



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara  
Kildare County Council

## **Candidate Information Booklet**

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

# **Assistant Scientist 3 Year Contract – Up to the end of 2027**

**Closing date for receipt of completed application forms is 4.00 p.m.  
on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024.**

***Kildare County Council is committed to a  
policy of equal opportunity.***



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## Introduction

Kildare County Council is one of 31 Local Authorities in the Republic of Ireland. The Council has responsibility for the delivery of a wide range of services which are necessary to the physical, economic, social, and cultural life of County Kildare, with a focus on making Kildare an attractive place to live, work and invest. Kildare County Council has 40 elected members representing 5 Municipal Districts, Athy, Kildare/Newbridge, Naas, Clane/Maynooth and Celbridge/Leixlip.

The following comprise the areas of service delivery in Kildare County Council:

- Economic & Community Development
- Local Enterprise
- Planning
- Cultural & Recreational Services
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Water Service
- Fire & Emergency Services
- Environment
- Finance, Digital Services & Innovation
- Corporate Services
- Human Resources
- Integration

This is an opportunity to gain employment in the role of Assistant Scientist with Kildare County Council.

## The Competition

The purpose of this recruitment campaign is to form a panel for Kildare County Council from which temporary posts may be filled for the Assistant Scientist as vacancies arise.

## The Role

Local authorities have responsibility under the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations for the monitoring of waters to determine the extent and trends of pollution arising from agriculture and to carry out inspections of farm holdings for the purposes of the regulations. 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. Local Authorities in collaboration with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are putting in place an enhanced inspection programme of farm holdings to protect, reverse trends and improve water quality in Ireland.

## Candidate

It is desirable that candidates demonstrate through their application form and at the interview that they have:

- Ability to develop and maintain productive relationships with 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 ICT skills;
- Good understanding of environmental policy, regulation and waste management / water quality/pollution principles;
- Experience of interpreting and implementing policy and legislation;
- Suitable experience relating to the control and supervision of staff.

## Duties and Responsibilities

The Assistant Scientist will carry out the following duties:

- Carry out inspections of farm holdings as required by the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations.
- To generate, maintain and collate data on the inspections of farm holdings.
- To complete annual returns to the EPA on the inspections of farm holdings.
- Collaborate with other agencies, including LAWPRO, ASSAP, Teagasc, DAFM, Dairy Sustainability Initiative, DHLGH and EPA.
- Engage with farmers to identify and manage risks to water quality arising from their farming operations.
- To support / organize / deliver local dissemination events to catchment farmers such as farm walks and meetings and media outputs.
- Prepare cross-compliance reports for cross-reporting of non-compliances to DAFM.
- Prepare enforcement notices and files for enforcement proceedings.
- To represent the local authority as an expert witness and deliver evidence at enforcement proceedings.

General duties include:

- To assist with profile-raising and awareness relating to water quality issues through media and elsewhere through radio/TV interviews, press releases/articles, electronic media and talks.
- Co-ordinate the data requirements for the RMCEI plan and NEMIS system.
- Carry out Health and Safety duties including toolbox talks, risk assessments, method statements and incident reporting.

- Use technology such as drones, survey equipment, sampling equipment, water chemistry meters, data recording devices and internet data sources
- Assist the local authority environment team in the creation of team plans, workplans and procedures.
- Perform actions to meet objectives under Ireland's River Basin Management Plan.
- Respond to water pollution incidents.
- Respond to pollution queries and complaints by the public.

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.

The role requires flexibility in terms of working hours as the duties may involve working outside of normal office hours.

## Qualifications

### **Character:**

Each candidate must be of good character.

### **Health:**

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

### **Education, Training and Experience etc.:**

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

- Hold an honours degree (Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications) in a relevant science discipline.
- have at least two years work experience in the natural waters science area;
- possess a high standard of technical training and experience.
- Hold a current full driving license in respect of category B vehicles or equivalent in the EU Model Driving License on the latest date for the receipt of completed applications.

The Assistant Scientist will be required to undertake training as provided by the local authority, and specifically in the area of Catchment Science and Management, and farm inspections skills.

### **Specific Knowledge Required;**

The role requires 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.

### Other required Knowledge

It is essential that the ideal candidates have:

- 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.

