



An Roinn Caiteachais Phoiblí
Sheachadadh PFN agus Athchóirithe
 Department of Public Expenditure
 NDP Delivery and Reform

SFI Public Service Fellowship 2023

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| 1. Name of Governmental Department or Agency |
| Department of Public Expenditure NDP Delivery & Reform |
| 2. Title of the Project |
| DPER4 Research how behavioural science can be utilised in the public sector to tackle environmental challenges and improve policy making |
| 3. Description of the Project |
| <p>The aim of this research project is to investigate the impact of behavioural science in the context of public service transformation in Ireland. A particular area of focus may be how the sector can best utilise behavioural science to tackle societal challenges and improve policymaking, particularly in areas relating to pro-environmental and climate related behaviour change.</p> <p>Addressing climate breakdown is set out as a key commitment in the departments Public Service Transformation Strategy, ‘Better Public Services’. In line with our Climate Action Plan commitments, the public sector must lead by example in driving far-reaching climate action across its buildings, transport, waste, and energy usage, as well as wider society. This includes reducing emissions by 51% by 2030 and increasing the improvement in energy efficiency in the public sector from the 33% target in 2020 to 50% by 2030.</p> <p>The project will examine how behavioural science principles, such as nudging, framing, and choice architecture, can be utilised in Irish public service initiatives to deliver climate action and sustainability and their effectiveness in influencing citizen behaviour and improving public service outcomes.</p> <p>The research will be conducted through a combination of literature review, data analysis, and case studies to gain insights into the application and outcomes of behavioural science in the Irish public sector. It will draw on best practice from countries including Denmark, UK, the Netherlands and the United States where behavioural science has been applied in a variety of ways to influence citizen behaviour in areas such as Public Health, Criminal Justice and Energy Conservation.</p> |
| 4. Project Scope |
| <p>The project will focus on the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a comprehensive literature review on behavioural science theories and concepts, as well as their application in public service transformation globally. |

- Analysing existing data and case studies of interventions in the Irish public sector and internationally to evaluate their impact on citizen behaviour and service outcomes.
- Identifying best practices and lessons learned from successful behavioural science interventions in both an international and Irish context.
- Identifying potential barriers and challenges to the effective implementation of behavioural science in the Irish public sector.

5. Skills/Expertise Required

This project will require a multidisciplinary skill set, including:

- Strong research skills, including literature review, data analysis, and case study analysis.
- Familiarity with behavioural economic theories and concepts, and their application in the context of public service transformation.
- Analytical skills to evaluate the effectiveness of behavioural economic interventions and draw meaningful conclusions.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, to convey research findings clearly and effectively.
- Project management skills to plan and execute the research project within the allotted timeframe.

6. Expected Outputs of Project

- A comprehensive literature review summarising the existing knowledge on the impact of behavioural Science in public service transformation, with a specific focus from an Irish context.
- An analysis of existing data and case studies of behavioural economic interventions in the public sector, highlighting their impact on citizen behaviour and service outcomes.
- Best practices and lessons learned from successful interventions in a public sector context.
- Recommendations for policymakers and public service practitioners on how to utilise behavioural science principles in public service transformation initiatives in Ireland.
- A final research report that summarises the research findings and recommendations for future research in this area.

7. Working Arrangements

- Hybrid (Office located on the 4th Floor St Stephens House, Dublin 2)

8. Expected Timeline

The estimated timeline for completing this research project is 8 - 12 months, with the following estimated milestones:

- Literature review completion: 2-3 months
- Data and case study analysis: 2-3 months
- Best practices and lessons learned identification: 2-3 months
- Recommendations and final report writing: 2-3 months

Note: Timings are subject to change, based on availability of data, supporting literature/case studies and any unforeseen challenges.

