CORK COUNTY COUNCIL
Executive Scientist – Veterinary Food Safety Laboratory

JOB DESCRIPTION

Introduction:
The Council is looking to create a panel for Executive Scientist posts in its Veterinary Food Safety laboratory. The position(s) will be based on the Environment Directorate Campus at Inniscarra, Co. Cork.

Context
The Council has a long history of operating in-house laboratories, most of which are consolidated on the Environment directorate’s campus at Inniscarra, Co Cork.

There are three laboratories located at Inniscarra, comprising two water labs and a veterinary food safety lab. All laboratories are accredited to ISO 17025 standards.

The initial assignment for this post will be within the council’s Veterinary Food Safety Laboratory. However, the successful applicant can be redeployed to other services in the future.

The Veterinary Food Safety Laboratory (VFSL) is contracted to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) as a designated National Official Food Control Laboratory. The VFSL provides services for the microbiological examination of food, water and environmental samples submitted by customers. Our Quality Management System ensures that the laboratory maintains a high standard of quality to meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025, regulatory authorities and to satisfy the needs of the customer.

The Role
The Executive Scientists will be the key personnel in the positions of Quality Manager and/or Laboratory Manager. It represents a great opportunity to take on a demanding role in a National Official Food Control Laboratory.

In broad terms the role will entail:

- Management of the Quality System and laboratory activities in this Official Food Control Laboratory to ISO 17025 standards.

Specific duties will be as assigned by relevant section and/or line manager and will typically include (but not be limited to):

- Supervise and manage the day-to-day running of the laboratory to ISO 17025
- Manage teams and individual employees within those teams
- Manage Health & Safety
- Organise staff training and sign off
- Provide technical guidance to personnel.
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- Prepare sampling plans and manage same
- Liaise with and respond to customers, other local authorities, government departments and statutory agencies including FSAI etc.
- Notification of exceedances and authorisation/certification of Test Reports
- Analyse data and generate reports, as required
- Plan and perform the verification/validation of Test Methods
- Review and update documents
- Plan and perform Internal audits
- Create and complete non-conformance reports
- Manage the purchase of supplies and equipment
- Organise the maintenance/calibration of equipment
- Resolve issues with suppliers/equipment/facilities etc
- Organize and co-ordinate proficiency tests
- Manage ICT systems including upgrades
- Represent the VFSL at meetings locally and nationally
- Undertake microbiological testing for a range of pathogens/indicator organisms in food, water and environmental samples in accordance with approved Methods, when required
- Attendance at court as technical witness in respect of laboratory reports, if required.
- Report to the Senior Executive Scientist or such other staff member as directed by the Chief Veterinary Officer or Director of Services from time to time
- Report to the Senior Executive Scientist on personnel matters
- Act for the Senior Executive Scientist as directed from time to time
- Any other duties that may be assigned.

Cork County Council operates a safety management system that has been accredited to OHSAS 18001 standard. Full compliance with this safety management system is an absolute requirement all Council staff.
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QUALIFICATIONS

1. **Character**
   Candidates shall be of good character.

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

3. **Education, Experience, etc.**
   Candidates shall:
   
   a. hold an honours degree (level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications) in Science;
   
   b. have at least five years satisfactory experience of scientific work; and
   
   c. possess a high standard of technical training and experience.

4. **Age**
   Candidates deemed “not to be new entrants” to the Public Service as defined by the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 must be under 70 years of age on the latest date for receipt of completed Application Forms for the office.

   The age restriction of 70 years does not apply to “new entrants” to the Public Service as defined by the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 (entrants in 2004-2012).

   In accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012, there is compulsory retirement at age 70 for new entrants to the public service after January 1st 2013.
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An ideal candidate will have;

We are looking for a dynamic individual with good leadership and management skills, a commitment to customer service and team development, an ability to manage and oversee large work programmes and to deliver results both independently and as part of a wider management team.

