

Community Connection Project

SECAD is seeking to recruit a **Community Connector(s)** to deliver actions that support local communities in designated areas in Mid, South & East Cork to assess and deal with ongoing changes in the community.

The Community Connection Project (CCP) will use a community development and inclusion approach to address concerns of communities and assist them in developing constructive responses to numbers of International Protection Applicants in their local area.

The Community Connector will engage and work with local communities in designated areas in Mid, South & East Cork over an 18-month period, helping build community resilience against misinformation and prejudice by working with the local community before, during and after the arrival of International Protection Applicants (IPAs) and where IPAs Centres are already in use.

The Community Connector will work with communities, in accordance with community development practice, to understand the facts and realities of the International Protection System and the challenges faced by people seeking asylum, in the context of communities with their own needs and challenges.

Overall purpose

The focus of the work will be to directly engage with local communities to understand and tackle challenges and concerns in the context of migrant integration locally. Distinct from other roles operating in this space, the Community Connector will engage with residents already living in the local community as their primary focus, rather than providing services and supports directly to IP Applicants. The Community Connector will do this by utilising a community development approach to strengthening the capacity of the community to work together and with key voluntary and statutory organisations and structures, with a focus on establishing facts, counteracting misinformation, engagement on community concerns and working to develop inclusive responses to migrant integration.

The work of the successful candidate will be underpinned by the core values of collectively, community empowerment; social justice and sustainable development; human rights, participation; equality and anti-discrimination.

The Community Connector will report directly to the relevant SECAD Programme Manager or a designate of the CEO, working closely with a SECAD cross programme community team.



Core Responsibilities

- Operate to community development principles in supporting the local community.
- Engage regularly with all relevant local voluntary and statutory organisations, as well as with relevant community development and inclusion services.
- Support the development of leadership capacity in the community if and where required
- Help establish, develop and/or grow relationships between local communities and International Protection Applicants, with the support of other relevant stakeholders in the area.
- Work with relevant community structures and leaders to ensure differing voices and views are heard, listened to and engaged with.
- Maintain regular communication channels with the local community with a view to counteracting misinformation on immigration.
- Facilitate a collaborative approach and develop a coordinated response with the community and other stakeholders in developing a clear annual plan including –
 - mapping out needs and services of the targeted area with associated resources
 - to put required supports and structures in place to address any weaknesses and strengthen the capacity of the local community to engage meaningfully with migrant integration efforts.
- Prepare progress reports and briefings on developments for onward submission to the Department.
- Collaborate with other Community Connectors around the country and the CCP Coordinator within the Local Development Company Network (LDCN) in the researching, developing and expanding of good practice.
- Engage with the Integration Forum and the Local Authority Integration Teams (LAITs) active in the locality to identify barriers to integration, knowledge gaps, service provision gaps etc.

Experience Required

- At least 5 years' experience of engaging with communities at a local level 'grassroots' level.
- Experience of delivering community development approaches, local needs analysis, planning and addressing social exclusion issues.
- Experience of communicating complex information in a succinct, easy to understand form.
- Strong communication and organisational skills, capable of liaising with a wide variety of stakeholders and conveying detailed information to relevant parties in a timely manner.
- Experience of conflict resolution, working with all parties to develop a mutually agreeable approach to resolving conflict.
- Understanding and experience of working with statutory and local /community development infrastructure and knowledge of the national/local policy context that they work in.
- Experience in project management and delivering projects with a defined timeline and work plan.
- Experience of designing and delivery of capacity building supports within the community sector.
- Be able to demonstrate leadership skills.
- Have excellent communication, facilitation and report writing skills.
- Proficient in MS packages e.g. Word, Excel, Outlook, programme databases, SharePoint portals



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Professional Qualifications and Experience

- Third level qualification related to Community Development or other relevant field
- Successful candidates must satisfy Citizenship Eligibility requirements
- Have verbal and written fluency in English
- A second language is desirable, but not essential

