

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Candidate Briefing Document for the position of

**General Secretary, Garda Representative Association.**

**Closing Date:** Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023



*The Garda Representative Association is an equal opportunities employer and all applications for employment will be considered on the basis of merit. The Garda Representative Association welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates irrespective of belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not they have dependants.*

**Sean McDonagh, Partner: (087) 796 1062**

Lansdowne Executive Search Limited,  
Hamilton House,  
28 Fitzwilliam Place,  
Dublin 2, D02 P283,  
Ireland.

[www.lansdownesearch.ie](http://www.lansdownesearch.ie)

## Organisation Overview

The Garda Representative Association (GRA) was formed in 1978, it is an association of members of the Garda Síochána of Garda Rank which is established under the provisions of the Garda Síochána Act, 2005.

Section 18 of the Garda Síochána Act, 2005 makes it unlawful for a member of the Force of Garda Rank to become a member of any trade union or association other than the GRA of which the objects or one of the objects is to control or influence the pay, pensions and conditions of employment of any police force.

The GRA, therefore, is the professional Association established to meet the needs of its members in these and other areas.

The GRA is organised at District, Divisional and National levels with committees and officers elected every four years by the democratic vote of its members. It is funded by subscriptions paid by its members at the rate of 0.60% of basic salary.

The Central Executive Committee (CEC) is comprised of one elected member from each Garda Division. The President and Vice President of the Association are elected every two years. The Associations Headquarters are located at Floor 5, Phibsborough Tower, Dublin 7.

### Mission

The mission of the GRA is to defend and promote members' interests, with due regard for public wellbeing and the Garda oath to protect and serve. We negotiate and advocate for members of Garda rank in respect of policy, Garda welfare and pay, terms & conditions. We also provide member services of relevance and value

### Vision

The GRA's vision is of a world-class police service enabled by dignity and fairness for our members. We believe that to maintain public safety and security and support social cohesion; our members should be part of a well-equipped, well-trained organisation, visible in the community and representative of the diversity of Irish society

### Values

The Association's activity is guided by the ethos that collectively we can achieve more than we can individually. We subscribe to organisational best-practice in democracy, transparency, governance and member support; while observing exemplary standards of personal and corporate conduct.

**For Further information on the Garda Representative Association please visit [www.gra.ie](http://www.gra.ie)**



## Garda Representative Association



### General Secretary

#### THE ORGANISATION

With almost 12,000 members across Ireland, the Garda Representative Association (GRA) represents serving members of Garda rank within An Garda Síochána.

The Association aims to unite and organise members and provide a means for the expression of their 'collective' opinion on all matters affecting their interests, welfare and well-being.

It comprises a Central Executive Committee in addition to Divisional and District Committees.

#### THE ROLE

The Association is seeking to appoint a General Secretary who will be driven by the challenges of a high profile national role and lead the GRA into the next stage of its development.

#### THE PERSON

The ideal candidate will be an excellent strategist with proven negotiation, judgement and decision-making skills in an industrial relations context. With a demonstrable understanding of policing, the person will possess the intellect, courage and outstanding communication skills required to act as a strong, compelling public face and advocate for the Association's members.

Further information including details on how to apply are available on [GRA.ie](http://GRA.ie)

Lansdowne Executive Search has been retained by the GRA to manage this recruitment process.

If you feel you would benefit from a confidential discussion about this opportunity, please contact Seán McDonagh, Partner, Lansdowne Executive Search on [sean.mcdonagh@lansdownesearch.ie](mailto:sean.mcdonagh@lansdownesearch.ie) or 087 7961062.

**Closing date for applications is Friday 10th February 2023.**

The GRA is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and encourage applications under all nine grounds of the Employment Equality Act.



Lansdowne Executive Search Limited, Hamilton House, 28 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2, D02 P283, Ireland.

