**Midlands Regional Food and Drink Network Manager - Grade VII**

Fixed Term Contract up to 31st March 2026

Laois County Council, as lead local authority, (together with Longford, Offaly and Westmeath Local Authorities) for the Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan Pathway for Just Transition project is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund Programme 2021-2027 is recruiting a **Regional Food and Drink Network Manager.**

The Midlands Regional Food & Drink Network Manager will hold responsibility for Work Package 5 – Delivery of the Midlands Regional Food and Drink Strategy, and will provide quarterly progress reports to the Regional Chief Executives, quarterly meetings of the Directors of Economic Development & Planning of the Midland Local Authorities, and relevant Local Authority Strategic Policy Committees upon request.

The Midlands Regional Food & Drink Network Manager will prepare an annual work programme in consultation with members of the Regional Food & Drink working group, and provide updates to the Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan Steering Committee, and constituent working groups as required.

The Midlands Regional Food & Drink Network Manager will also be responsible for the planning, hosting and delivery of county and regional networking and promotional events in partnership with regional stakeholders to facilitate and encourage the growth and development of food and drink sector within the Midlands Region.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

* Develop strong productive working relationships with regional and national stakeholders to ensure that collaboration among all stakeholders including those from public, private, educational/training and community sectors is maximised so that the vision and objectives of the strategy are delivered
* Spark regional and national enthusiasm by establishing the Midlands as a food sector landmark and an active component of immediate environment and local/regional community
* Engage and develop a community of stakeholders from the wider food, innovation and enterprise community by attending events and networking
* Create and nurture a collaborative, innovation fuelled environment, encourage networking benefit and synergies among regional and other food businesses
* Ensure education and training and skills development within impacted communities is at the heart of the project
* Identify and pursue opportunities to further develop the Midlands Regional Food & Drink Sector
* Implement decisions of the working group established for the project
* Work to ensure best practice Governance in line with the Good Governance code is achieved in the operation and growth of the Midlands Regional Food & Drink Sector
* Ensure compliance with all required local authority financial, procurement, management and governance reporting requirements;
* Ensure compliance with terms and conditions of EU JTF Funding, including the preparation of recoupment claims
* Carry out all other duties as required and participate as a full member of the Laois CoCo MREP EU JTF project.

**Candidate Profile:**

**Minimum Essential Qualifications**

* A QQI Level 8 degree in a relevant discipline
* A minimum of 5 years’ experience of working within a business environment, proven track record of managing a broad range of stakeholders
* In-depth knowledge and experience of the food/agri food sector

**Competencies**

* Ability to work as part of a team, including consulting, collaborating and building relationships with key stakeholders.
* Self-motivated and able to initiate and deliver projects with minimal supervision.
* Strives for high quality of work and demonstrates commitment to best practice food incubation and innovation
* Ability to communicate effectively to enable knowledge and technology transfer.
* A results-driven individual with a strong focus on goal-setting, performance delivery and accountability.
* Ability to work independently and meet self-imposed milestones and deliverables.
* A proactive, solutions-focused approach to work with an ability to adapt to changing requirements and shifting work priorities.
* Demonstrate that they possess the skills / competencies identified as essential for the role as follows:
  + Leadership and strategic planning
  + Communications and relationship building
  + Leading teams
  + Organisational management and administrative skills
  + Integrity, responsibility, accountability and a strong sense of need for achievement of goals and successes.

**Location:** The Food and Drink Network Manager will be based in The Midlands Region.

**Payscale:** €57,675 - €74,978 LSI2

A panel may be created from which future vacancies may be filled.

**LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER**

**“The Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme, Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan Pathway for Just Transition project is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund Programme 2021-2027"**