Please supply copies of any certificates, diplomas or degrees you may have with the application form

### Competencies for the post of Assistant Scientist

Key Competencies for the post include the following and candidates will be expected to demonstrate sufficient evidence within their application form of competence under each of these. Please take particular note to these when completing the application form as any short-listing or interview processes will be based on the information provided by the candidates:

<p><b>Performance Management and Change</b></p>	<p><b>Political Awareness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a clear understanding of the political reality and context of the local authority.</li> </ul> <p><b>Safety, Health &amp; Welfare at Work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully implements safe systems of working in accordance with the Corporate Safety Statement for their area of work</li> </ul>

<p><b>Delivering Results</b></p>	<p><b>Problem Solving and Decision Making:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can pinpoint the critical information and can address issues logically Acts decisively and makes timely, informed and effective decisions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Operational Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Establishes high quality service and customer care standards</li> <li>• Organising work programmes and implementing solutions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Managing Resources and achieving efficiencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages the allocation, use and evaluation of resources to ensure they are used efficiently to deliver on operational plans</li> <li>• Drives and promotes reduction in costs and minimisation of waste.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ensuring Compliance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abides by the laws, regulations and policies and procedures affecting your employment and the discharge of your duties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Delivering Quality Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes the achievement of quality outcomes in delivering services, which are linked to the corporate priorities, with a focus on continuous improvement</li> <li>• Evaluates the outcomes achieved against operational plans, identifies learning and implements improvements required.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Personal Effectiveness</b></p>	<p><b>Resilience and Personal Well-Being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remains calm under pressure and can separate personal issues from work issues</li> <li>• Values the well-being of staff and others by managing stress levels and work-life balance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Integrity &amp; Public Service Values</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is honest and trustworthy in all dealings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal Motivation and Initiative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is enthusiastic about the role and is motivated in the face of difficulties and obstacles</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does more than is required or expected, anticipating situations and acting to pre-empt problems</li> </ul>
<b>Performance through People</b>	<p><b>Leading and Motivating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leads, motivates and engages others to achieve quality results.</li> </ul> <p><b>Managing Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowers and encourages people to deliver their part of the operational plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communicating Effectively</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has effective verbal and written communication skills</li> <li>Has good interpersonal skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge, Experience and Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge and understanding of the structure and functions of local government including service requirements.</li> <li>Knowledge of current local government issues.</li> <li>Understanding of the role of an Assistant Scientist</li> <li>Understanding key challenges facing the local government sector and Kildare County Council.</li> <li>Knowledge and experience of operating ICT systems.</li> </ul>

## Particulars of Employment

### The Post

The post is wholtime (i.e., 35 hours per week) and appointment may be permanent or temporary.

### Driving Licence

Applicants should at the date of applying hold a full valid Irish /EU licence, for Class B vehicles, or a licence acceptable to NDLS for transfer to full Irish licence, (Link below). They must be a competent driver and, shall drive a car in the course of their duties and for this purpose provide and maintain a car to the satisfaction of the local authority. The council must be indemnified on their insurance.

<https://www.ndls.ie/help/faq.html#exchange-of-foreign-driving-licences>

### Location

Kildare County Council reserves the right to assign the successful candidates to any premises in use by the Council, now or in the future.

The person appointed will be required to report to their place of work by their own means of transport and at their own expense.



## **Commencement**

Kildare County Council shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month and if they fail to take up the appointment within such period, or such other longer period as the Council in its absolute discretion may determine, Kildare County Council shall not appoint them.

## **Working Hours**

The current working hours are 35 hours per week, Monday to Friday. Kildare County Council reserves the right to alter the hours of work from time to time in line with Government Circulars.

All hours worked are subject to and recorded in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997, and the Organisation of Working Time Regulations, 2001. Kildare County Council requires employees to record their hours using a Clocking system.

## **Reporting Arrangements**

Assistant Scientists report directly to the appropriate supervisor in the Section or to any other employee of Kildare County Council as the Director of Services or other appropriate employee may designate for this purpose.

A system of regular appraisal will be operated during employment, which will involve discussions between the employee and the line manager regarding performance and conduct.

