

Sam O'Brien – Olinger PhD

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Summary

All of my experience of conducting research, analysing policies, and producing documents for a variety of audiences has been motivated by my personal and professional commitment to the evidence-informed approach to understanding social issues and, in response, policy formation.

My academic and applied professional experience informed my efforts to make valuable and novel contributions to the knowledge-base of a range of sectors. Some of my relevant efforts include:

- Publishing a book based on my PhD research findings -having spent nearly 4 years conducting ethnographic fieldwork with operational and managing members of An Garda Síochána of a wide range of ranks and roles (*[Police, Race and Culture in the 'new Ireland': An Ethnography, 2016](#)*)
- Making formal submissions to a number of public consultation processes, to Government Departments, and statutory bodies.
- Researching and report writing for a number of European Union funded projects.
- Drafting position papers based on research I conducted into a range of social issues, and making recommendations for implementing organisational policies.
- Developing an evidence-base for organisations regarding Human Rights-based and equality-proofed approaches to policy formation and implementation.
- Translating complex data into accessible information for the general public, as well as niche audiences, to further the agenda of a diverse range of organisations.
- Blogging; Magazine articles; social media pieces; e-bulletins; newsletters.
- Conducting research with the aim of developing information packs and training resources for frontline practitioners.
- Providing research and written contributions for public awareness raising campaigns.
- Quickly becoming knowledgeable in areas such as health, social policy, implementation science, monitoring, prevention and early intervention methods, as well as models of evaluating the impact, value for money and effectiveness of programmes and interventions.

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- ✓ **Excellent experience of designing methodological approaches to understanding complex issues; conducting qualitative research and report writing.**
 - ✓ **Seasoned qualitative researcher.**
 - ✓ **Experienced at making valuable contributions to colleagues' work.**
 - ✓ **I enjoy building and sustaining positive professional relationships with mentors, managers and senior colleagues.**

- ✓ Familiarity with the issues being faced by vulnerable groups in areas such as social welfare, health services, housing and education.
 - ✓ Proven ability to carry out various kinds of needs assessments for a diverse range of beneficiaries/service users.
 - ✓ Years of providing support via information sessions and facilitating workshops locally and nationally.
 - ✓ Experienced at creating and maintaining productive and positive relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, agencies, and networks -including service-users, NGOs, and statutory bodies.
 - ✓ Highly skilled at developing and implementing workplans; carrying out administrative duties; report writing; and managing volunteers.
 - ✓ Familiarity with representing organisations and delivering papers at both domestic and international events, such as conferences and project meetings.
 - ✓ Longstanding ability to adapt to and be flexible around working outside of usual work hours and travelling -within Ireland and internationally.
 - ✓ Applied knowledge of the General Data Protection Regulations and research ethics in relation to confidentiality and ensuring anonymity.
 - ✓ Excellent ICT skills.
 - ✓ Strong code of ethics in-tune with the ethos and mission of the Health Research Board.
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Education			
Institute	Dates attended	Qualification	Summary of Results
University College Dublin, School of Sociology	30/09/2006 – 22/06/2012	Higher Doctorate of Philosophy (NFQ Level 10)	Awarded (with minor changes)
Trinity College Dublin, School of Sociology	18/09/2005 – 15/09/2006	Master of Philosophy (NFQ Level 9)	Honours (with distinction for my dissertation)
National University of Ireland Maynooth, Department of Anthropology	08/09/2004 – 30/05/2005	Postgraduate Diploma (NFQ Level 9)	First class honours
National University of Ireland Maynooth, Faculty of Arts and Humanities	15/09/2000 – 15/05/2004	Honours Bachelor degree (NFQ Level 8)	2.1

Employment record

Dates	Job Title	Employer
11/07/2014 – present	University of the 3 rd Age (U3A) Programme Officer	Age Action Ireland 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8

Description of Relevant Duties.