## Job Description

<b>Post Title:</b>	<b>General Secretary, Garda Representative Association</b>
<b>Post Status:</b>	Four Year Fixed Term Contract***
<b>Location:</b>	Floor 5, Phibsborough Tower, Dublin 7
<b>Reports to:</b>	GRA Central Executive Committee
<b>Closing Date for Applications:</b>	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2023

### The Role:

The General Secretary will provide strategic leadership, exceptional support and effective management of the Garda Representative Association (GRA) and ensure that it functions to the highest standards and achieves its objectives on behalf of members.

#### ***The General Secretary will:***

- Lead negotiations on behalf of members on matters of pay, pensions and conditions of service.
- Be the key spokesperson with media and external stakeholders.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders and represent the interests of members at senior levels in An Garda Síochána, Government and the Civil Service, in IR forums and to the public at large.
- Advise and support the CEC in marshalling the collective voice of members on identified priorities, such as the restoration of pay, and act on their instructions.

## Overview of Key Responsibilities

### ***Leadership***

- Provide strong and credible leadership to the Association.
- Keep the voice and interests of members at the centre of the Association's work.
- Ensure that the Association at all times acts with the highest levels of probity and achieves value for money from the resources entrusted to it.

### ***Negotiation***

- Act as principal negotiator in matters of pay, pension and conditions of service, developing strategies and tactics as appropriate.

### ***Communications, Media & Stakeholders***

- To be the Association's key spokesperson in the media and develop effective relationships with external stakeholders such as Government, Oireachtas, senior civil servants, Garda management, Garda Ombudsman Commission, Garda Inspectorate, the Police Authority, other Garda representative bodies and relevant trade unions.
- To develop and promote a cohesive and effective communications process within the Association and its members.
- Present an authoritative, credible and persuasive public image on behalf of the Association and its members while at all times behaving in a professional and considerate manner.
- To attend Annual Delegate or Special Delegate conference and where necessary address same.
- To carry out duties and functions in accordance with the Constitution and Rules of the Garda Representative Association and as assigned by the Central Executive Committee.

### **Strategy & Planning**

- Promote and seek to achieve the objectives of the GRA as set out in the Constitution and Rules and as mandated by Annual or Special Delegate Conference, through development of medium and long term strategies and implementation of appropriate plans.
- Ensure the voice and interests of members are at the centre of the Association's work.
- Support the Central Executive Committee, and other sub-committees, through the provision of advice, position papers and policy documents, performance and risk management reporting as well as structured and precise information regarding the work of the Association.
- Ensure that the organisation is run effectively at all levels and that structures and process are in place to achieve its aims, with clear definition of accountability, responsibility and authority in place.

### **Performance & Delivery**

- Discharge the various functions of the Association as set out in the Constitution and Rules.
- Ensure that effective and demonstrable risk management arrangements are in place throughout the Association including the identification, monitoring and managing of risks.
- Ensure that the Association deploys effective practices and innovations in membership organising, campaigning and/or representation.
- Manage the day to day running of the office of the Secretariat at the Association's headquarters, ensuring that staff are supervised, deployed and duties assigned as necessary for the efficient running of the office.
- Ensure the safe custody of all reports, papers and resolutions passed or approved at Conference.
- Develop and implement a robust information management system for the Association.
- Attend scheduled meetings of the Central Executive Committee, by leave of that Committee, and carry out lawful instructions of the Central Executive Committee. Keep the Central Executive Committee apprised on all matters regarding the progress of objectives, policies and proposed strategies, and all meetings arranged or attended on behalf of the Association.
- Prepare a Conference Report to appraise members on the progress of all objectives and policies.

***This job description is not intended to be an exhaustive list of duties and the post-holder may be required to undertake any additional work that the Central Executive Committee deems appropriate. The role will evolve in line with the changing priorities of policing and of the Association and its members. This job description is liable to change over time.***

## **Qualifications & Experience**

***The ideal candidate will demonstrate the following:***

### **Experience & Knowledge**

- A successful track record of leadership at a senior level, preferably in a comparable membership organisation.
- A minimum of 8 years' practical negotiation experience with a national association or equivalent body.
- An understanding of policing is desirable.
- Experience of public speaking and/or active engagement with the media and a proven ability to communicate effectively and concisely to a diverse range of audiences.
- A high degree of political sensitivity and demonstrable experience of dealing with a range of complex issues within a political and/or demanding stakeholder environment.
- Demonstrable experience of effective engagement with diverse stakeholders and ability to influence senior figures in the Garda management, Government and/or Civil Service.

