



Cork Life Centre

sharing the vision of Edmund Rice

To work together
To create opportunities
To empower people
To reach their full potential

RECRUITMENT OF DIRECTOR – SEPTEMBER 2024

ABOUT US

Cork Life Centre is a voluntary organisation that offers education services for up to 55 young people between the ages of 12 and 18 who, for various reasons, have not thrived in a mainstream educational setting. Over 60 staff members of the Centre, most of whom are volunteers or part-time workers, offer one-to-one or small group tuition to students pursuing Junior and Leaving Certificate subjects, supporting them to prepare for state examinations and QQI qualifications.

The Centre works through the SERVOL (*SERvice VOLunteered for all*) model and was established under the trusteeship of the Christian Brothers in 1999; they remain the Centre's Patrons. The vision of Edmund Rice, founder of the Christian Brothers, is core to the ethos of the Centre. We recognise the uniqueness of each individual and nurture their development in a holistic way. While acknowledging the importance of the academic curriculum and state examinations, our service also focuses on addressing the social and wellbeing needs of our young people in line with the pillars of the SERVOL model: *a philosophy of ignorance, active listening and respectful intervention*. We encourage each of our students to be the best they can be.

Our model is founded on the principle of respect. We aim to provide our students with an open and accepting environment where we encourage them to reach their full potential; to learn vital social and life skills; to develop positive, trusting relationships with peers and staff, and to support them with issues and challenges they may face through the provision of counselling and outreach services. The holistic support of students, including outreach and support to students' families, carers and community, is central to our service as developing these relationships facilitates the educational process and creates a productive teaching environment for our students, whose needs are very often complex and challenging.

Our funding comes from state agencies and philanthropic sources; our key state partners are the Department of Education, the Health Service Executive and TUSLA. Cork Life Centre is not a school, however; we are an alternative education provider founded on the belief that everyone has the right to learn in an environment where they feel safe, included and respected.

At Cork Life Centre, we understand that each student has unique needs and goals; we strive to create a learning space that is supportive and nurturing. We believe in educating the heart as well as the mind, supporting our students to become responsible, compassionate global citizens. We work to show our students the importance of family, community and respect for all, while instilling in them the knowledge, skills, and character to thrive in the world.

We live our mission every day.

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ROLE & PERSON SPECIFICATION

2024 has brought many changes for the Cork Life Centre, including closer relationships with the Department of Education, adjustments to the management and financial structures, an expansion of educational offerings and an upcoming transfer of patronage. At this critical time, it will be essential to keep the ethos of the Centre and future service at the core of the day-to-day role.

As a result, the Centre is seeking an experienced and dynamic Director who demonstrates high integrity and a hands-on leadership style. Reporting to the Chairperson and Board of Management who act on behalf of the Trustees, the Director will have overall responsibility for all aspects of the organisation, including pastoral care of the students, education service delivery, policy development, fundraising, finance, human resources, internal and external communications and liaison between the management team and the Board. This key management role requires a collaborative and supportive approach to the development of robust governance processes and delivery of targeted services, with a focus on quality improvement and the implementation of changes necessary to further develop the Centre to fulfill its mission.

The successful candidate will ensure the effective day-to-day operation of the Cork Life Centre and maintain professional relationships with the Centre's stakeholders and funders as well as sourcing and creating relationships with potential new funders. They will be responsible for the development and delivery of the Centre's strategic plan, working in partnership with statutory, voluntary and community stakeholders to ensure that services are provided. The Director will be responsible for ensuring the Centre's compliance with legal obligations and will maintain and ensure compliance with robust policies and procedures for all aspects of the Centre's work.

This is a rewarding and challenging role within a dynamic environment. The ideal candidate will be a clear and confident communicator, with excellent advocacy and presentation skills and an ability to represent the Centre at local and national level. They will have demonstrated experience in project and people management, capable of working independently as well as part of a team.

To be successful, the post-holder will be highly organised and embody the Centre's dedicated and compassionate culture. They will lead, manage and support our strong, experienced team of dedicated staff, volunteers and trustees who have a track record of delivering a highly valued education and outreach service to children and families across Cork city and beyond.

The new Director will join Cork Life Centre at an exciting time and will lead the charity through its next stage of development. This will be a time of building on the learning and experience of the previous chapters to ensure the Centre continues to provide the most effective and most needed support, enabling our students to reach their full potential and thrive in the world.

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QUALIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- An appropriate third-level educational qualification;
- Significant leadership / senior management experience;
- Proven ability to manage staff;
- Experience of working with young people in a similar environment.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & COMPETENCIES:

- Understanding and knowledge of the key challenges and issues within the sector;
- Knowledge of community development, youth work or related field;
- Knowledge of relevant regulations and processes, including child safeguarding, employment legislation and local policies and procedures;
- Understanding of the SERVOL model and ethos of the Centre;
- Strategic view of change management to achieve immediate and long-term objectives;
- Excellent planning, management and organisational skills;
- Ability to identify, manage, and report on risk;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with personal effectiveness;
- Demonstrated ability to lead, collaborate and communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders;
- Effective transformational leadership, with strong influencing skills and political astuteness;
- Positive driver for change while maintaining stability and continuity;
- Ability to assimilate and analyse complex information rapidly, collaborate appropriately, consider the impact of decisions before acting and anticipate problems;
- Ability to maintain focus and persistence, even under complex and demanding conditions;
- Willingness to learn from experience and identify opportunities to grow and develop.

KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

- Day-to-day responsibility for delivering the services of the Centre;
- Leadership of the Centre's management team;
- Daily engagement with and pastoral care of students;
- Relationship management and liaison with all stakeholders, funders and families;
- Compliance management regarding all relevant policies, procedures and regulations;
- Management of budget and funding streams;
- Human Resources management;
- Recruitment, training and retention of staff and volunteers;
- Support of staff and volunteers with planning, delivery and evaluation of programmes;
- Secretary to and liaison with the Board of Management of the Centre;
- Representation of the Centre at local, regional and national level;
- Advocacy for the Centre, its students, and its wider community.

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CONDITIONS & BENEFITS:

- The salary for this role is based on the pay-scale for CEOs of Band SC1 Section 38 organisations. The current salary scale (from June, 2024) is €79,056; €79,766; €82,886; €86,019; €89,126; €92,248; €95,351. The starting point for the successful candidate will be commensurate with experience;
- 20 days annual leave;
- Access to Employee Assistance Programme;
- Continuous Professional Development opportunities including study leave and financial support;
- Successful candidates will require to be Garda Vetted for this position;
- The Cork Life Centre is an equal opportunities employer.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Applicants should pay particular attention to the role and person specification outlined above to ensure their suitability for progression to interview stage. If you feel you are the person we are looking for, please email your CV and expression of interest to board@corklifecentre.ie.

The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 4th October 2024 at 17:00.

Interviews will be conducted in mid-October 2024.