

## Job Description

<b>Job Title</b>	Rural Development Programmes Manager
<b>Reporting to</b>	CEO
<b>Responsible to</b>	CEO of Laois Partnership Company and the voluntary Board of Directors
<b>About us</b>	<p>Laois Partnership Company is the local development company for County Laois. We run a number of state and EU funded programmes that aim to promote social inclusion, community and rural development and increase employment and enterprise. We provide a range of supports and services that aim to make Laois a better place to live, where people can prosper and achieve their full potential.</p> <p>At present the company runs a number of funded programmes such as SICAP and LEADER, via the Department of Rural and Community Development; a CE scheme for community childcare services in Laois and a TUS work scheme for County Laois, via the Department of Social Protection as well as a Social Prescribing service funded via the HSE. We also run a childcare service, and a community services programme for elderly people, with funding via POBAL. Other programmes available within the service include a Ukrainian support service; rural development programmes such as Rural Walks Scheme and Rural Social Scheme.</p>
<b>Purpose of the post</b>	<p>The core responsibility of the Rural Development Manager is to manage and oversee the LEADER programme, <b>and a number of other smaller programmes with a rural development focus</b>, as assigned by the CEO.</p> <p>This position will involve working within the LEADER programme. The LEADER Programme aims to support the local development of Ireland’s rural areas. The rural development manager will work with the RDP team (project officers and admin) to promote innovative and strategic rural development via the resources of the LEADER programme. A key focus is to animate the rural development through community led approaches in Co Laois, and to build capacity of rural communities and enterprises.</p> <p>Following a successful tender application to deliver the LEADER programme 2023 – 2027, the Manager will be responsible for the overall implementation, and evaluation, of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for Co Laois.</p> <p>The manager will be responsible for providing supervision and support for staff in relation to the work and their ongoing professional development and also works as part of the wider management team to contribute to the ongoing development of the organisation.</p>
<b>Duties and Responsibilities</b>	<p><b>Programme development &amp; delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To animate the LEADER Local development strategy within Laois. The manager will work with the team to actively promote the LEADER Programme in the catchment area to maximise the impact of the programme.</li> <li>➤ To work with project promoters to build their capacity to participate in rural development and to access available benefits.</li> </ul>

- To assist potential project promoters in developing rural and environmental projects including grant drawdown within the guidelines of the Rural Development Programme Ireland 2023 – 2027 Operating Rules.
- To prepare final descriptive and evaluation reports on projects for presentation and consideration for approval by the Independent Evaluation Committees and the Local Action Group (LAG).
- To prepare budget data for analysis and qualitative reports on progress, under the LEADER Programme.
- To liaise on a routine basis with representatives of the Department of Rural and Community Development and its Liaison Officers on matters associated with the RDP 2023– 2027 (LEADER) Programme.
- To prepare timely reports on the process of the Programme delivery to relevant funding bodies where and when appropriate.

### **Leadership and Management**

Positive staff engagement is a key component of this role. The manager will be expected to:

- Show strong leadership skills to help motivate, develop and empower the team.
- Provide clear direction, and support, in relation to setting team and individual goals and evaluating performance.
- Provide informal and formal support, guidance, and caseload management for staff, including monitoring workloads and ensuring accountability for quality of work.
- Provide regular professional support and supervision for staff members.
- Promote a positive team spirit within the rural development programmes and across the wider organisation.
- Ensure that the teams operate in accordance with relevant programme policies and procedures and those of the wider organisation.
- Provide organisational leadership working with the senior management team to promote good organisational practices and strong leadership across the organisation.
- Demonstrate ability to reflect on personal leadership skills and gain knowledge and further skills in this area.

### **Collaborative Working**

- To positively promote the programmes managed, and proactively represent the interests of individuals and communities that the programmes serve.
- To participate in relevant fora/working groups and seek to positively influence policy and practice development to enhance rural development.
- To provide general advice and information on the company and the LEADER Programme to individuals and community groups and where appropriate, refer such clients to other relevant support services / programmes as administered by the company.
- To link closely with other agencies to ensure maximum effectiveness of the implementation of the LEADER programme.

### **General Duties**

- To always comply with Laois Partnership policies and procedures.
- To work in a manner which positively promotes the aims, objectives, and values of the organisation.
- To actively participate in regular support meetings with the CEO.
- To actively participate in service review meetings and contribute to organisational development, upholding a culture of integrity, equality, transparency and quality service provision.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To take responsibility as and when required for other programmes within the organisation that are complimentary to the rural development agenda.</li> <li>➤ Undertake any duties consistent with the post as may be reasonably requested by the CEO.</li> </ul> <p>Please be advised that this is not an exhaustive list of duties for the role and changes may occur. This role is a developmental role and will require flexibility and adaption to new and changing situations on an ongoing basis.</p>	
Eligibility Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Relevant third level qualification in relation to rural/economic development or a related field.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Evidence of further study in leadership/management</li> </ul>
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ At least five years' paid experience in a rural/economic development programme, similar to the RDP programme.</li> <li>➤ Strong experience in developing, delivering, and improving services and programmes</li> <li>➤ Strong experience of building and maintaining successful relationships with a variety of stakeholders, including communities, funders, senior leaders, and delivery partners</li> <li>➤ Experience and deep understanding of rural development and building capacity</li> <li>➤ Experience of mentoring and empowering staff teams leading to high performance</li> <li>➤ Proven ability to manage a demanding and diverse workload</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Experience of managing government funded projects</li> <li>➤ Previous experience of LEADER programme</li> <li>➤ Experience of working in a target-based environment and meeting strict guidelines</li> <li>➤ Track record in providing professional support and mentoring for staff</li> <li>➤ Experience of working as part of a Senior Management Team</li> <li>➤ Strong experience of developing and implementing monitoring and evaluating processes.</li> </ul>
Skills and competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Excellent communication skills</li> <li>➤ Strong project management experience</li> <li>➤ Strong monitoring and evaluation skills</li> <li>➤ Strong solution focused skills</li> <li>➤ Ability to manage varied and busy workload effectively</li> <li>➤ Displays the ability to respond constructively to feedback, listens carefully and presents themselves professionally</li> <li>➤ Good working knowledge of CRM/ICT systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong budget development and management skills</li> <li>➤ Experience of using CRM system</li> </ul>
Other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong analysis and decision making skills</li> <li>➤ Fast learner</li> <li>➤ Good initiative</li> <li>➤ Full clean driving licenses and use of own car</li> <li>➤ Satisfactory references</li> </ul>	
Terms and Conditions	<p><b>Contract:</b> Contract of indefinite duration, subject to funding</p> <p><b>Probation:</b> 6 months probation period, with 3 month formal review</p> <p><b>Hours:</b> 35 hrs/week</p> <p><b>Salary:</b> €60,679 point one of the Manager salary scale</p>	

	Satisfactory references, will be sought prior to the successful candidate taking up the post.
<b>How To apply</b>	<p>To apply, please send a letter of application, outlining why you believe you are suitable for this role, together with your Curriculum Vitae. Please submit this, via email, marked RDP MANG to <a href="mailto:info@laoispartnership.ie">info@laoispartnership.ie</a></p> <p>Extended closing date for receipt of applications is <b>Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024</b>.</p> <p>No late applications will be accepted.</p> <p>Informal enquiries by email to <b>info@laoispartnership.ie</b></p> <p>Canvassing will disqualify.</p>

**Laonis Partnership Company is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of gender, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, disability or membership of the travelling community.**