## **Probationary Period of Employment**

Where a person is permanently appointed to Kildare County Council, the following provisions shall apply –

- a) there shall be a period after appointment takes effect, during which such a person shall hold the position on probation;
- b) such period shall be twelve months, but the Chief Executive may, at their discretion, extend such period;
- c) such a person shall cease to hold the position at the end of the period of probation, unless during this period the Chief Executive has certified that the service is satisfactory;
- d) the period at (a) above may be terminated on giving one weeks' notice as per the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts;
- e) there will be assessments during the probationary period.

## **Remuneration**

€44,853 per annum to €65,576 per annum (maximum)

€67,677 per annum (LSI 1) (after 3 years satisfactory service at maximum)

€69,782 per annum (LSI 2) (after 6 years satisfactory service at maximum)

On appointment successful candidates will be placed on the first point of the salary scale. Appointment to a higher point of the salary scale may apply to candidates employed elsewhere in the public service, subject to verification of service history.

Remuneration is paid fortnightly by PayPath directly to the employees nominated bank account. The current wage pay cycle may be revised during the period of employment. Remuneration is subject to all statutory deductions, e.g., P.A.Y.E. and P.R.S.I. Increments are paid annually subject to satisfactory attendance, conduct and performance and national agreements. Increments may be withheld if performance, attendance and/or conduct are not satisfactory.

### **Superannuation & Retirement**

A person who becomes a pensionable employee of the County Council will be required in respect of their Superannuation to contribute to the Local Authority at the appropriate rate.

The terms of the Local Government Superannuation (Consolidation) Scheme 1998 as amended or the Public Services Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 or the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme & Other Provisions) Act 2012 will apply as appropriate on appointment.

Retirement age for employees is dependent on their relevant contract of employment, with due consideration being given to the rules of the Superannuation Scheme to which they belong.

- For appointees who are deemed not to be “new entrants” as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, retirement is compulsory on reaching 65 years of age.
- The minimum retirement age for “new entrants” to the public service as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 is 65. There is no mandatory retirement age.
- Effective from 1st January 2013, The Single Public Service Scheme applies to all first-time new entrants to the public service, as well as to former public servants returning to the public service after a break of more than 26 weeks:
  - Retirement age is set, initially, at 66 years; this will rise in step with statutory changes in the State Pension Contributory (SPC) age to 67 years in 2021 and 68 years in 2028.
  - Compulsory retirement age will be 70.

### **Annual Leave**

Granting of annual leave, payment for annual leave and arrangements for public holidays will be governed by the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 and the nationally agreed annual leave scheme for the sector. The annual leave year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December. The current leave entitlement for this post is **30** days.

The Chief Executive of Kildare County Council retains autonomy regarding office closures, (e.g., Christmas Office Closure), any days arising from such closure will be reserved from the employee's annual leave entitlement. Proposed office closure days will be reviewed and advised to all employees each year.

### **Residence**

The person holding the office must reside in, or at an address convenient to the Local Authority, as approved by the Chief Executive.

### **Outside Employment**

The position is whole-time, and the officer may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which would interfere with the performance of official duties.

### **Code Of Conduct/Organisation Policies**

Employees are required to adhere to all current and future Kildare County Council codes of practice including Code of Conduct of Employees and all current and future organisational policies including, but not limited to Health and Safety, Communications, Data Protection, Equality, Staff Mobility, Attendance Management and Use of Electronic Equipment.

### **Training**

Employees are required to attend and participate fully in training programmes as may be decided by the Council from time to time and to apply their learning in the course of their daily working activities.

### **Health and Safety Regulations**

Kildare County Council as an Employer is obliged to ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work of all its employees. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the County Council has a legal duty to exercise all due care and take all protective and preventative measures to protect the Safety, Health and Welfare of its employees.

All employees also have a legal obligation under Safety and Health legislation to co-operate with management and not engage in any improper conduct or behaviour or do anything, which would place themselves or others at risk.

### **Canvassing**

Any attempt by a candidate, or by any person(s) acting at the candidate's instigation, directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise influence in the candidate's favour, any member of the staff of the County Council or person nominated by the County Council to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position being sought.

