



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

Assistant Scientist

Information for Candidates

March, 2025

1. The Position

The Council is seeking applications from suitably qualified candidates with relevant experience for the position of Assistant Scientist.

It is proposed to form a panel of qualified candidates from which vacancies both permanent and temporary will be filled during the lifetime of the panel.

Recent Environmental Protection Agency reports show water quality is declining in Ireland and that at current levels of progress, Ireland will fail to meet the EU and national goal of restoring all waters to good or better status by 2027. Agriculture is a significant contributor to this declining water quality.

The Assistant Scientist will work as part of a multi-disciplinary team within the Water & Environment Section of Donegal County Council. The successful candidate will be involved in assisting in environmental protection, which may include: Farm Inspections, Bathing Water Quality, WFD Monitoring, Private Drinking Water, Air & Noise Quality, and other areas of the environment. The role requires knowledge and understanding of current environmental legislation and how it relates to Local Authority functions.

This Information Booklet pertains to a panel that will be formed at Assistant Scientist for vacancies that may arise in the Central Laboratory during the lifetime of the panel. The relevant posts within the Council's workforce plan are in the Water & Environment Directive and will be based in the Central Laboratory at Railway Road in Stranorlar.

2. Roles Duties & Responsibilities

- Contribute to the implementation of the Annual Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspection (RMCEI) Plan;
- Undertake farm inspections as required by the Good Agricultural Practice Regulations;
- Support / organize / deliver local dissemination events to catchment farmers such as farm walks, meetings and media outputs.
- Prepare cross-compliance reports for cross-reporting of non-compliances to DAFM and enforcement notices and files for enforcement proceedings represent the local authority as an expert witness and deliver evidence at enforcement proceedings.
- Management of the bathing water monitoring program and assessment and reporting of results in accordance with Bathing Water Regulations;
- Assisting in the management of drinking water monitoring programmes and assessment and reporting of drinking water results in accordance with Drinking Water Regulations;
- Undertake domestic wastewater treatment system inspections in line with the National Inspection Plan;
- Undertake monitoring in accordance with the Water Framework Directive monitoring programme;
- Respond to water and waste pollution incidents, queries and complaints;
- Perform actions to meet measures under the Water Action Plan;

- Inspecting and reporting on the environmental aspects of planning applications;
- Implementation of Water Pollution, Air Pollution and Noise legislation;
- Assist in the preparation of Departmental Returns, FOI requests, AIE Requests, Public Presentations;
- Liaise with Councillors and other bodies including the Department, EPA, Uisce Éireann, HSE, Local Authorities Waters Programme (LAWPRO) and others;
- Any other duties as may be assigned to the officer from time to time by the local authority and may include the duty of deputising for other officers of the local authority, when required, and such duties as may be assigned to them in relation to the area of any other local authority.

3. Qualifications & Requirement of the Post

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has declared that the qualifications for Assistant Scientist will be as set out below:

(a) Character:

Candidates shall be of good character.

(b) Health

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Successful candidates will be required to undergo a medical examination carried out by the Council's Occupational Medical advisor prior to appointment.

(c) Education, Training, Experience etc.

Each candidate must, on the latest date for receipt of completed applications:

- (i) Hold an honours degree (Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications) in science
- (ii) have at least two years satisfactory experience of scientific work; **and**
- (iii) possess a high standard of technical training and experience

(d) Desirable Skills

It is desirable that candidates have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the:

- European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations.
- Water Framework Directive.
- Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977-1990.
- Water Quality and agricultural impacts.
- Existing knowledge and or experience in Catchment Science and Management and farm inspection skills will be an advantage.
- Ability to develop and maintain productive relationships with colleagues, customers and stakeholders.
- Ability to build networks and successfully influence key internal and external stakeholders.
- Effective written and verbal communication skills, with experience in the preparation of technical reports and the delivery of presentations to a varied audience in various formats.
- Ability to pinpoint the critical information and address issues logically.
- An ability to prepare and present technical reports.
- Ability to deal with complex and confrontational situations.
- Effective investigational skills and the ability to respond to complaints.
- Excellent organisation skills and possess the drive to deliver the required results.
- Strong information and communications technology skills.
- Good understanding of environmental policy, regulation and legislation.
- Have good knowledge and awareness of the statutory obligations of Health and Safety Legislation and the implications for the organisation and the employee, and their application in the workplace.
- Have a high standard of administrative and management experience

It would be desirable that candidates would hold a degree (level 7/8 or higher degree) qualification in Science, with chemistry or microbiology as a core subject or Agricultural Science.

(e) Core Competencies

i. Management and Change

Political Awareness

- Has a clear understanding of the political reality and context of the local authority.

Knowledge & Experience

- Demonstrates required technical knowledge, understanding, training and experience for the role. Keeps up to date with current developments, trends and best practise in their area of responsibility.

Safety, Health & Welfare at Work

- Fully implements safe systems of working in accordance with the Corporate Safety Statement for their area of work.

ii. Delivering Results

Problem solving and decision making

- Can pinpoint the critical information and can address issues logically. Acts decisively and makes timely, informed and effective decisions.

Operational Planning

- Contributes to operational plans and develops team plans in line with priorities and actions for their area of operation, having regard to corporate goals, operational objectives, available resources
- Establishes high quality service and customer care standards
- Organising work programmes and implementing solutions.

Managing Resources and achieving efficiencies

- Manages the allocation, use and evaluation of resources to ensure they are used efficiently to deliver on operational plans
- Drives and promotes reduction in costs and minimisation of waste.

Ensuring Compliance

- Abides by the laws, regulations and policies and procedures affecting your employment and the discharge of your duties.

