

CAREER PROFILES:

KARINA FITZGERALD

PLANNING ADVISOR, MARINE PLANNING POLICY & LEGISLATION

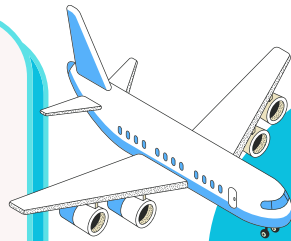


AN OVERVIEW OF YOUR JOB:

I work as a Planning Advisor in a Government Department, providing advice in terms of developing new policy for maritime spatial planning and legislation for marine planning.

WHERE ARE YOU USUALLY BASED?

Two days in an office and three days working from home. Also attend meetings with stakeholders in Ireland and in Europe.



WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF YOUR JOB?

Marine planning is relatively new in Ireland and it is exciting to be part of a team that is developing a new marine planning system for the state. I particularly enjoy writing new policy.

HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS CAREER?

I studied Geography as part of my undergraduate at Maynooth University and then decided to do a Masters in Regional and Urban Planning at UCD. I worked in a number of local authorities as a planner dealing with both forward planning and development management. This experience proved invaluable for working as a planning advisor in a Government department.

WHAT'S THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR JOB?

The demands on our maritime space are increasing, placing additional pressures on our seas. It is challenging to develop robust policy quickly and in a manner that balances all the competing needs.



HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS CAREER?



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A TYPICAL DAY...



Review and respond to emails, discuss work with team members, attend virtual meetings with key stakeholders and other Government departments, give presentations on marine planning, review marine plans, research and develop new policy.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A YOUNG PERSON INTERESTED IN THIS CAREER PATH?

Engage with planning and marine planning in your area. Look up the Office of the Planning Regulator, the Irish Planning Institute, An Bord Pleanála, and your local council. Read newspaper articles relating to planning, particularly marine planning. Read our Marine Planning Newsletters – at <https://projectmarinenewsletter-housinggovie.hub.arcgis.com/#c7ix4vgdI>

BESIDES FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS, WHAT SKILLS OR TRAITS ARE MOST USEFUL FOR YOUR TYPE OF WORK?

Ability to make decisions, effective communication (both written and oral), negotiation skills, project management, time management.

Public consultation is essential for developing planning policy. It is therefore important to be able to interact with people and listen to their concerns and views.

Flexibility is also important as work priorities often change and it is important to be able to be adaptable.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN THIS LINE OF WORK?

I have worked as a planner for almost 20 years and moved from terrestrial planning to marine planning in 2021.

TIME to STUDY



WHAT WORK EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS OR TRAINING WOULD YOU RECOMMEND FOR GETTING INTO THIS CAREER?

To become a planner one can do an undergraduate in planning or an undergraduate in a range of subjects such as geography / sociology / engineering / science / ecology / biodiversity / architecture / environmental management and then study for a Masters in Planning.

The Office of the Planning Regulator provides advice on a career in planning: <https://www.opr.ie/public-awareness->



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