

Appointment of a Programme Manager to manage and support the work of the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP)

The partners supporting the NStEP programme now seek applications for the post of Programme Manager on a fixed-term, 3-year contract.

About NStEP

The National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) was launched in 2016 to develop a national vision for enhancing and embedding student engagement within higher education. NStEP is a joint initiative of the Union of Students of Ireland (USI), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). NStEP develops and supports student engagement in Irish higher education institutions. Student engagement is underpinned by the principle of "student as partner," with involvement in NStEP requiring a partnership between staff in higher education institutions (HEIs) and student representatives.

To date, this national programme has brought together staff and students within their own contexts, with the aim of fostering a culture of meaningful engagement. NStEP provides space for collaboration and capacity building, for sharing ideas, for creating best practice to elevate the student voice, and for implementing student-staff partnerships.

The value and impact of NStEP has been evident through institutional engagement with CINNTE institutional reviews, developing strategic plans, and evolving partnership at different levels of institutional decision making.

The national partnership of the HEA, QQI, and the USI aims to champion student partnership at the strategic level and embed meaningful student engagement in future sectoral developments. NStEP has given a platform for partnership between staff and students and for collaborations between institutions, students' unions, and national agencies to enhance the student experience.

Key aspects of the programme include:

- Student training and leadership development opportunities
- National projects to improve student engagement practice
- Supporting higher education institutions to improve student partnership
- Supporting students' unions to themselves engage fully with student engagement work
- Ensuring student engagement is recognised in national policy
- Developing networks of students and staff interested in student engagement
- Providing professional development opportunities for staff

The current strategy builds upon the work carried out since 2016, pushing the boundaries of our understanding of student partnership, and ensuring impact is both achieved and communicated. The NStEP Steering Committee is now seeking a programme manager to action this strategy and to ensure the Programme continues to develop and enhance a partnership approach to student engagement across Irish higher education.

The successful applicant will report to the NStEP Steering Committee (the USI, the HEA, and QQI). The Programme Manager will work to drive and implement the work of NStEP and oversee the successful execution of the day-to-day work of the Programme, actively supported by each of the partner organisations. The work of the Programme Manager will be carried out within the context of the current strategy, ensuring it meets identified national strategic priorities.

Programme staff (currently one) will report directly to the manager. A number of trainers operate the programme across the country.

For applicants who are currently working in higher education, the position is open to both academic and professional staff. The post will be based in Dublin. There will be a need for the successful candidate to travel regularly within Ireland for meetings, updates and institutional visits, and some international travel will also be required from time to time.

The Role

The Programme Manager will provide key support to the Steering Committee in the following areas:

Project Management

- Providing project management and co-ordination support across all NStEP activities, including student training, institutional engagement, and events
- Developing a workplan and key deliverables
- Ensuring all NStEP activities and outputs are connected to and informed by other national initiatives and by relevant national and international policy and research
- Supporting collaborative system-level projects related to student-staff partnerships
- Developing a range of written resources, policy papers, guidance materials and publications

Capturing and Monitoring Impact

- Gaining an understanding, in consultation with NStEP participants and partners, of how impact is achieved within the area of student engagement
- Implementing the NStEP impact strategy, to ensure that impact is appropriately captured and disseminated with a view to informing policy and practice
- Supporting HEIs to capture and disseminate the impact of NStEP initiatives within their own contexts with a view to enhancing and embedding student engagement

within higher education which in turn will enhance teaching and learning practice across the sector

Reporting and Communicating

- Working with USI staff to prepare regular updates to the NStEP Steering Committee, including impact reports and financial reports
- Managing external NStEP communications, including social media, and ensuring all communications reinforce the intentions of NStEP and the priorities identified in the upcoming NStEP Strategy
- Compiling reports and communications for a variety of audiences across Irish higher education to ensure staff in higher education understand the strategy and objectives of the NStEP programme
- Supporting and building relationships with key partners and stakeholders to ensure clear and positive communication and a drive towards mutual goals

The Person

The successful applicant will have:

- NQF Level 8 qualification or higher in a relevant discipline with at least 18 months relevant experience.
- Exceptional organisational, administrative and project management skills
- An ability to act autonomously and display sound leadership, whilst ensuring adherence to priorities set out by the Steering Committee
- The capacity to successfully manage a large-scale project involving multiple stakeholders and a varied workload
- Knowledge and experience of project evaluation/impact monitoring
- The energy and commitment to build ongoing collaborative relationships with higher education stakeholders, including students, student leaders, staff, volunteers, professional staff, senior managers and policy partners
- Excellent facilitation, event planning and training skills, with the ability to adapt to different settings and audiences
- Highly developed communication skills, including oral, written and digital, with particular strengths in adjusting messaging to suit a variety of audiences
- An ability to process diverse sources of information, review and synthesise research and policy, and write succinct, informative and instructive reports/guidelines that will be of benefit to the sector

Desirable competences:

- An understanding of relevant national and international higher education structures and policies related to student engagement, quality, and teaching and learning (such as the Irish Survey of Student Engagement and strategies of NStEP partners) to ensure efficiencies and synergies at national level
- Commitment to the creation of an environment that promotes equality of opportunity whilst recognising and valuing diversity

Salary & Conditions

The employer for this role is the Union of Students in Ireland. The role is not a public sector position. Salary for this position is benchmarked against the Civil Service Higher Executive Officer (Non-PPC) pay scale. Remuneration is therefore €53,332 gross per annum. The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time to keep it aligned with government pay policy, and increments may be awarded during the term of employment subject to satisfactory performance.

The position includes hybrid working.

Please send CV, with cover letter outlining your suitability for the post to Denise Glover either via email denise.glover@usi.ie or by post to:

Denise Glover,
Union of Students in Ireland,
Ceann Áras na Mac Léinn,
12 Shamrock Villas,
Harold's Cross,
D6W XH75.

Please include **National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) Programme Manager** in the subject line.

Deadline for receipt of applications is **12 noon, Wednesday 12 June, 2024**.

Interviews for the position will be in person and held in late June 2024.