### **Important Notice**

**The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.**

## Communications

Kildare County Council will contact you, when necessary, at each stage of the competition by email. It is strongly recommended that you only submit one email address with the application form, and that you do not change your email address during this recruitment campaign, as any email will be sent to the email address originally supplied on your application form. It is important to note that the email address you provide when applying must be one that you can access at all times. The onus is on the applicant to inform the Human Resources Department of any change in email address throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing [jobs@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:jobs@kildarecoco.ie). The onus is also on each applicant to ensure that s/he is in receipt of all communication from the Council. Kildare County Council does not accept responsibility for communications not accessed or received by an applicant.

The personal information collected on the application form, including any attachments, (which may include the collection of sensitive personal data) is collected for the purpose of processing this application and any data collected is subject to Kildare County Council's privacy statement which can be found at [Click Here](#)

## Before You Proceed

Before proceeding you should satisfy yourself that you meet the requirements for the post as set out in Page 4 of this booklet. This will prevent you from incurring unnecessary expense in progressing in the competition.

## Shortlisting

Kildare County Council reserves the right to shortlist applications. Shortlisting may take the form of either a desktop-shortlisting process (based on the information provided by the candidate in their completed application form) or a shortlisting interview.

Kildare County Council reserves its right to shortlist candidates, in the manner it deems most appropriate, to proceed to the interview stage of the competition. Shortlisting will be completed on the basis of information supplied on the application form and the likely number of vacancies to be filled. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications / experience on the application form. The shortlisting process will provide for the assessment of each applicant's application form against predetermined criteria that reflect the skills and depth of experience considered to be essential for a position at this level.

The information you supply in the application form will play a central part of the shortlisting process. Kildare County Council's decision to include you on the shortlist of candidates going forward to the next stage of the process may be determined based on this information.

The shortlisting board will examine the application forms against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements for the position. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your relevant qualifications/experience on your application form. Based on examination of the application form, the shortlisting board will select those who appear to be most suitable for the position.

You will be contacted in relation to any interview dates and times. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you must produce photographic identification.

## **Interview Stage**

### **Interview Process**

The interview is your opportunity to provide evidence of your knowledge, skills and experience and the Local Authority's opportunity to assess your suitability for the role as advertised.

Candidates will be assessed at the interview under five main competencies.

- 1. Performance Management & Change**
- 2. Delivering Results**
- 3. Personal Effectiveness**
- 4. Performance through People**
- 5. Knowledge, Experience and Skills**

A list of these competencies and key indicators are included on pages 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Candidates must achieve a minimum 50% of the total marks available in each of the competencies outlined above at interview in order to meet the qualifying standard.

Kildare County Council may at their discretion require candidates to attend a preliminary interview in which case admission to the competitive interview would be conditional on candidates reaching such a standard as Kildare County Council considered appropriate in the preliminary interview.

Interviews shall be conducted by Board(s) set up by Kildare County Council. The Board(s) will assess the merits of candidates (except insofar as they are assessed otherwise) in respect of matters referred to in the prescribed Qualifications and any other relevant matters. Only candidates who reach such a standard as Kildare County Council consider satisfactory in the competitive interview shall be considered for selection and placed on a panel.

## **Feedback**

Candidates shall be notified of the outcome of each stage of the selection process as soon as possible.

If, following the interview, a candidate is placed on a panel they shall be informed of their marks and position on the panel.

### **Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required by Kildare County Council, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as required by Kildare County Council within the specified timeframe, regarding any matter relevant to their candidature, will be deemed to have withdrawn their application from the competition.

### **Pre-Employment Checks**

Before contracts of employment are agreed, various checks are undertaken. These include medicals, references, verification of qualifications and may include Garda vetting.

### **Confidentiality**

Kildare County Council, in its recruitment and selection procedures, has appropriate measures in place to protect the confidentiality of all applicants. All enquiries, applications and other aspects that form part of the recruitment formalities are treated as confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside of those directly involved in the recruitment process - subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts.

Records created, maintained, and stored by Kildare County Council as part of the recruitment and selection process are subject to a range of legislation, including Freedom of Information and Data Protection. Kildare County Council shall comply with the National Records Retention Policy and any other relevant records retention policies.

### **Citizenship**

Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

- (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
- (e)** 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.
- (g)** Please note that in order to work in Ireland, a non-EEA National, unless they are exempted, must hold a valid Employment Permit. Should you be successful in the selection process, prior to appointment you will be required to confirm that you are in possession of same.