## Abilities & Personal Qualities

- A strong personal commitment to the goals of the GRA.
- An ability to demonstrate credible, flexible and adaptive leadership to reflect the complexities of purpose, context and audience.
- Exceptional communication, interpersonal, negotiating and influencing skills.
- Ability to think and act strategically and to articulate a clear sense of direction and vision to a wide audience.
- Ability to understand and synthesise a range of differing views.
- Ability to build effective relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders.
- Ability to motivate colleagues and the capacity to contribute to the Association's work in creative and innovative ways.
- An ability to work independently, within the context of a strategy.
- Sufficient personal resilience to effectively discharge the responsibilities of the role.

## Principal Conditions of Service

### **General:**

The appointment will be on a fixed-term contract basis for four years.\*\*\*

**\*\*\* In accordance with the Constitution and Rules of the Association.**

If the person appointed is a serving Garda the appointment may be offered on the basis of a secondment.

### **Probation:**

A probationary period may apply to this position.

### **Remuneration:**

An attractive and competitive remuneration package will be provided reflecting the seniority and importance of the position.

### **Working hours**

While normal office hours will generally apply, the role carries a requirement to periodically work irregular and unusual hours, including evenings and weekends. The role may also involve travel. No additional remuneration or overtime payments will apply.

### **Annual Leave**

Annual leave associated with this post will be 28 days plus public holidays.

## Competencies

<b><i>Association Contribution</i></b>
Maintains a broad overview of issues facing members and the bigger policing picture. Promotes debate, idea sharing and teamwork across the Association seeks to build cohesive Committees that act in the collective interest of members.
<b><i>Strategic Contribution</i></b>
Ability to initiate and develop strategy options for the Association. Shapes the formulation of plans, develops appropriate tactics and influences key stakeholders to ensure engagement. Looks forward, takes a long-term view and anticipates opportunities that could be harnessed and challenges that need to be managed.
<b><i>Analytical &amp; Thinking Skills</i></b>
Constantly seeks to broaden their knowledge base and is open to new information and fresh perspectives. Quickly masters own brief, assimilating information from a wide variety of sources internal and external to the Association. Probes and critically evaluates information considering all angles before committing to the decision. Will develop a number of options and is open to innovative approaches when addressing issues. Is comfortable dealing with financial data, trend analysis and broader macroeconomic data. Knows how to access, commission and interrogate research to resolve issues.
<b><i>Managing Critical Relationships</i></b>
Relates effectively to a diverse range of people internal and external to the Association and seeks to build reciprocal understanding and trust. Manages key influencers positively and is responsive to their agenda. Is confident and credible communicating with senior decision-makers within the Government, An Garda Síochána and other relevant bodies. Manages conflict situations constructively, seeking to achieve clarity of understanding and to build common ground in order to achieve objectives.
<b><i>Communication</i></b>
Makes an impact through fluent and articulate communication skills. Encapsulates difficult ideas in language with which people are comfortable. Is proactive at networking with critical external individuals and organisations. Writes in a coherent and concise manner. Uses ICT proficiently.
<b><i>Negotiation</i></b>
Is comfortable dealing with ambiguity and complexity. Negotiates and influences skillfully to achieve buy-in and secure optimal outcomes for members.
<b><i>Results Orientated Approach</i></b>
Takes personal responsibility for getting things done and achieving the Association's objectives. Is proactive and action orientated. Is prepared to commit to a position using the best available information. Will tackle difficult issues demonstrating patience and persistence. Is proactive in shaping and steering issues. Invests a high level of energy and personal commitment into the role. Sustains discipline and poise under pressure. Looks for opportunities to get feedback and seeks to develop own performance on an ongoing basis.
<b><i>Professional Integrity</i></b>
Adheres to and promotes values and an ethical approach to the mandate and policies of the Association. Brings a consistently high level of personal and professional commitment. Commits to the development and implementation of strategies and plans in liaison with the Central Executive Committee. Acts at all times in the collective interest of members.
<b><i>Organisational Skills</i></b>
Structures the planning and delivery of work to ensure resources are matched to priorities. Sets up effective systems to track and quality assure work in progress. Actively promotes value for money and cost benefit as key evaluation criteria for the Association. Encourages the optimal use of information technology to expedite processes and enable information sharing with members.
<b><i>Focus on People</i></b>
Is committed to the positive management and development of staff as a key resource. Shows good judgement in identifying and deploying staff. Tackles performance problems and improves the contribution of staff. Builds strong teams.

