



Candidate Information

Policy & Research Officer

Migration Justice

PRO-01-25

January 2025



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About Law Centre NI (LCNI)

Thank you for your interest in joining Law Centre (NI). LCNI is an award-winning organisation that has used the law to drive change in Northern Ireland for 47 years. We are constantly innovating, working in all communities, using the law to transform people's lives.

We are fiercely independent and unrelenting in our pursuit of justice. With a strong track record of strategic litigation and policy advocacy we make change through a unique blend of legal, training, community engagement and policy advocacy work.

The Law Centre's legal work is organised across three teams.

- ❖ The **Migration Justice Team** works with asylum seekers, refugees and victims and survivors of trafficking and domestic abuse, upholding their legal rights and campaigning for a fairer and more humane immigration system. We lead the *Refugee and Asylum Forum*, a network of organisations with direct experience of providing support and services to asylum seekers and refugees. Our policy advocacy and influencing work draws heavily on our community engagement and our legal expertise, so decision makers understand how law and policy is working on the ground.
- ❖ The **Anti-Poverty (Social Security Rights) Project** works to address poverty in NI by ensuring the social security system delivers an effective safety net for people when they need it. Our impact litigation in the public interest has been at the cutting edge of changes to law and policy, making life better for many people and not just in NI. We convene the *Cliff Edge Coalition* to advocate for the retention and strengthening of the NI Executive's 'welfare reform mitigations' that are an essential bulwark against some of the harshest elements of social security change. We deliver extensive legal information resources and training to advisers on all aspects of social security law and our *Social Security Law & Practice Conference* keeps advisers up to speed on law and policy changes.
- ❖ The **Employment Rights Project** supports workers facing unfair working practices or who are victims of forced labour to be able to challenge their employer and uphold their employment law rights. Our team produces regular public legal education resources so people better understand their legal rights as well as adviser guides and training so that people can get the help they need within their communities.

Across all our legal services, we provide free, independent legal advice, casework and representation before the tribunals and courts. As a referral legal organisation for the community and voluntary sector, we use our legal expertise to support other organisations and groups to resolve issues facing people in need. Through extensive training and information resources we continuously build capacity across the

community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland and our public legal education work makes sure that everyone understands their legal rights.

Law Centre NI work is supported by both government funding and a range of philanthropic foundations. Our work is Lexcel-accredited and regulated by OISC. The legal work of the Law Centre is led by the Director of Legal and Senior Solicitor. As a charity, the Law Centre is registered with the Charity Commission NI and is governed by a Board, all of whom give their time and expertise freely in support of our mission.

At the Law Centre, you will see the difference law can make in transforming people's lives. You will be part of making change happen, not just for individuals, but at a wider policy level. We promise you a deeply rewarding job and opportunities for continuous learning.

If you have the ambition to be a part of a dedicated and creative team that makes change happen, using your legal skills and experience to build a better future, please consider an application. For more information and details of how to apply, please visit <https://www.lawcentreni.org/careers>

About this role and the Migration Justice Team

You will be shaping the Law Centre's policy work to influence and achieve progressive change to law and policy in NI. You will be working within the Migration Justice Team, which means your primary focus will be immigration and specifically forced migration.

The Migration Justice Team builds on a long history of immigration work at the Law Centre. Our pioneering and dynamic colleagues are passionate about making a difference to the lives of migrants in Northern Ireland. You can read about some of the changes to law, policy and practice led by LCNI in the Refugee & Asylum Forum's 'Priorities for Action' report, which is available on our [website](#).

There are three strands to our work – legal, policy and community engagement – and we work in partnership with many initiatives and organisations in this field with the aim of supporting migrants who have come to Northern Ireland seeking sanctuary. We assist people to obtain immigration status which then unlocks rights and entitlements including housing, social security and employment. We also seek to upskill the wider community and voluntary sector through our training and information resources so that they are better equipped to meet the needs of migrants.

Your particular role will be to develop our policy and influencing work. This will mean evidencing the impact of law and policy on migrant communities in Northern Ireland and sharing our policy analysis with policy makers. You will draft clear recommendations for progressive change and you will work with a range of wider stakeholders – including the Refugee & Asylum Forum – to secure the implementation of our recommendations.

General candidate information

The post may be filled by secondment of the successful candidate from their current post for a duration to be agreed by all parties and on LCNI terms. LCNI will also consider requests for flexible working arrangements.

Benefits are:

- 35 hour working week;
- Opportunity to develop and deepen discrete subject expertise through excellent professional learning and support;
- Generous holiday entitlement of 24 days annually, building to a maximum of 30 days. This is in addition to 14 statutory and other days;
- Flexible working arrangements;
- Excellent development opportunities;
- Being part of making change happen;
- Employee Assistance Programme;
- Health & Wellbeing initiatives;
- Accessible City Centre location.

The successful candidate will be expected to take up post as soon as practicable. The successful candidate will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months which may be extended in accordance with LCNI policy.

We're looking for committed, enthusiastic and skilled professionals who share our values and our commitment to use law to transform lives. If that sounds like you and you're self-motivated with the passion, skill and resilience to stand for some of the most disadvantaged in our communities, we'd love to hear from you. If you would like to have an informal discussion to find out more about LCNI or these posts, please contact us at humanresources@lawcentreni.org and we'll get in touch.

Safeguarding Checks

As this post involves working with children and/or vulnerable adults, this post will be offered subject to Access NI vetting. The post will also be subject to professional disciplinary checks.

References

All appointments are subject to receipt of at least two satisfactory written references covering the last three years of your employment.

