



Recruitment and Selection Procedure

**To be read in conjunction with Equalities and Diversity Policy in staff handbook
and PDTT Recruitment Policy**

(includes Appendix 1 – Recruitment of Offenders)

Approved by Board of Trustees 2023

**To be reviewed every three years or if legislation
changes. Next review is 2026**

Lead Staff Member: Jackie Rosenberg

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Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Legislation

The relevant statutory requirements are contained in the following legislation:

The Equalities Act 2010, Employment Equality (Repeal of Retirement Age Provisions) Regulations 2011.

The purpose of this procedure is therefore to ensure that PDT's Recruitment and Selection processes enable us to meet our objectives as stated in our EDI policies and procedures contained within the staff handbook.

The recruitment of high-quality staff is crucial to the objectives and continued success of Paddington Development Trust. This guidance is designed to assist managers to recruit and select the best candidate in a fair and consistent manner and in accordance with PDT policy. Underpinning this approach is the need to provide equality of opportunity in employment. PDT recognises the skills and abilities of all people regardless of their sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion, age, creed, colour, nationality or disability. This includes equal treatment of existing staff, who are considered for promotion or acting up arrangements.

This guidance is designed to assist you to recruit and select the best candidate for a vacancy in line with PDT's equal opportunities policy and all relevant legislation.

It is the responsibility of each Manager to ensure that this policy is carefully followed. For advice on any aspect of this policy or procedures please speak to the Deputy CEO.

Scope

PDT policy is that all vacancies should normally be advertised to ensure the widest possible pool of applicants. In certain cases of interim or temporary appointments, or, in the best interests of the service at any given time, this may not occur, and such posts may be filled by a consultant, secondee or through other means. This decision will rest with the Chief Executive.

Prior to advertising a post, Manager's should seek approval from the Chief Executive for the post and bring the need for recruitment to the attention of the Senior Management Team.

New posts and job vacancies

The occurrence of a vacancy is an opportunity to review the need for the post and its duties, responsibilities and salary.

Managers, the Deputy CEOs, the Chief Executive and Senior Finance Officer are responsible for determining the duties, responsibilities and salary. Salaries need to be agreed in line with comparable positions within PDT and should be agreed with the CEO and Senior Finance Officer.

Job Description

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process. The job description must be produced for every vacancy and drafted prior to taking any other steps in the process. The job description sets out the main duties and responsibilities of the position and has a number of purposes;

- it is the key document by which to determine the appropriate salary for the post,
- It indicates to potential candidates the range of duties and responsibilities of the post,
- It is used during appraisal to help evaluate the performance of an individual.
- It is a tool for performance management to ensure that the post-holder is fulfilling the appropriate duties to a required standard.

The language in job descriptions should:

- Avoid jargon and unexplained acronyms and abbreviations.
- Be readily understandable to potential applicants to the post.
- Avoid ambiguity about responsibilities and be clear as to whom the post is accountable and any managerial or financial responsibilities the post-holder will have.

Person Specification

The person specification is of equal importance to the job description and informs the selection decision. The person specification details the minimum skills, experience and abilities that are required to do the job. It should be drawn up after the job description and, with the job description, should inform the content of the advert. The person specification should be specific, related to the job, and not unnecessarily restrictive. For example, only qualifications strictly needed to do the job should be specified. The inclusion of criteria that cannot be justified as essential for the performance of the job may be deemed discriminatory under equalities legislation. The person specification enables potential applicants to make an informed decision about whether to apply and those who do apply, to give sufficient relevant detail of their skills and experience in their application. The person specification forms the basis of the selection decision and enables the appointment panel to ensure objectivity in their selection.

The person specification details the:

- Education/Qualifications and Training
- Knowledge/Skills
- Previous experience
- Personal Characteristics/Other requirements

For some jobs a particular qualification(s) may be essential, while for others no single qualification may be appropriate, and a particular type of experience may be just as relevant as a formal qualification. Where qualifications are deemed essential these should reflect the minimum requirements necessary to carry out the job to an acceptable standard. UK qualifications should be stated but (other than for required membership of a UK professional body) it should be made clear that overseas equivalents will be accepted.

The type of experience required of applicants should be specified.

Further Details for applicants

The further details provided to an applicant will be as follows;

- Advertisement
- General background information about Paddington Development Trust and the post
- Job description and person specification
- Hours of working and salary
- Application procedure
- Application form
- Equal opportunities monitoring form .

Publicising the Vacancy

All PDT posts should be advertised on the PDT website and should be made known to all existing PDT employees. It is not PDT's general policy to advertise posts internally in advance of a public advertisement.

Posts will therefore be externally advertised to other relevant media outlets at the same time as appearing on the PDT website. Managers will be responsible with the CEO and Deputy CEOs for agreeing the best media outlet to advertise with.

