



IUA MicroCreds Project Lead (Interim)
(maternity cover, July 2024 – March 2025)

The Irish Universities Association (IUA), the representative body for Ireland's leading universities, invites applications for the role of Interim MicroCreds Project Lead (maternity cover), for a nine-month fixed term contract.

About the MicroCreds project

MicroCreds is an ambitious 5 year, €12.3 million project (2020-2025) led by the Irish Universities Association (IUA) in partnership with seven IUA member universities: University College Dublin, University College Cork, University of Limerick, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, University of Galway and Maynooth University.

Ireland is the first European country to establish a coherent National Framework for quality assured and accredited micro-credentials. IUA project partner universities are collaborating to develop, pilot and evaluate the building blocks required for a transformation in lifelong learning through micro-credentials.

The over 350 micro-credentials already on the project platform MicroCreds.ie are reimagining and reframing the relationship between learners, universities, enterprise and civil society partners, generating a step change in upskilling and reskilling. Our aim is for MicroCreds to address the barriers to participation in lifelong learning, including time constraints for learners and inflexibility in current programme provision and delivery.

The IUA MicroCreds Project was awarded funding following a competitive process under the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science's (DFHERIS) Human Capital Initiative Pillar 3 Innovation and Agility, with funding drawn from the National Training Fund. The objective of the Human Capital Initiative (HCI) is to underpin the provision of additional capacity across the Higher Education Sector to meet priority skill needs for enterprise. The current round of funding is due to end on 31 March 2025.

About the Interim Project Lead role:

Reporting to the IUA Director for Learning, Teaching and Academic Affairs, the Interim Project Lead will work with the project Steering Committee, Enterprise Advisory Group and broader project team across the university sector and at IUA, to ensure that all project

activities and work packages are successfully delivered in an effective, timely and efficient manner.

Specifically, the role holder will:

- Have responsibility for the successful marketing and promotion of micro-credentials to learners and enterprise, resulting in increased enrolments on courses across university partners;
- Continue to engage with enterprise and industry to raise awareness of MicroCreds as a solution to skills gaps;
- Continue to provide ongoing support for the rapid development of capacity to roll-out micro-credentials across each of the seven universities;
- Lead the ongoing development of our portal, MicroCreds.ie, to provide information to our key audiences of learners and enterprise;
- Lead the development of any required amendments to the national framework for micro-credentials;
- Work collaboratively across university partners, enterprise stakeholders, government agencies and with our funders to agree a future phase of funding to continue learner and enterprise take-up of microcredentials across the university sector.

In order to achieve these successfully, the role holder will need to:

- Work closely with the University Project Leads as well as senior academic, programme development, student recruitment, quality assurance and IT stakeholders in each university;
- Liaise with key employer and employer representative stakeholders and also stakeholders in skills development, including Ibec, Enterprise Ireland, the IDA, the Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association (ISME), Regional Skills Forums and Skillnet Ireland, to ensure effective collaboration with and uptake by enterprise partners;
- Liaise with key stakeholders in the Higher Education Authority; the Dept. of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science; QQI; and other relevant state bodies;
- Manage the project budget and provide reports and evaluation documents to partners and funders.

Key Attributes and Abilities:

This is a very exciting opportunity to be at the forefront of driving innovation in the delivery of high-quality, flexible teaching and learning across the 7 universities. The successful candidate will make a distinctive contribution to an area of strategic importance in the Irish university sector and its engagement with a very broad range of employers and labour market stakeholders. The most critical experience and abilities for this role are:

- Exceptional leadership and programme / project management skills with a proven track record in setting up and managing large-scale projects in the higher education sector or equivalent.
- Extensive experience in leading collaborative processes across a range of different stakeholders including universities and industry representatives to address skills needs.
- An understanding of the learning development landscape within Irish higher education and the opportunities afforded by innovation, flexible delivery and digitalisation.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral, with a demonstrable ability to advocate and foster collaboration and engagement across a range of audiences.
- Successful achievement of student recruitment targets in the education sector.
- Experience of writing funding proposals and working closely with funding agencies to secure new funding.
- Experience of leading integrated communications campaigns across a range of different online and offline channels, ideally targeting our key audiences of lifelong learners and enterprise.
- Appropriate academic and professional qualifications.
- Pro-active, a self-starter and a track record of achievement.
- Ability to travel to face to face meetings and events across Ireland on a regular basis.
- Significant experience of budget management, including forecasting, planning and reconciliation.
- Strong data management experience, including analysing and presenting data. In addition, a thorough knowledge of GDPR and its practical implementation to comply with requirements.

Desirable:

- Experience of professional education / lifelong learning in the higher education sector.
- Experience of managing procurement processes, including writing 'Requests for Tender' and managing supplier evaluation processes.
- Experience of managing financial audit processes.
- Experience of website development and knowledge of website functionality for optimal user experience.

Contract details:

The position of Interim MicroCreds Project Lead (maternity cover), is offered on a 9 month fixed term contract, commencing July 2024 and subject to a period of probation and meeting on-going performance requirements. The role may require domestic travel within Ireland. From time to time you may be required to work outside of normal office hours to fulfil the duties of the role.

The IUA operates a flexible working model, and this role can be partially fulfilled through remote working. However, the role will require some in-office working at our office on

Merrion Square, Dublin 2, especially in the early stages, as well as regular face-to-face engagement with key stakeholders as required.

A competitive salary commensurate with experience will be offered. Annual leave entitlement is 19 days (not including bank holidays) for the duration of the contract.

A secondment arrangement for existing public-sector employees may be possible, subject to concluding an appropriate agreement between the IUA and the candidate's current employer.

About the IUA:

The Irish Universities Association (IUA) is the representative organisation for Ireland's research intensive universities including DCU, MU, TCD, TU Dublin, University of Galway, UCD, UCC and UL.

IUA acts as the sectoral 'voice' of its university members and is committed to:

- clearly and publicly articulating the importance and value of university education
- acting as an advocate for the university system
- providing effective liaison and dialogue with the State and its agencies
- ensuring the system is resourced and prepared for the challenges of the future
- developing sectoral policies and strategies
- maximising the contribution of higher education in all its dimensions to society and the economy.

Application Details: Please forward a detailed but concise CV and cover letter (max 500 words), demonstrating the competencies and experience listed above, by email by 23:59 15th April 2024 to: marguerita.lardner@iua.ie Tel. 01 6764948.

Interviews will be held on the 30th of April 2024 in the IUA.