Candidates should also ideally have:

- Excellent knowledge and competence in microbiology
- Experience of managing an ISO 17025 accredited microbiology laboratory and have extensive knowledge on how to test food, water and environmental samples
- Experience in managing quality functions in an ISO 17025 accredited facility
- Experience in staff training and supervision
- Experience in authorisation/certification of Test reports
- Experience in designing and undertaking validation/verification projects
- Experience of participation in an INAB audit
- Experience in undertaking full non compliance rectification from root cause analysis through CA and PA
- Experience in managing work programmes and in prioritising work to meet changing needs
- Experience in the maintenance of the laboratory facilities
- Good knowledge and understanding of relevant National and European Communities legislation, particularly in respect of food and water
- Competency in the area of information technology. Desirable experience in Q-pulse and Labware LIMs. Administrator level would be advantageous
- Experience in Health and Safety risk assessments for laboratory work including assessment of MSDS and identification of controls
- Understanding and experience in managing compliance for chemical and biological agents regulations
- Good Knowledge of statutory Health and Safety obligations, the implications for the organisation and the employee, and their application in the workplace
- Have a good understanding of Local Authority services and structures in Ireland, particularly as they relate to environmental functions
- Excellent Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- People Management Skills
- Leadership skills and experience
- Problem solving skills
PARTICULARS OF OFFICE

1. The office is permanent and pensionable.

2. The appointment will be made on the result of an interview conducted by or on behalf of Cork County Council.

A Shortlisting process may be applied to this competition. Accordingly, it is very important that you show how you meet the requirements for the position. Candidates may be shortlisted on the basis of the information submitted on their Application Forms.

A panel may be formed as a result of these interviews from which further similar positions arising in Cork County Council may be filled.

3. Superannuation:

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class D rate of PRSI contribution will be required, in respect of their superannuation, to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 5% of their pensionable remuneration. All persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority are required, in respect of the Local Government (Spouses and Childrens Contributory Pension) Scheme, 1986, to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of the Scheme.

For Class D officers the minimum retirement age is 60 and the maximum retirement age is 70.

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority, who are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children).

For Class A ‘non new entrants’ as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004, the minimum retirement age is 60 and the maximum retirement age is 70.

For Class A ‘new entrants’ as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 the minimum retirement age is 65 with no maximum retirement age.

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority for the first time on or after 1 January 2013 are assigned to Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme & Other
Provisions) Act 2012. Therefore, the conditions of employment regarding retirement age and superannuation shall be as follows:

The minimum retirement age is 66 in line with State Pension contributory age. This will increase to 67 in 2021 & 68 in 2028. Scheme members must retire at age 70.

You are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution. You are required in respect of superannuation to contribute at the rate of 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children) plus 3% of pensionable pay.

4. Retirement

The Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme & Other Provisions) Act 2012 introduces new provisions for superannuation and retirement. Single Public Service Pension Scheme Members must retire at age 70. For appointees who are deemed “not to be new entrants” as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004, retirement is compulsory on reaching 70 years of age. There is no compulsory retirement age for appointees who are members of the Local Government Superannuation Scheme (LGSS) and who are deemed to be “new entrants” as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004.

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children).

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class D rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 5% of their pensionable remuneration.

All persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority will be required in respect of the Local Government (Spouses and Childrens Contributory Pension) Scheme to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of the Scheme.
5. Probation:

Where persons who are not already permanent officers of a Local Authority are appointed, the following provisions shall apply:-

(a) there shall be a period after such appointments take effect, during which such persons shall hold office on probation;

(b) such period shall be one year but the Chief Executive may, at his/her discretion, extend such period;

(c) such persons shall cease to hold office at the end of the period of probation unless during such period the Chief Executive has certified that the service of such persons is satisfactory.

6. Salary:

Salary: €48,691 basic per annum (entry point)

The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time. Holders of the office shall pay to the local authority any fees or other monies (other than their inclusive salary) payable to or received by them by virtue of their office or in respect of any services which they are required by or under any enactment to perform. The contract may be terminated at any time subject to normal legal requirements.