'Word of mouth recruitment' is likely to be indirectly discriminatory in terms of race, disability and/or sex discrimination. It is very important therefore that all posts are advertised as widely as possible and that all applicants are dealt with in the same way and given the same information and opportunity to make an application.

To ensure that applicants are fully informed about the vacancy for which they are applying and to ensure that they provide PDT with all the information we require, adverts must direct applicants to the website, which will provide more information including how to apply. Advertisements should include the following points:

- PDT logo (plus partners' logos if appropriate)
- Job title
- Salary
- Background to PDT
- Brief details of job
- Key details of person specification
- Duration of appointment
- How to obtain application pack
- Closing date for applications
- (ideally) Interview date or likely week when interviews will be held

The Deputy CEO – Head of Community Programmes, is available to assist Managers in drafting the adverts if requested.

External advertisements will have a closing date of at least 2 weeks after the date of publication.

Processing applications

PDT only accepts completed application forms. CVs with accompanying information will not normally be accepted. **The application form enables applicants to advise if they require any special arrangements to be made to enable their application due to disability.** Any such requests should be discussed with Deputy CEO – Head of Community Programmes, to determine what can be accommodated i.e.: providing information in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, tape and on disk etc. **The application form also provides for the applicant to confirm their right to work in the UK.**

Care must also be taken when initiating contacts with applicants to ensure that all applicants are treated in the same way, for example with invitations to visit the department, informal meetings to discuss the vacancy, and provision of information.

The confidentiality of applications must be respected by all those involved in the selection process.

Short-listing and Interview Panels

All interviews must be conducted by a panel. The Manager should select interview panel members prior to the closing date and ideally prior to advertisement of the post. This allows panel members to assist in the short-listing process.

Panels must:

- Consist of a minimum of two people including the immediate line manager of the vacant post, a colleague (either internal or from a relevant partner organization) who is familiar with the area of work and, where appropriate, a third person, who may be a PDT Trustee, Neighbourhood Board member, young person etc. depending on the post advertised.
- Consist of staff who have received training in recruitment and selection
- Reflect a sex and ethnicity balance by including colleagues from other departments
- Declare if they already know a candidate
- Be willing and able to participate fully in both the short-listing and all interviews for the duration of the recruitment process, including appointment, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates

Monitoring

To ensure PDT's policies are working to benefit all concerned, PDT asks all applicants to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form as part of the application process. This form should be separated from the main application on receipt.

Access to this information will be available to the PDT Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees and will be used for the purposes of compiling employee statistics and equal opportunities monitoring.

Short-listing

After the closing date has passed, Managers will arrange for all applications received to be photocopied so that each member of the panel can receive a copy and short-listing for interview should take place. Short-listing should be carried out by at least two members of the interview panel, including the immediate line manager. The composition of the short-listing panel will depend on the nature and seniority of the post.

It is the responsibility of the short-listing panel to ensure candidates are measured against the requirements outlined in the person specification. Short-listing decisions should be based on evidence that the applicant has met the requirements of the person specification. Short-listing panel members should avoid dismissing applicants who appear to be overqualified. Assumptions should not be made about their reasons for applying for the post as they may eliminate an otherwise exemplary candidate. Consideration of the neatness of the application form e.g. the neatness of their handwriting, should not be the basis for short-listing unless the neatness of their handwriting is desirable for the post. A person with a disability may have some difficulty in producing a neatly written document and have no access to a typewriter or a person who can assist them.

Whatever documentation is used, the Manager who is recruiting is responsible for recording decisions taken against the agreed criteria and retaining this information. The original applications for all applicants, together with a written note of the reasons for short-listing or rejecting applicants must be retained by the Manager for six months from the date that an appointment decision is made, in case of a complaint to an Employment Tribunal.

Selection Tests and Presentations

Consideration should be given to using job-related selection tests or asking candidates to give presentations as part of the selection process if there are some areas of the person specification that are difficult to test at interview. If selection tests or presentations are to be used, all candidates should be given the same written information as to how long they will take, the topic area(s) they will be cover, and what if anything they should prepare in advance. Care should be taken to ensure that job-related tests are well explained in writing for candidates, in plain language, that all candidates are subject to the same tests under exactly the same conditions, and that presentation topics do not favour any one candidate.

Selection tests should be carefully considered – a person with a disability may be capable of the task but find the time constraints difficult, due to the nature of the disability; make allowances for this if the job does not require such quick responses.

Arrangements for Interviews

To invite short-listed candidates to interview the following information is needed:

What the interview will consist of

Where the presentation test will take place

What visual aids will be available for presentations

Where and to whom candidates should report on arrival at PDT

Interviews should be scheduled as soon after the closing date as reasonably possible, as delays are likely to lead to a loss of candidates.

