



PUBLIC PRACTICE

AUTHORITY FAQs

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| ELIGIBILITY | PAGE 2 |
| EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST | PAGE 3 |
| SELECTION OF ASSOCIATES | PAGE 5 |
| MATCHING | PAGE 6 |
| ONBOARDING | PAGE 7 |
| PLACEMENT PROGRAMME | PAGE 8 |
| RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME | PAGE 9 |
| OTHER | PAGE 10 |

ELIGIBILITY

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO HOST A PLACEMENT?

Public Practice invites Expressions of Interest from public organisations that are:

- Local or city governments, combined authorities, groups of more than one authority, development corporations, or publicly-led delivery vehicles.
- Located in London, the South East or the East of England (for authorities outside of these regions, please see below).
- Able to secure funding and HR approvals for the full 12 or 18 month placement period starting 1 October 2019.
- In a position to offer the selected Associate a formal job offer by 3 August 2019, an employment contract by 1 September 2019 and for them to be able to start in post on 1 October 2019.

CAN WE APPLY TO HOST MORE THAN ONE PLACEMENT?

Yes, Authorities are welcome to apply to host more than one placement. A separate Expression of Interest form should be submitted for each different post.

CAN WE APPLY TO HOST A PLACEMENT IF WE ARE LOCATED OUTSIDE OF LONDON, THE SOUTH EAST AND EAST OF ENGLAND?

The third cohort of placements will be focused on Authorities in London, the South East and East of England, as all placements need to be within commuting distance of each other. Public Practice is open to expanding to a wider geography, subject to demand, and encourage Authorities in other regions to get in contact to express any interest.

CAN WE APPLY TO HOST A PLACEMENT STARTING ON A DIFFERENT DATE?

All placements for the third cohort start on 1 October 2019. Public Practice offers two intakes for placements each year, the second in April, and is developing alternative recruitment offers. Authorities, for whom the programme dates are not workable, are encouraged to contact Public Practice with any interest.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

HOW CAN MY AUTHORITY EXPRESS AN INTEREST IN HOSTING A PLACEMENT?

All Expressions of Interest are made using the template Expression of Interest form available on our [website](#).

HOW ARE EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST ASSESSED?

Expressions of Interest are assessed based on the following four criteria:

- **Fit:** The extent to which the placement role and ambitions of the Authority are aligned with the mission of Public Practice.
- **Impact:** The extent to which the placement is likely to make a quantitative and qualitative difference to the delivery of homes, public realm, infrastructure, and public engagement.
- **Additionality:** The extent to which the placement role will allow the Authority to build planning capacity within the organisation and explore new ways of working.
- **Deliverability:** The likelihood that the placement will be successfully delivered in time to onboard the selected Associate for the start of the programme.

We also consider the skills and experience available in our Applicant pool before shortlisting Expressions of Interest. This is to ensure that any Expression of Interest that is shortlisted has a good chance of being matched with a suitable Associate.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST?

For placements beginning 1 October 2019, Authorities must submit an Expression of Interest by 3 June 2019.

WHEN WILL WE KNOW IF OUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

For placements beginning 1 October 2019, Authorities will be informed if their Expression of Interest has been successful on the week commencing 10 June 2019.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS IF OUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IS SUCCESSFUL?

Upon your Expression of Interest being shortlisted for matching with an Associate the next steps are as follows:

- **Sign a placement agreement with Public Practice:** To be eligible for matching with an Associate, you will be required to sign a placement agreement with

Public Practice. The agreement sets out the terms of the relationship between your Authority and Public Practice, once an Associate is successfully matched and placed with you. You will be required to return a signed copy of the placement agreement, by 28 June 2019, to be eligible for matching. If Public Practice is not able to successfully match you with an Associate, the terms of the contract will not apply.