7. The local authority shall require persons to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointments within a period of not more than one month and if they fail to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as the local authority in its absolute discretion may determine, the local authority shall not appoint them.

8. Health

For the purpose of satisfying the requirements as to health it will be necessary for successful candidates, before they are appointed, to undergo at their expense a medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the local authority. On taking up appointment the expense of the medical examination will be refunded to candidates.

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

10. When required to do so, holders of the office shall hold a full driving licence for Class B Vehicles and shall drive a motor car in the course of their duties and for this purpose provide and maintain a car to the satisfaction of the local authority.

11. The base for working purposes shall be the work site or as determined by Cork County Council.
12. Duties:

The duties of the office are to give the local authority and

(a) such other local authorities or bodies for which the Chief Executive for the purposes of the City and County Management Acts, is Chief Executive, and

(b) to any other local authority or body with which an agreement has been made by the local authority or by any of the authorities or bodies mentioned in sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph,

under the direction and supervision of the appropriate professional officer, such services of an of an advisory, supervisory or executive nature as may be required by any local authority or body hereinbefore mentioned in the exercise and performance of any of its powers, functions and duties including the duty of assisting the appropriate officer in the provision of such services of any of the foregoing local authorities or bodies and, when required to do so, to perform the duty of acting for the appropriate officer of higher rank during the absence of such officer of higher rank. Holders of the office may be assigned to work in all appropriate areas in the course of their employment.

13. Recruitment:

Pursuant to article 8 of the Local Government (Appointment of Officers) Regulations 1974, the Minister has given directions as follows:-

(i) The appointment shall be advertised in such a manner as to clearly indicate that the local authority is an equal opportunities employer.

(ii) Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by or on behalf of the local authority.

(iii) A local authority may decide, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to the competition, to carry out a shortlisting procedure and admit to the competition only persons who appear to be likely to attain in the competition a standard sufficient for appointment.

(iv) A panel may be formed on the basis of such interview. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the local authority that they possess the qualifications declared for the office and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may within the life of the panel be appointed as appropriate vacancies arise.
ESSENTIAL SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KEY COMPETENCIES

Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate in their application and at interview that they possess the following competencies through the experience and skills they have gained to date:

Delivering Results – Delivering Quality Outcomes and Ensuring Compliance
Promotes the achievement of quality outcomes in delivering services, with a focus on continuous improvement. Abides by the laws, regulations, policies and procedures affecting the discharge of your duties.

- Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard through collaborating with, instructing and motivating stakeholders and by managing resources effectively.
- Develops and implements quality assurance measures to achieve compliance with performance standards or benchmarks.
- Critically evaluates outcomes and processes used to achieve them.
- Is aware of and understands relevant legislation, regulations and policies that govern the Local Authority.
- Refers to relevant professional documents as required.

Performance Through People – Communicating Effectively
Recognises the value of and requirement to communicate effectively. Has effective verbal and written communication skills. Has good interpersonal skills.

- Effectively manage performance and create opportunities for development using the Performance Management and Development Process.
- Use diplomacy and tact to facilitate working relationships with dissatisfied staff or customers.
- Is effective in communicating a complex or technical message, using language appropriate to the audience.
- Prepares for communication, carrying out the necessary research and speaking to the relevant people in advance.
- Have a focus on the customer and on service improvement.

Personal Effectiveness - Personal Motivation and Initiative
Is enthusiastic about the role, and is motivated in the face of difficulties and obstacles. Adopts a positive attitude to work; is enthusiastic and open to taking on new challenges or responsibilities. Takes the initiative and is proactive in addressing issues.

- Adopts a positive and constructive approach to work.
- Sets challenging standards and achieves high quality outcomes.
- Responds positively to the challenges of the role.
- Manages own time effectively to achieve objectives.