How to apply

Please note the following important information about the application process:

- Please complete the application form **in full**. You should ensure that you give examples that **demonstrate** how you satisfy the relevant criteria, including relevant dates. CVs will not be considered.
- Please return your application form as a Word document by email to the email address specified in the application form. Please also return a completed monitoring form as directed.
- Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.
- Applications should be submitted by email to:
humanresources@lawcentreni.org by the closing date.
- We will communicate with candidates by email so candidates should ensure that they regularly check their inbox.
- The panel reserves the right to enhance the criteria as appropriate in the event of a large volume of applications.

Closing date for receipt of applications: **10.00 am Monday 3rd February 2025**

It is anticipated interviews will be held week commencing **10th February 2025**

In the event that a candidate is invited to interview and is unavailable on the proposed date and time due to reasons beyond their control, the panel may try to accommodate an alternative arrangement subject to their own availability, although this is not guaranteed unless an adjustment is required in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Job description

Job Title:	Policy & Research Officer
Job Purpose:	To support LCNI's Migration Justice policy advocacy, developing evidence-based policy solutions that influence legal, policy and practice development in NI.
Location:	Belfast City Centre.
Salary:	NJC Pay scales SO2, £32,909 - £34,723 (pro rata) + 5% employer pension contribution
Post:	28 - 35 hours per week
Report to:	Head of Migration Justice
Contact with:	Policy makers and officials Elected Representatives Migrant support organisations Media Clients and members of the public Statutory and voluntary & community organisations Volunteers, members, students Academics and think-tanks Other relevant stakeholders

MAIN DUTIES

1. Ensure that the Law Centre's experience of casework and community engagement is translated into effective policy advocacy;
2. Proactively identify law, policy and practice issues and develop appropriate solutions for progressing these;
3. Prepare policy submissions including briefing papers, research papers and consultation responses;
4. Influence officials and policy makers and foster and develop constructive working relationships;
5. Develop and maintain effective relationships with LCNI members and other external stakeholders including through the Refugee & Asylum Forum;

6. Represent LCNI as appropriate at relevant external meetings and events, for example, giving evidence to NI Assembly Committees, other parliamentary committees, presentation of conference papers, meetings with government departments, elected representatives, etc.;
7. Work with LCNI colleagues to ensure that LCNI's policy work is communicated effectively including through social media;
8. Work with LCNI colleagues to prepare information resources to support community organisations and to develop and deliver information sessions;
9. Be the first point of contact for immigration-related policy queries, including from policy makers, voluntary & community organisations, researchers etc.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

10. You will maintain and develop expertise in immigration law.
11. You will continually monitor your own training and professional development needs in consultation with your line manager and source appropriate support.
12. You will act as ambassador for LCNI in all your work and role-model LCNI's values in delivering its vision and mission.

OTHER DUTIES

13. Ensure timely management information reports are available to the LCNI management team and contribute to reports to funders as required;
14. Identify and maximise organisational development opportunities;
15. Be available to work outside standard business hours occasionally to meet the demands of the role;
16. Undertake relevant administrative duties in the performance of the above;
17. Undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time.

As this post may involve work with children and vulnerable adults, the Law Centre NI will offer the post subject an Access NI and pre-employment check.

*Note: this Job Description is not exhaustive and will be subject to review in line with the changing business needs of the organisation. **January 2025**

Personnel specification

Essential Criteria

Qualifications, Knowledge & Experience

- *E1. University level degree or equivalent.
- *E2. At least one year's experience of social policy advocacy on behalf of an organisation.
- *E3. Good knowledge of forced migration/displacement issues currently affecting individuals in NI.

Abilities and Skills

- E4. Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- E5. Administratively well organised with proficient ICT skills.
- E6. Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to work independently as well as in a team.

Aptitudes and commitment

- E7. Self-motivated with a passion for affecting progressive social change.
- E8. Committed to the Law Centre's mission

Circumstances

- *E9. Willingness to travel as required.
- *E10. Available for occasional evening and weekend work in accordance with the requirements of the post

Desirable Criteria

- D1** Experience of research on behalf of an organisation
- D2** Knowledge of UK and NI government structures
- D3** Experience of working in migrant support sector
- D4** Experience of developing information materials
- D5** Experience of delivering training
- D6** Experience of effectively mobilising others to advocate for progressive change
- D7** Lived experience of forced displacement
- D8** Current UK driving licence with access to a car (note this will be waived where applicants can demonstrate suitable alternative arrangements or in response to disability needs)

*Will be assessed at sift stage

Our Vision

A just and equal society where people live in the dignity of their rights.

Our Mission

We use the power of law for social change. To stand for everyone's rights by informing and educating people about their rights and by protecting and advancing people's rights, working collaboratively for social justice.

Our Values

The following values underpin all aspects of our work with each other, with clients and with other stakeholders.

<i>Authentic</i>	we act consistently with our commitment to social justice
<i>Integrity</i>	we honour our word
<i>Independence</i>	we work without fear or favour
<i>Expert</i>	we are driven by learning and we bring expert knowledge of the law and evidence of people's experiences of the law to all our work
<i>Cutting-edge</i>	we test the boundaries of law and policy to advance the rights of people in NI. We are creative in developing new solutions for social justice.
<i>Inclusive</i>	we work with and for others. We innovate to make sure our services are accessible to our clients.
<i>Trusted</i>	we are credible and respectful. We build trusted relationships. We care for our clients and each other and when we commit, we can be trusted to see it through.
<i>Professional</i>	we deliver quality services.