- Provide additional information to your named HR officer: On the Expression of Interest form, you are asked to provide the details of the HR officer who is supporting the placement. Upon being shortlisted, Public Practice will contact the HR officer with additional information regarding the recruitment and employment of Associates to support the recruitment of the Associate internally.
- Further define your role (where appropriate): In some cases, you may be asked to further define the role put forward in the Expression of Interest. Public Practice will provide feedback to guide any further definition of the role as necessary.
- Attend a placement workshop: All shortlisted Authorities are asked to participate in a day long placement workshop to contribute to the assessment and matching of Associates. We expect that one placement workshop is attended by either the officer submitting the Expression of Interest or the placement line manager. Placement workshops will be held on the 1, 2, 3 and 4 July 2019.

SELECTION OF ASSOCIATES

HOW DOES THE ASSOCIATE SELECTION PROCESS WORK?

Associates undergo a rigorous two stage selection process before being matched to Authorities:

- Online applications: To apply for an Associate position with Public Practice, Applicants must first submit an online application. The application focuses on the skills they will bring to the Authority they are placed in, the track record of Applicants and their motivation and ambitions for working in local government.
- Placement workshop: The second round of the selection process is an all-day placement workshop, focussed on further testing the skills and experience of the Applicants, whilst also considering the most suitable roles for each. Applicants have a 45 minute panel interview and complete a range of activities, including a presentation and a group exercise.

WHO ASSESSES APPLICATIONS FOR ASSOCIATE POSITIONS?

The assessment of Applicants at the online application stage is supported by a group of around 40+ expert assessors. Our expert assessors are experienced public sector planning and placemaking practitioners. At placement workshops, you will contribute to the assessment of Applicants. At least one officer from all shortlisted Authorities will be expected to participate in one of the placement workshops.

MATCHING

HOW DOES MATCHING WORK?

Public Practice takes the skills, experience, personal qualities and preferences of Associates into account when matching Associates and Authorities. Following the placement workshops, Public Practice will recommend a match with the Associate we feel is most suitable for the role.

WILL WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE ASSOCIATE WE ARE MATCHED WITH?

When you receive a proposed match, you will be provided with an Associate Pack containing information on the proposed Associate, including: a bio, CV and statement on why the Associate is suitable for the role. You will also have the opportunity to meet your proposed Associate before confirming whether you would like them to be placed with you.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE PROPOSED MATCH IS NOT SUITABLE?

Where a proposed Associate is felt not to fit the role or organisation after meeting them, you will have the opportunity to decline the Associate. In this case, Public Practice will endeavour to rematch you with another Associate based on your feedback. Last year, we successfully matched over 80% of shortlisted Authorities with an Associate.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ASSOCIATE DOES NOT WANT TO BE PLACED WITH US?

Where an Associate does not feel the placement is suitable, Public Practice will endeavour to find another suitable Associate.

ONBOARDING

HOW ARE ASSOCIATES EMPLOYED?

Associates are employed by their host Authorities. You will be expected to provide the Associate with an employment contract in the same way you would any other employee. Most Associates are employed by Authorities on fixed-term contracts, though some Associates may wish to join you as a secondment from their existing employer.

WHAT ARE THE PAY ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSOCIATES?

As the Associate's employer or secondment host, your organisation will pay the Associate directly or through their existing employer. The Expression of Interest form asks for an expected salary range, and Associates will also provide their current salary in their applications to Public Practice. When matches are proposed, Public Practice will share salary information with both parties. The final pay arrangements are to be negotiated between you and the Associate.

WHAT ARE THE ARRANGEMENTS AROUND WORKING HOURS FOR ASSOCIATES?

As the Associate's employer, you will need to discuss and decide on the Associate's working arrangements with them. Public Practice is open to Associates being full-time or part-time, or having other flexible working arrangements, such as compressed hours. The only stipulations from Public Practice are that 10% of their time in-post is spent attending the Research and Development programme led by Public Practice, and that the Associate's overall time commitment is a minimum of 3 days per week.

WHAT PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS DO WE HAVE TO CARRY OUT FOR ASSOCIATES?

You should follow your normal procedures with regards to pre-employment checks when taking on an Associate. Public Practice does not conduct pre-employment checks on behalf of Authorities.

WHAT WILL OUR RELATIONSHIP BE WITH PUBLIC PRACTICE?