Other Requirements

- Good interpersonal skills, including an ability to liaise with a wide range of professionals on an interagency basis; and build and maintain effective working relationships with staff in these agencies/organisations to deliver positive outcomes for communities
- Ability to be proactive, use own initiative and work effectively.
- Positive and flexible approach to the work.
- Empathetic attitude / approachable.
- Excellent standards of accuracy and attention to detail.
- Excellent written communications skills, including ability to draft summary information and correspondence.
- Excellent IT skills, including word processing, excel, presentation and social media competence.
- Commitment to work within the values, policies and procedures of SECAD.
- To act consistently in a professional manner at all times.
- To participate in regular supervision with the line manager.
- Experience of designing, facilitating and planning events
- Flexibility in relation to hours of work to meet the needs of the role.
- Consent to be Garda Vetted (if required)/ The work may involve contact with children/vulnerable people depending on who is engaged, so the successful candidate may be subject to mandatory Garda Vetting.

Teamwork

- Shows respect for colleagues and co-workers
- Develops and maintains good working relationships with others, sharing information and knowledge, as appropriate
- Offers own ideas and perspectives
- Understands own role in the team, making every effort to play his/her part

Terms & Conditions

- Post:** Community Connector – 18-month contract, may be renewed depending on performance and funding availability. A number of part time roles may be considered.
- Location:** Roles to align with existing projects in Youghal, Cobh, Macroom & Millstreet.
- Reporting to:** Designated SECAD Programme Manager / as designated by the CEO
- Salary:** Salary will be based on the Development Officer scale depending on experience.
- Transport:** Full and clean driver's licence is required with own means of transport.



Application Process

Applicants should pay particular attention to the job description and your suitability to the role. Please email your application (CV & Letter of Application) to: info@secad.ie marked '**SECAD Community Connection Project 2025**'.

Closing date for receipt of Applications (CV & Letter of Application) is **Friday 28th February 2025 at 17.00.**

Shortlisting will take place. **Interviews scheduled to take place during week beginning 18th March 2025.** A panel may be formed.

SECAD Partnership is an Equal Opportunities Employer

About SECAD Partnership

SECAD Partnership CLG (SECAD) is a Local Development Company established in 1995. Our main office is located in Middleton, Co. Cork. SECAD's main development objective is to promote and enable sustainable development through our Rural Development and Social Inclusion programmes. SECAD has a voluntary Board of Directors and a staff team of c. 50 people.

SECAD works with individuals, community and voluntary groups, business, academia and other stakeholders to create a more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive society. SECAD manages a wide range of funds and services including social investment and employment support programmes, implemented on behalf of various Government Departments, State Bodies, the European Commission and the private sector. SECAD currently delivers a number of major programmes along with other smaller schemes and initiatives.

SECAD is delivering the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP 2024-2028) throughout South Cork including the Muscraí Gaeltacht. SECAD is an implementing partner for LEADER 2023-2027 on behalf of the South Cork and West Cork LCDC's. SECAD has vast experience in administering Irish government and European funds, as well as transnational co-operation projects including LEADER / Rural Development Programmes, Social Inclusion Programmes, the Local Area Employment Service (LAES), Rural Social Scheme and Tús (Employment Schemes), INTERREG, Intelligent Energy Europe, Erasmus + and the Programme for Employability Inclusion and Learning (gender equality). SECAD was recently approved funding for WorkAbility (ESF+ 2021-2027) and the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund.

Wild Work is a SECAD initiative with a social ethos. Wild Work supports employment activation, educates and raises awareness of nature and biodiversity and benefits society as a whole. To read more about Wild Work see www.wildwork.ie

As a Grant Making Organisation (GMO), SECAD manages community benefit funds throughout Ireland on behalf of various sustainable energy developers, infrastructure providers and others. A key area of expertise is community engagement - developing positive, effective links with communities, supporting them to access and maximise funding and services.

For more information on SECAD see www.secad.ie

