager through an agreed work plan which will include output targets and identified time scales. The broad activities of the post will include:

Animation & awareness raising:

- Devising an appropriate Communication plan and lead on publicity regarding launch of programme.
- Devising and implementing an action plan in collaboration with the Programme Manager to ensure a successful recruitment/uptake of 20 groups/80 participants on to the MCS programme in Northern Ireland (**please note a similar action will be undertaken by Irish Rural Link staff (IRL) in the Border Counties*)
- Liaising with the Project Officer in Irish Rural Link to achieve and maintain same in the Border Counties, ensuring complementarity and consistency across the programme

Project Delivery:

- Building relationships within individual groups and community settings
- Liaising with the Training & Development Officer and other staff members, devising and carrying out Development Needs Analysis within individual settings
- Facilitating Leadership & Successions Plans for 20 rural community-based organisations operating community facilities in NI
- Liaising with the Diversity & Inclusion Officer to devise suitable activity plans for 20 rural – based community organisation located within NI to aid diversity & inclusion within settings, supporting actions encouraging shared inclusive space
- Liaising with Project Officer within Irish Rural Link to ensure consistency of delivery within programme and obtain joint learning

Mentoring and Capacity Building:

- Provide mentoring & capacity building support to volunteers and management committees participating in the programme
- Delivering training where appropriate & helping identify other trainers where required
- Identifying best practice from other projects and programmes and disseminate the learning from these
- Support the identification of study visits and help facilitate the delivery of cluster events, residentials and other networking opportunities
- Assist with the delivery of the OCN Level 2 Maximising Community Space training programme where required



Communications:

- Liaising with the Programme Manager, lead on all communications functions within the MCS Team, including the project launch and closure events
- Work closely with Project staff to identify and contribute to case study development and impact statements.
- Follow the PR requirements of the PEACEPLUS programme including the use of logos on all publicity and communication materials
- Participate in regular planned and ad hoc meetings with the Project Delivery Team to assess and review the ongoing delivery of the programme.
- Represent Rural Action and the project in external networks and meetings if required.
- Promote awareness & advocate for shared inclusive space
- Promote cross-community/border collaboration opportunities for participating organisations/groups
- Collate monitoring data and provide information that will support the reporting of information to the Project Steering Group, SEUPB and JeMS, ensuring project outputs and results are monitored in line with LoO targets and identify any issues in attrition or non-compliance
- Maintain records of meetings, workshops held and events attended, and contact engagements within the PEACEPLUS MCS programme-funded project.
- Contribute to reports, recommendations, and lessons learned for future programme development.

General

- Participate in staff development and training events.
- Carry out any other duties deemed necessary within the postholder's competency to ensure the effective operation of your role within Rural Action or a role where similar experience and/or knowledge and/or skills might be required.



Our Organisational Values & Expectations

At Rural Action, we believe that how we work is just as important as what we achieve. These principles guide our culture and define what we expect from every member of our team:

Our Principles

- **Champion our mission:** Always promote Rural Action positively and help strengthen the partnerships that support our work.
- **Act with integrity:** Conduct yourself in a trustworthy, reasonable, and responsible manner in all aspects of your role.
- **Foster respect and inclusion:** Promote a harmonious working environment where everyone is treated with fairness, dignity, and equality — and where intimidation or harassment is never tolerated.

Our Professional Standards

- **Policy adherence:** Abide by all organisational policies and procedures, ensuring they are implemented fully within your areas of responsibility.
- **Safety and safeguarding:** Maintain full compliance with health and safety and safeguarding requirements relevant to your role.



Employee Specification

The Employee Specification outlines the essential skills, knowledge, qualifications, and attributes required to successfully carry out the duties of this role. When completing your application form, please ensure you address each criterion listed — drawing on your full range of experience, whether gained through paid employment, voluntary work, education, or other relevant settings.

Essential Criteria

- **Qualifications**

- Degree level qualification or 4 years relevant experience

- **Experience**

At least 2 years' experience in the last 5 years of operating in a similar role as Project Officer (with communications function), to include:

- Delivering projects and activities in community-based environments.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills, with the ability to convey complex information clearly and concisely.
- Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office packages.
- Proficient in using digital tools such as SharePoint, Canva, etc.
- Comfortable navigating and updating customised management systems, databases or CRM platforms to support data capture and programme delivery.
- Ability to prioritise tasks and meet deadlines.
- Ability to work collaboratively within and across projects.

- **Skills and Attributes**

- Ability to plan work, meet targets and work to deadlines
- High level of inter-personal skills
- Ability to think creatively and flexibly
- Highly motivated team member
- Able to work to own initiative
- Be proactive
- Good written and oral communication skills
- ICT literate



Desirable Criteria

- **Qualifications**

- 3rd level qualification in a related field (e.g. Rural/Community Development, Youthwork, Good Relations, Communications)

- **Experience**

- Understanding of rural community/development
- Experience of working in an office environment with various teams supporting community-based projects.
- Experience in working with projects that focus on reconciliation, promoting good relations, and cross-border peacebuilding.
- Communications role in project delivery and experience of event management to create awareness and support events.
- Familiarity with a range of other project, data and people management software – e.g. JEMS, Miro, Trello etc.
- Able to adapt quickly to new technologies and digital workflows, with a proactive approach to learning and problem-solving.

Other Factors

- Access to transport is essential
- Willing and able to travel within NI, Ireland and occasionally further if required.
- Willing and able to work occasional extended hours if required.



Conditions of Service

The successful applicant will play a key role in helping Rural Action deliver its strategic plan, and as such, a flexible and proactive approach to work is essential.

This post is based in Cookstown, with Rural Action currently operating a hybrid working model. Upon successful completion of the probation period, the postholder will have the opportunity to work flexibly within this model. However, due to the collaborative nature of the MCS programme, regular face-to-face engagement with colleagues and partners will be required.

Access to personal transport is essential, as the role involves travel across Northern Ireland, the border region of Ireland, and occasionally further afield to attend meetings and events.

Please note that successful applicants will be required to undergo an Access NI check.

This post is subject to funding with possible extension until 30th September 2028.



Additional Information

Equal Opportunities

Rural Action is an Equal Opportunities Employer and all applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Application Process

The closing date/time for submission of applications is

12 noon on Wednesday 22ND October 2025

Please ensure your form and any requested supporting documentation is emailed to:

samantha@ruralaction.co

Please Note: We cannot accept applications received after the closing date/time.

Guidance Notes on Applying for this role

Please ensure you complete the application form in full. Rural Action will not make assumptions from the title of your post(s) or the nature of any employing organisation(s) as to your skills and experience gained.

If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet any eligibility criteria, your application may be rejected.

ONLY the details provided by you in your form will be used for determining your eligibility for the post/shortlisting purposes.

Contact Details

If you have any queries regarding the recruitment process, please contact Samantha (samantha@ruralaction.co) or phone 028 8648 0900.

Thank you for your interest in Rural Action and this post.

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