Public Practice acts as a broker, finding Associates to fulfill roles within host Authorities. Public Practice also delivers a Research & Development programme to Associates, the outputs of which are shared with host Authorities. Upon agreeing to host an Associate, Authorities will be required to sign a placement agreement with Public Practice which will outline the terms of the relationship between the two organisations.

PLACEMENT PROGRAMME

WHAT PERFORMANCE REVIEW MECHANISMS DOES PUBLIC PRACTICE USE FOR ASSOCIATES?

You will be expected to use your own internal performance review processes to monitor the performance of Associates whilst they are on placement. Public Practice will schedule three on-site visits in order to meet both the Associate and their line manager. Visits are an opportunity to discuss the performance of Associates where necessary.

Public Practice also monitors the performance and attendance of Associates on the Research & Development programme. Each Associate is expected to attend and fully participate in at least 80% of the Research & Development programme sessions. If attendance falls below this threshold or performance becomes an issue, Public Practice will inform you of the situation.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE WE WANT TO TERMINATE THE CONTRACT OF THE ASSOCIATE BEFORE THE END OF THE PLACEMENT?

If, for any reason, you conclude that the performance of the Associate is unacceptable, we ask that you let us know as soon as possible before taking any action. Public Practice will work with you to attempt to address any problems. If it is not possible to resolve the issue and you terminate the Associate's contract, we will look to find a replacement Associate, or provide you with a partial refund of the placement fee.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE ASSOCIATE CANNOT OR DOES NOT WISH TO COMPLETE THEIR PLACEMENT?

In the unlikely event that an Associate cannot complete the full placement, Public Practice will seek to replace the Associate within four weeks with another suitable candidate. If no suitable replacement can be found, Public Practice will refund the placement fee on a pro rata basis for any months of the placement that have not been completed.

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

HOW DOES THE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WORK?

The R&D Programme gives Associates the preparation they need to transition into their new roles within the public sector, the training they need to make their placements a success, and the community of practice they need to find new solutions to their day-to-day work. Your Associate is required to spend 10% of their placement participating in the R&D Programme. For most Associates this will involve attending fortnightly day-long sessions on Fridays, with breaks in December and August. The two main aims of the R&D Programme are: Professional Development and Research in Practice.

- Professional Development: The Professional Development strand focuses on building the capacity of Associates by giving them access to the knowledge, skills and techniques they need to be effective public planners. Training through talks and workshops will be frontloaded towards the beginning of the year. Sessions to reflect on the experience of their placement and build resilience will punctuate each of the three terms. Support with career planning beyond the end of their placement will be weighted towards the third term.
- Research in Practice: The Research in Practice strand is centred around exploring, developing and sharing public planning practice. Associates will be expected to develop a research project that is directly relevant to their day-to-day work. As these projects begin to take shape during the course of the year, R&D Days will become more focused on helping Associates capture shared practice knowledge, in collaboration with fellow Associates addressing similar issues. Regular Practice Reviews will also give Associates the chance to present practical issues they are facing in their placements for advice and feedback from the rest of the cohort.

CAN MY TEAM PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME?

Authority officers are invited to participate in the Research & Development programme in two ways:

- Research in Practice: Associate led research projects are embedded in current practice. Officers will have the opportunity to contribute to scoping topics at the beginning of the programme, steering research questions and informing research projects through interviews, roundtables and focus groups.
- R&D days: Your Authority will be invited to host one or more R&D Day over the course of the year. R&D Days are opportunities for the Associates to learn about your Authority and work, and for your staff to also take part in the learning and development sessions. At least one session within each R&D Day, such as a roundtable discussion, presentation, workshop, or site visit, will be open for colleagues to attend.

OTHER

HOW MUCH IS THE PLACEMENT FEE?

Upon accepting the proposed Associate, your Authority will be asked to pay a placement fee to Public Practice. The placement fee is £5,000 (+VAT) for 12 month placements and £7,000 (+VAT) for 18 month placements.

IS THERE AN ADDITIONAL FEE IF WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP THE ASSOCIATE ON BEYOND THE END OF THE PROGRAMME?

There is no additional fee to Authorities who wish to offer Associates a permanent contract when their placement has come to an end. If you would like to use Public Practice to extend the Associate's placement, there will be a basic administration fee associated with this service.