Delivering Quality Outcomes

- Promotes the achievement of quality outcomes in delivering services, which are linked to the corporate priorities, with a focus on continuous improvement
- Evaluates the outcomes achieved against operational plans, identifies learning and implements improvements required.

iii. Performance Through People

Leading and Motivating

- Leads, motivates and engages others to achieve quality results.

Managing Performance

- Empowers and encourages people to deliver their part of the operational plan
- Resolves conflict when necessary

Communicating Effectively

- Has effective verbal and written communication skills
- Has good interpersonal skills.

iv. Personal Effectiveness

Resilience and Personal Well-Being

- Remains calm under pressure and can separate personal issues from work issues
- Manages time and workload effectively
- Values the well-being of staff and others by managing stress levels and work-life balance.

Integrity & Public Service Values

- Is honest and trustworthy in all dealings.

Personal Motivation and Initiative

- Is enthusiastic about the role and is motivated in the face of difficulties and obstacles.
- Does more than is required or expected, anticipating situations and acting to pre-empt problems.

4. Particulars of the Post

(a) General

Donegal County Council proposes to create a panel of qualified candidates for the position of *Assistant Scientist* from which it will fill any vacancy that may arise.

(b) Probation

The successful candidate shall be required to be on probation for an initial period, as determined by the Council. This period may be extended at the discretion of the Council.

(c) Remuneration

The current annual pay-scale is €45,802 minimum to max LSI2 €71,185. (as per Circular EL 03/2024).

Holders of the post will be paid at the appropriate point on the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Department Circular.

New entrants will commence on the minimum point of the scale.

(d) Base

The base for the post of Assistant Scientist shall be the Central Laboratory, Railway Road, Stranorlar

The role of Assistant Scientist may involve some travel, with some trips involving overnight stays and associated costs covered by the appropriate allowances.

(e) Residence

Holders of the post shall reside in the district in which their duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

(f) Working Hours / Annual Leave

The normal hours of work will be 35 hours per week. The Council reserves the right to alter the hours of work from time to time.

Annual leave allowance will be in accordance with Circular LG(P) 07/2011. Maximum 30 days for all applicants.

(g) Requirement to Drive

Candidates shall be required:

- (a) to possess a full current category B Driving Licence.
- (b) to have their own vehicle available for use while performing their duties and the associated costs will be covered by the appropriate allowances.

(h) Citizenship Requirements

Eligible candidates must be, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms; (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or (b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or (c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or (d) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or € A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa or (f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

(I) Conflicts of Interest

The post holder shall not engage in any gainful occupation, other than as an employee of a local authority, to such an extent as to impair the performance of his or her duties as an employee of a local authority or in any occupation which might conflict with the interests of the local authority or which might be inconsistent with the discharge of his duties as a local authority employee.

(J) Garda Vetting

Candidates for the post of Assistant Scientist are subject to Garda Vetting. Please note all candidates must attain a satisfactory Garda Vetting Disclosure prior to appointment, otherwise the offer of employment will be withdrawn.

In the event where a Garda Vetting Disclosure indicates that there is a case pending, then the appointment cannot proceed at that time and the offer of employment will be withdrawn. The candidate will however retain their position on the panel and will be considered for the next vacancy should same arise within the lifetime of the panel.

5. Recruitment Process

A. Application Form

- Applications must be made on the official application form and all sections of the form must be fully completed.
- Please do not submit a CV with your application. Only information contained in the application form will be considered when assessing a candidate's suitability for the post.
- Applications must be submitted as an e mail attachment in either Word or PDF format only by email to vacancies@donegalcoco.ie
- Applications must be received by the deadline specified on the form.
- Applications that are late, lost or delayed will not be considered unless official evidence showing that the application was sent within the timeframe can be produced.

B. Short Listing

Candidates may be short-listed for interview on the basis of information supplied. In the event of a short-listing exercise being required, an Expert Panel will convene to examine and assess the application forms against a set of pre-determined criteria, based on the requirements of the job. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications and experience on the application form.

Where it is considered, by reason of the number and standard of applications received, that it would be reasonable not to admit all candidates to the interview, only persons likely to attain at the interview a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment shall be called for interview.

C. Right to Information and Review - # AS 001

The Council is committed to offering feedback and information to candidates. Any candidate who wishes to do so may request to have a decision or the process reviewed. Any such request must be submitted in writing, stating the grounds of the request and this must be submitted to the Human Resources Department, Three Rivers Centre, Lifford, Co. Donegal within five working days of the date of notification of a relevant decision quoting the above reference number.

D. Confidentiality

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

E. Other

Appointments to the Council are subject to satisfactory checks with regard to references, qualifications, medical examinations, and Garda Vetting, as applicable.

F. Canvassing Will Disqualify

Any attempt by a candidate (or by any persons acting on their behalf) to canvass or otherwise influence any officer of the Council (or persons nominated by it to interview or examine applicants) in the candidate's favour, either directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise, will automatically disqualify the applicant for consideration for the position.

G. General Data Protection Regulation

Donegal County Council is committed to protecting your personal data and we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 – 2018, and the General Data Protection Regulation.

- **Basis for Processing your Personal Information**

The basis for processing your personal data is to process your application for the position you have applied for with Donegal County Council under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources Department policies and procedures.

When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied on your application form. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. You are entitled to obtain at any time, a copy of information about you, which is kept on record.

- **Sharing of Information**

Outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated shortlisting and/or interview board.

If, following the competition, you are deemed a qualified candidate and offered a position; the information provided in your application form will form part of your Personnel File.

Furthermore, should you be offered a position and subsequently confirm your interest in the position, the information provided on your application form will be used to request service records and employment references.

- Storage period

Your application will be retained for two years from the date of the competition. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition.

Donegal County Council's Privacy Statement can be assessed at:

www.donegalcoco.ie