



Post Title	Project Officer (Grade IV)
Unit	Centre for the Advancement of STEM Teaching & Learning (CASTeL)
Project	Improving Gender Balance
Funding Agency	Science Foundation Ireland
Post duration	Fixed Term Up to 31 December 2018

Project Background

Improving Gender Balance is a pilot project, funded by Science Foundation Ireland, and organised by the Centre for the Advancement of STEM Teaching & Learning (CASTeL) in DCU and the Institute of Physics. It is designed to address issues around gender and physics in schools. It seeks to take a holistic approach to changing students' experience with physics in order to encourage more students, especially girls, to choose to take it. By working with teachers, schools and students to change perceptions of who can study science and tackle the inequities that prevent students from engaging in physics, this project will promote the importance of STEM education in student's lives and, through the project's work with physics teachers, support STEM education itself. It draws upon similar work being carried out by the Institute of Physics in England and Scotland. The project officer will be based in CASTeL.

The Centre for the Advancement of Science and Mathematics Teaching & Learning (CASTeL), at Dublin City University, directed by Dr. Eilish McLoughlin, is multidisciplinary research team focussed on enhancing science and mathematics education at all educational levels, supported by evidence-based research and contributing to international good practice. CASTeL members, comprising of scientists, mathematicians and educationalists from Dublin City University (DCU)'s Faculty of Science and Health and Institute of Education, lead and participate in formal and informal STEM education projects, nationally and internationally, which are focussed on inquiry based science teaching, learning and assessment.

The Institute of Physics in Ireland is a scientific membership organisation devoted to increasing the understanding and application of physics in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It has over 2000 members, and is part of the Institute of Physics (IOP). The Institute of Physics has a world-wide membership of over 50,000 and is a leading communicator of physics-related science to all

audiences, from specialists through to government and the general public. Its publishing company, IOP Publishing, is a world leader in scientific publishing and the electronic dissemination of physics. IOP in Ireland has a significant record in working to support the teaching and learning of physics by the provision of workshops, conferences and resources much of these in conjunction with the Professional Development Service for Teachers. IOP has developed a number of programmes to address issues around the low uptake of physics in schools by girls. The Improving Gender Balance project will form a part of other IOP gender projects in England and Scotland. IOP has also worked closely with CASTeL on a number of other educational and public engagement projects.

The uptake of physics by girls in Ireland remains stubbornly low at school level with only about 25% of the Leaving Certificate cohort being female. This imbalance continues through all levels of study and into the wider workplace, representing a significant loss of science capital to the country and, on an individual level, indicating that many women are not fulfilling their potential in this area. This project aims to optimize students' experience with science in their first three years of secondary school and ensure that all students are able to make an informed and unbiased choice around physics. In order to achieve this aim, the project will work closely with teachers, students and other influencers (parents, school senior management etc.) to provide a holistic approach to addressing gender in physics and STEM education. By taking this whole school approach, the project will ensure that the wider school community is working in concert to create an environment that is encouraging for all. Activities will be supported by existing examples of excellent practice and resources made available from the IOP and CASTeL, both of whom have significant experience in this area, developed through related successful projects.

Function

We now wish to engage a project officer on a fixed term contract basis to the Irish team working on this Improving Gender Balance project. This project will engage six schools in the Dublin/Leinster area through a variety of activities including, continued professional development, the provision of classroom resources, careers workshops, building confidence and resilience for girls and employing a whole school approach to gender stereotyping. This work will be coordinated by a project officer, with support from the IOP and CASTeL personnel.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

The Project Officer (PO) will report to the Director of CASTeL and liaise closely with members of the IOP team working in this area. The PO will manage all aspects of the project in Ireland. The work will include:

- Identifying and summarising existing literature on improving gender balance and managing organisational culture change
- Building and sustaining relationships with the project schools – liaising with teachers and management.
- Selecting and preparing project resource materials.
- Organising and delivering a range of workshops on gender issues

- Organising appropriate physics teaching supports in conjunction with IOP and CASTeL personnel
- Managing the finances of the project budget
- Developing and maintaining project website and communications
- Disseminating outputs from the project - publications, reports, presentations.
- Co-ordinating external evaluation of the project
- Developing an implementation proposal for national roll out.

Minimum Criteria

- The post-holder must possess a primary degree and a minimum of three years' work experience in a relevant science or STEM domain.
- Good understanding of gender issues and organisational culture change

Skills

- Excellent written and oral proficiency in English (essential).
- Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills.
- Experience of managing projects, particularly with multiple partners.
- Qualitative and quantitative data analysis skills
- Ability to work in a team and to take responsibility to contribute to the overall success of the team
- Ability to work sensitively with a range of stake holders including students, teachers, senior managements, parents

Experience

The following are all desirable:

- A research postgraduate qualification with academic publication.
- Experience of project management, including financial management skills
- Understanding of how Irish secondary schools operate and the regulations and requirements that bind them
- Awareness of the issues of gender imbalance in subjects at school (particularly physics) and of the causes, effects and influences of gender stereotyping and how to counter them
- Proven ability to deal tactfully with a wide range of people
- Willingness to travel to schools
- Ability to present and address a large audience with confidence
- Awareness of issues relating to evaluation of pilot projects

Competencies required for this post are:

- **Knowledge of the Organisation/Sector:** The ability to continuously learn and understand the structure, processes and relationships within DCU. Has an awareness of the

issues impacting the educational sector. Is capable of representing their area within DCU and knows when to relay back relevant information.

- **Communication:** Communicates in a clear manner and actively listens and engages to gain understanding. Uses a variety of communication methods in a professional way and appropriate to the audience.
- **Personal Effectiveness/Excellence:** Continuously strives to learn about how things are done, why they are done that way and how the role impacts on everything. Is effective in planning and managing their workload
- **Team Working:** Working together in a supportive manner to share tasks and information. Shows respect for the contribution of others. Will respond positively with the team, to the need for change

Salary Scale: *€33,625 - €50,750 per annum

**Appointment will be commensurate with qualifications and experience and will be made on the appropriate point of the salary scale, in line with current Government pay policy.*

Closing Date: 16th February 2017

Informal Enquiries to:

Dr. Eilish McLoughlin, CASTeL, Dublin City University E-mail: Eilish.mcloughlin@dcu.ie Phone: +353 (0)1 700 5862

Note: Please do not send applications to this email address, instead apply as described below.

Application Procedure

Application forms are available from the DCU Current Vacancies (open Competitions) website at <http://dcu.ie/hr/vacancies/current.shtml> and also from the Human Resources Department, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel: +353 (0) 1 700 5149

Applications should be submitted by email to hr.applications@dcu.ie or by Fax to +353 (0)1 700 5500 or by post to: Human Resources Department, Dublin City University, Glasnevin Campus, Dublin 9.

Please clearly state the role you are applying for in your application and email subject line, as follows:
Job Ref # 487 Project Officer, Centre for the Advancement of STEM Teaching & Learning (CASTeL)

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