## Recruitment Process

The GRA has engaged Lansdowne Executive Search to manage the recruitment process for this position. Candidates for this role will be sought via three channels: (a) Lansdowne Executive Search's own search activities (b) On-line advertising on selected industry websites and (c) Newspaper advertisements.

All applicants to advertisements will receive an acknowledgement of their application and all will be assessed based on the criteria specified for the role. Applications will be via eMail only. No original certificates or references should be submitted as any part of an application. ***Following the completion of the advertising and search processes, a short-listing process will be utilised based on the information supplied on the completed C.V and Key Achievements Form.***

The number of applications received for a position generally exceeds that required to fill the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the GRA may decide that a smaller number will be called to interview.

In this respect, the GRA provide for the employment of a short-listing process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application documents, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application documents against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position.

This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. ***It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience in your application.***

Candidates selected from the short-listing process will be invited for a competency-based interview with the GRA. It is likely that a small number will be called for second interview, in which case they may be asked to prepare a presentation in response to a possible case study or proposed strategic scenario.

As appropriate, shortlisted candidates may be required to undertake psychometric tests.



## Competitive Interviews

***The preliminary interviews for this post are likely to be held in February 2023.*** (Please see Recruitment Process Timetable below). Video conferencing software may be used in the interview process. ***Interviews will be semi-structured in format, with candidates asked to provide examples of the competencies for the role as outlined on page 6 of this Information Booklet.*** We will endeavour to give as much notice as possible of interview dates.

***Candidates who do not attend for interview as scheduled, or who do not furnish such evidence as required in regard to any matter relevant to their application, will have no further claim to consideration in this process.*** It is important to be aware that candidates must let the GRA/Lansdowne Executive Search know of any extenuating circumstances prior to or during the particular stage of the selection process. Any documentary evidence must be supplied within 5 working days.

Please note that submission of such document(s) is not a guarantee that the circumstances outlined will alter the decision/outcome. A candidate who undertakes any part of the selection process and who subsequently claims extenuating circumstances should note that this will not be considered. Examples of possible extenuating circumstances include hospitalisation or bereavement. The onus is on candidates to ensure that they perform to the best of their ability. Therefore, issues such as tiredness, nerves, travel to tests/interviews or expected results/performance not achieved, are not considered extenuating circumstances.

***A copy of the Constitution and Rules of the Association will be made available on request to all shortlisted applicants.***

**CANVASSING WILL DISQUALIFY**

## Application Procedure

Applications should be made by **completing the attached Key Achievements Form (Appendix 1)**.