I am responsible for setting up new U3A groups, supporting their members, and facilitating the growth and success of the [U3A network](#) (31 groups and 1500+ members nationwide). Key areas of work include research, public engagement, and contributing to policies surrounding older people's Civil and Human Rights as an integral constituent of the Community and Adult Education sector. The programme aims to:

- increase active and positive ageing through lifelong learning activities
- social inclusion of older people
- contribute to the policy objectives set out by the European Commission in the Europe Strategy 2020
- achieving certain goals of the Department for Education and Skills.

Researching and writing about the needs of older learners in Ireland and abroad forms an integral part of this work. My annual salary is €37,000.

Dates	Job Title	Employer
01/11/15 - 23/7/17	Policy, Research, and Communications Officer	Age Action Ireland 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8

Description of Relevant Duties.

This role involved researching and applying an evidence-based/informed approach to advocacy work aimed at improving the lives of older people. Producing publications based on research into a range of economic and social issues facing older people allowed me to contributed to various submissions to government departments, research reports, E-books, EU project reports, internal reporting, and public awareness campaigns at the heart of the organisation's core [advocacy and social policy work](#). These activities required raising awareness of the diverse needs of older people to a range of stakeholders; including:

- Policy makers
- Services providers
- Stakeholder organisations and relevant networks
- The general public
- The media

This role also included supporting the organisation's [Ageing & Development Programme](#) by researching and disseminating information on the issues older people face in the Global South and developing countries, such as the protection of Human Rights; healthcare; and ensuring the inclusion of older people in humanitarian responses to emergency situations. By working closely with [HelpAge International](#) one important aim was to raise awareness about said issues amongst:

- The general public
- Older people
- Politicians
- Policy makers
- Other development organisations in Ireland and internationally.

Dates	Job Title	Employer
11/08/2014 – 30/09/2015	ForAge Project Development Officer (funded by the European Union)	Age Action Ireland 30-31 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2
01/04/2014 – 08/10/2015	Intercultural Nursing Home Project Officer (funded by Pobal and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission)	Age Action Ireland 30-31 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2
23/10/2013 – 31/12/2014	@Learn Project Development Officer (funded by the European Union)	Age Action Ireland 30-31 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2
30/10/2014 – 17/12/2014	Researcher and analyst (voluntary); see submission made to the Department of Justice	The Integration Centre 20 Mountjoy Square East, Dublin 1 (no longer in existence)
10/10/2013-17/10/13	Researcher and analyst; see the library stock off specialised books, training materials, research reports, academic journals	Youth Work Ireland 20 Lower Dominick Street, Dublin 1
01/06/2013 -30/09/2013	Researcher and analyst (voluntary); see the ICI's report on 120 racist incidents in 12 months.	The Immigrant Council of Ireland Andrew Street, Dublin 2
8/9/2012-30/9/2013	Graduate Intern (see CES's work with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs)	The Centre for Effective Services , 9 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2

Skill-set	Know-how
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Can hit the ground running and adapt to new settings and others' rhythm of working. ✓ Excellent interpersonal, written & verbal communication skills ✓ Able to work independently as well as closely with different line managers and colleagues simultaneously. ✓ Can independently lead on and prioritise tasks when appropriate. ✓ Able to deliver a high standard of writing for a range of audiences. ✓ Enjoy developing new ideas and coming up with creative solutions. ✓ Able to decide on, plan and undertake research to achieve concrete objectives. ✓ Can work with a wide range of external partners and diverse stakeholders. ✓ Ability to quickly prioritise tasks within complex and competing agendas with tight time constraints. ✓ Calm and collected under pressure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Designing and developing web-based resources and online tools. ✓ Strong background in policy, social and cultural research and analysis of issues regarding a range of groups and subcultures. ✓ Awareness of the international and local policy field pertaining to Social Integration and Issues around Health Services. ✓ Highly experienced with using an evidence-based and outcome-centred approach to informing research, policy and organisational strategies. ✓ Very familiar with working within numerous teams; of inter-agency collaboration; and interdisciplinary teamwork. ✓ Excellent understanding of how to leverage on an evidence-informed approach for influencing policy and report writing. ✓ Highly experienced at measuring implementation processes.

Referees can be provided upon request.