



**Community Connector
Outreach Officer (Regional Platform)
Student Support & Development
Administrative Assistant
Full Time Fixed Term Contract up to Three Years**

The University

Student Support & Development (SS&D) provides professional, academic and personal support and development opportunities to students in DCU and is a busy and diverse Unit which includes the Student Advice Centre, the Careers Office, Counselling & Personal Development, the INTRA work placement Office, Student Learning, the Student Health Centre, the Disability & Learning Support Office, the Access Office and Chaplaincy. Further information on SS&D can be found at: <http://www.dcu.ie/students/index.shtml>.

The College Connect Programme

College Connect is a collaborative initiative between Athlone Institute of Technology, Dublin City University, Dundalk Institute of Technology, and Maynooth University (the MEND Regional Cluster). *College Connect* aims to enhance educational aspirations for the most socio-economically disadvantaged people in the MEND region through a participative and sustainable suite of activities and resources to illuminate pathways and provide opportunities into, through and beyond higher education.

College Connect will achieve this through a project management team and Community Connectors who will invigorate a regional network of stakeholders whose collective expertise will strengthen the knowledge base for effective engagement with target groups. The College Connect Programme is funded by the Higher Education Authority and the Midlands, East and North Dublin MEND Regional Higher Education Institutions.

College Connect comprises four innovative educational interventions which have been designed to address existing barriers and support the participation of marginalised groups in the MEND region:

🔗 *Strand 1: Connecting the Cluster*

Connecting the Cluster brings together stakeholders to develop a regional strategy to increase access to higher education from the most marginalised groups. The strategy is rooted in participative, democratic, stakeholder engagement, recognising the wealth of expertise that exists across the region. This innovative organisational structure builds on MEND's foundational work and strong record of accomplishment of regional collaboration.

🔗 Strand 2: Connecting the Region

Connecting the Region will develop a regional access strategy and community needs analysis to support MEND to strengthen its work with communities experiencing entrenched socio-economic disadvantage and to be more responsive to addressing inequality of access across the region. Four Community Connectors will connect MEND to stakeholders supporting access to education across the region and work alongside partner organisations to develop stronger relationships between the regional cluster and local communities.

🔗 Strand 3: Connecting the Learner

Connecting the Learner will develop a single regional platform to connect to prospective students, families, and stakeholders, aimed at maintaining and raising aspirations for progression to higher education through college readiness tools and mentoring. The College Connect platform allows MEND to communicate the value of higher education and provide targeted support and guidance to learners. The platform assists learners to understand the pathways and supports available across the region, connect to a regional mentor and map their way to college.

🔗 Strand 4: Connecting to College

Connecting to College will consolidate existing pathways and develop new pathways to support greater access and share learning about effective transition and post-entry supports. High-quality transition and post-entry supports result in greater academic engagement, achievement, retention and progression

The Role

MEND wishes to appoint a Community Connector for the College Connect Programme. The successful candidate will be part of a team of four Community Connectors each based in one of the MEND Higher Education Institutions. The Community Connectors will be responsible for building sustainable, collaborative relationships with communities experiencing deep disadvantage to support access to higher education. The role will require travel within the MEND area.

Each Community Connector will also lead one of the core strands of the College Connect Programme, supporting the Director to develop and deliver the MEND Regional Widening Participation Strategy. The Community Connector based in DCU will lead the development and delivery of a regional online platform to provide targeted advice and guidance on the pathways and supports available across the region, a college readiness tool to support higher education decision making and preparation and access to the College Connect Mentoring Programme.

The successful candidate will have a thorough knowledge of the Irish education system and educational disadvantage, evidence of building sustainable, collaborative relationships with communities experiencing disadvantage, experience in actively engaging communities to progress social change, and exceptional communication skills.

This candidate will ideally have experience of the development of online platforms and/or web content. The candidate will have excellent organisational, project management and IT skills and high levels of self-motivation and flexibility.

This position will be based in DCU and will report to the College Connect Director

Principal Duties

- ✎ Build sustainable, collaborative relationships with communities experiencing deep disadvantage to support access to higher education and contribute to the Regional Community Needs Analysis.
- ✎ Support the Director to build a MEND Regional Widening Participation strategy in partnership with communities with low participation rates in higher education.
- ✎ Work with the Director to identify the range of community stakeholders and widening participation activities across the MEND region and link them to the College Connect Programme.
- ✎ Broaden access to higher education across the MEND region by linking communities to pathways, transition and post-entry supports; promoting widening participation from the most marginalised groups; and delivering regional targeted events and workshops to provide information, advice and guidance to support access to higher education.
- ✎ Lead the development and delivery of a regional online platform to provide targeted advice and guidance on the pathways and supports available across the region, a college readiness tool to support higher education decision making and access to the College Connect Mentoring Programme.
- ✎ Support the 1916 Bursary Fund to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the most marginalised groups through further development of the application process, promotion and engagement with regional partners.
- ✎ Prepare progress reports and presentations for the Director, MEND HEIs and other stakeholders on a regular basis.
- ✎ Contribute to the evaluation of the College Connect Programme supporting the evaluation frameworks, the building of baseline data and the dissemination of findings.
- ✎ Carry out any other duties related to the College Connect Programme.

Ideal Candidate

- ✎ An undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline. A postgraduate qualification in Community Development, Education, Social Policy, Media Technology, Multimedia, or a closely related field would be an advantage.
- ✎ A deep understanding of educational disadvantage and widening participation in higher education and practice underpinned by a commitment to diversity, inclusion and social justice.
- ✎ A minimum of three years' experience of working in the area of community development, widening participation, or social inclusion.

- ☞ Experience of developing and delivering online platforms on time and within budget.
- ☞ Excellent IT skills, including a good working knowledge of Windows, common computer applications and web editing tools.
- ☞ Exceptional communication skills evidenced by the ability to build relationships and consensus.
- ☞ Evidence of leading and working in teams.
- ☞ Experience of project and budgetary management with high-level communication, writing, financial, and administration skills
- ☞ High levels of creativity, innovation, motivation, proactivity and flexibility.
- ☞ Full clean driver's license and access to a car.

Salary

Salary Scale: €34,971 - €52,268,175 p.a. (Administrative Assistant)

Appointment will be commensurate with qualifications and experience, and will be made on the appropriate point of the salary scales, in line with current Government pay policy. Full details of salary upon promotion for internal staff can be viewed at: <http://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/hr/pdfs/Pay-Upon-Promotion-Internal-Staff.pdf>

Closing Date: 6th September 2018

Informal Enquiries:

Informal enquiries may be addressed to Cathy McLoughlin, Head of DCU Access Service. Student Support & Development, Dublin City University, Dublin 9 Ireland, cathy.mcloughlin@dcu.ie Tel: +353 01 700 8814

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://www4.dcu.ie/hr/vacancies/current.shtml> and also from the Human Resources Department, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel: +353 (0)1 700 5149; Fax +353 (0)1 700 5500 Email: hr.applications@dcu.ie. **Along with the application form, please submit a CV and cover letter.**

Please clearly state the role that you are applying for in your application and email subject line: Job Reference # 978 – Community Connector, Outreach Officer, DCU Student Support & Development

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

Dublin City University is an equal opportunities employer.