Letters or e-mail to all shortlisted candidates should include:

- Date time and place of their interview
- Instructions on how to find their way to the interview venue
- A request that they contact the author of the letter/message if they have any special requirements in relation to the interview (related to access to the venue or any other special need related to disability)

Interviewing

The structure of interviews should be decided in advance. The Chair of the panel will agree and record with the appointments panel a format for the interview. This format should include:

- A welcome by the Chairperson
- An introduction to the panel members
- A brief explanation of the interview format
- A questioning session with reference to the person specification for the post
- A section where candidates are offered the opportunity to ask any questions

This will include the questioning areas to be explored by each panel member by reference to the person specification for the post. The same areas of questioning should be covered with all candidates and assumptions should not be made regarding the expertise or abilities of candidates because of their employment history. This should be made clear to all applicants. Interview questions should be phrased so that they do not favour any one candidate. Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous. Care must be taken to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory for e.g. questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job. It is, for example, legitimate to ask for confirmation of whether individuals can comply with the working patterns of the post but not to ask details of their domestic or childcare arrangements etc. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that such questions are not asked.

Where a candidate being interviewed has a disability for which adjustments may need to be considered, the candidate's requirements should be discussed with him/her once the planned questioning is complete. The outcome of these discussions must not influence the consideration of the candidate's application

Interview notes must be taken by each panel member, to help the panel to make an informed decision based on the content of the interview. Such notes must relate to how candidates demonstrate their education knowledge, skills and experience in relation to the person specification. **The Data Protection Act allows applicants to request disclosure of such notes in the event of a complaint, and an Employment Tribunal would expect PDT to have notes of every selection decision. The lack of such notes would seriously impede PDT's ability to contest such a complaint. Any inappropriate or personally derogatory comments contained within the notes could be considered discriminatory and are unacceptable.**

It is good practice to offer candidates feedback after interviews. The Chair of the panel is responsible for informing unsuccessful candidates and offering feedback. Feedback should be specific, relating to the person specification, and honest.

Making a decision

The information obtained in the application, the interview, and any selection tests (and references if they have been obtained beforehand) will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made. The assessment must be made on evidence not unsubstantiated 'feelings'.

If a disabled candidate best meets the person specification, advice must be sought after the interviews from the Deputy CEO as to what would be considered 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the disability in question. The Deputy CEO will seek external advice as appropriate. In the event that on consideration of the needs of the potential appointee, it is considered that the adaptations needed would not be deemed to be 'reasonable' under the DDA the Deputy CEO will draft a letter to the applicant explaining why the adaptations cannot be made.

The Chair of the panel must ensure that a written note of the reasons for selecting the successful candidate and rejecting others is made and placed on a recruitment file together with the original applications, short-listing notes, interview notes of all panel members and selection tests if used.

The appointments panel must be satisfied that the approach to the selection procedure and the final decision can be justified at a later date. The panel must also be aware that they may be required to justify their original decision perhaps several months after the selection process has taken place to an Employment Tribunal.

Only a provisional offer can be made to the preferred candidate, ie making it clear that the offer is subject to satisfactory references being received and disclosure checks where appropriate.

References

References are normally taken up by the relevant line-manager

- Where an applicant indicates that s/he does not want wish his/her current employer to be contacted prior to interview this should be respected.
- Telephone references should be avoided but, where time pressures or the location of referees dictate that this may be appropriate, recruiters should ensure that they are certain as to the identity of the person to whom they are speaking. When conducting telephone references, it is helpful to plan the conversation beforehand and to have a list of questions ready. A file note should be made at the time of the telephone conversation and written confirmation should always be requested.
- Referees who respond by fax or e-mail should be asked to provide a hard copy of their reference on headed paper.
- References are confidential and must be sought 'in confidence'.

References should only be used for the purpose for which they were intended and their confidentiality must be maintained. References must only be kept on the recruitment file and the personal file held by the Line Manager or Deputy CEO.

Appointment

Verbal offers of appointment are normally made by the Chair of the panel and followed up by letter including proposed start date and salary.

Induction

It is PDT's Managers' responsibility to ensure that all members of staff – whether they are new to PDT or moving to a new role from within – go through an induction process so that they gain an understanding of their work and potential contribution to PDT and feel supported in their new working environment and are able to apply their experience and skills at an early stage. This process includes both permanent staff and those employed on fixed term contracts.

Appendix 1: Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

- As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Paddington Development Trust (PDT) complies fully with the [code of practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly
- PDT undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed
- PDT can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that PDT are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)
- PDT can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected
- PDT is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background
- PDT has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process
- PDT actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records
- PDT select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
- An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position

- PDT ensures that all those in PDT who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences
- PDT also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, PDT ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment
- PDT makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the [code of practice](#) and makes a copy available on request
- PDT undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.