All sections of the form must be fully completed. Once you complete your application you must email a comprehensive Curriculum Vitae and Key Achievements Form to:

**Seán McDonagh**

**Partner**

**Lansdowne Executive Search Limited,**

(e) sean.mcdonagh@lansdownesearch.ie

Or for a confidential discussion please call Seán on +353 87 796 1062

### ***Please Note:***

- Candidates must **submit ONE** document in **MS Word format** containing CV and Key Achievements Form together.
- The document must be **TYPED**. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.
- All questions must be answered.
- Boxes may be expanded as required – please comply with maximum word count requirements.
- Please read the job specification (***Pages 3-6 of this Information Booklet***) which provides relevant information about the requirements of this post.
- The GRA is an equal opportunities employer. Recruitment to posts within the GRA is on the basis of merit as assessed during the recruitment process.
- Please note that omission of any or part of the requested application documentation or incorrect formatting, as set out below, will render the application incomplete.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered

## Competition Process

### Closing Date

Your application must be submitted by email **no later than Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within 5 working days of applying, please contact ***Sean McDonagh, Lansdowne Executive Search.***

**Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.**

*Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the GRA and should make sure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.*

### Recruitment Process Timetable

<b>Application closing date</b>	Friday 10th February 2023
<b>Eligibility Sift (Lansdowne)</b>	Mid-February 2023
<b>Qualified candidates presented to GRA for short listing</b>	Mid-February 2023
<b>First stage interviews (GRA)</b>	Late February 2023
<b>Final stage interviews (GRA)</b>	Early March 2023
<b>Offer extended to successful applicant</b>	Mid-March 2023

## Key Achievements Form

### Section 1 - PERSONAL DETAILS

<b>First Name:</b>		<b>Surname:</b>	
<b>Home Address:</b>		<b>Correspondence Address: <i>(if different)</i></b>	
<b>Home Phone Number:</b>	<b>Mobile Phone Number:</b>	<b>Eircode:</b>	
<b>Email address: <i>(this is the primary method of communication)</i></b>			

### Section 2 – STATEMENT OF SUITABILITY

Please outline how you meet the essential requirements as set out in the Candidate Information Booklet (maximum of 400 words)

### Section 3 – COMPETENCIES

For each competency, briefly set out what you consider to be a good example of how you demonstrated key strengths and skills in these areas. Your example should include a brief description of the nature of the task/problem, your specific involvement, and the outcome (*maximum of 250 words per competency*).

#### Association Contribution (Maximum 250 words)

#### Strategic Contribution (Maximum 250 words)

#### Analytical & Thinking Skills (Maximum 250 words)

**Managing Critical Relationships (Maximum 250 words)**

**Communication (Maximum 250 words)**

**Negotiation (Maximum 250 words)**

**Results Orientated Approach (Maximum 250 words)**

**Professional Integrity (Maximum 250 words)**

**Organisational Skills (Maximum 250 words)**

**Focus on People (Maximum 250 words)**

**All parts of the document must be completed and should be submitted, along with a CV,  
by Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

## Appendix 2

### **Other Information**

The GRA will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the GRA are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position the GRA will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises, the GRA may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

#### **Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

#### **Security Clearance**

Vetting and/or police clearance may be sought in respect of individuals who come under consideration for appointment. The applicant will be required to complete and return a Garda Vetting form should they come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to the National Vetting Bureau for security checks on all addresses at which they resided. If unsuccessful this information will be destroyed by the GRA.

If the applicant subsequently comes under consideration for another position, they will be required to supply this information again.

#### **Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required by the GRA, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the Garda Representative Association required in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

#### **Feedback regarding the process**

Feedback will be provided on written request following the interview stage. Such a request should be made within 5 working days of being notified of the GRA's decision.



### **Review Process**

Should a candidate be unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their application for appointment, they may write to [gsinterviewboard@gra.ie](mailto:gsinterviewboard@gra.ie) setting out the basis on which they seek a review. This request must be made within 5 working days of receiving notification of the decision on their application. This review will be carried out internally by the GRA.

### **Candidates' Obligations**

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process. Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions if found guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/ or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where the candidate has not been appointed to a post, they will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- Where the candidate has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, they shall forfeit that appointment

### **Data Protection Act 2018**

When your application form is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. To make a request under the Data Protection Act 2018 or GDPR 2018, please submit your request in writing to [gsinterviewboard@gra.ie](mailto:gsinterviewboard@gra.ie).

Please ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes