



## **Candidate Information Booklet**

**IRC264560**

## **Dairy Herd Manager - Higher Scientific Officer (HSO)**

**Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute Northern Ireland (AFBI)**

Completed Application Forms must be returned to HRConnect no later than 12 noon (UK time) on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021

# **Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute**

## **Communication between HRConnect and you**

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

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## FOREWORD

### ABOUT THE AGRI-FOOD AND BIOSCIENCES INSTITUTE

**The Agri-food & Biosciences Institute (AFBI) is a leading provider of scientific research and services to government, non-governmental and commercial organisations.**

AFBI was established on 1 April 2006 as a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

As the Northern Ireland Government's main research and science provider in the areas of agri-food, fisheries and the environment, AFBI's science plays a crucial role in providing the underpinning statutory and analytical testing, research and development work, emergency response and expert scientific advice required to support the work of DAERA and the wider agri-food industry. AFBI's key science themes represent, Leading improvements in the agri-food industry; Protecting animal, plant and human health; and Enhancing the natural and marine environments.

In line with AFBI's vision of "Advancing the local and global agri-food sectors through scientific excellence" the Institute seeks to be an influential, internationally recognised centre for research and scientific services in the agri-food and marine sectors. AFBI's science is outcome-driven and aimed at solving important practical problems for a wide range of local, national and international funders in the public and private sectors. Our staff carry out world class research, surveillance, and analytic and diagnostic testing for a wide range of funders in the fields of animal health and welfare, sustainable agricultural systems, plant science, food innovation and safety, environmental protection, fisheries and aquatic ecosystems, and agricultural and rural economics.

AFBI's current Corporate Plan outlines our strategy and ambitions for the period 2018 to 2022. It sets out the 3 strategic outcomes we aim to deliver for society, the economy and the environment, as well as industry and customers in an ever more efficient and effective manner. The plan demonstrates the unique multidisciplinary strength of AFBI and how we will work with partners from science, government, industry and farmers to provide a positive impact. These achievements will be underpinned by attracting and developing excellent staff and building a fit for purpose physical infrastructure.

AFBI's 'Science Impacts 2020' publication outlines key outcomes from AFBI science. Notably over the past 5 years AFBI have delivered approximately four million animal, plant and food safety tests to support sales from the NI agri-food industry to the value of £3.2 billion. In that period, AFBI have also delivered >90 evidence and innovation projects for DAERA, ~400 peer review scientific publications, over two thousand outreach activities, and have secured £44m of external research grants and contracts working with partners from across 35 countries. We are also actively developing strategic alliances

with other research organisations and dissemination partners to facilitate a pipeline of research from fundamental to applied and onward application to ensure the impact of AFBI Science.

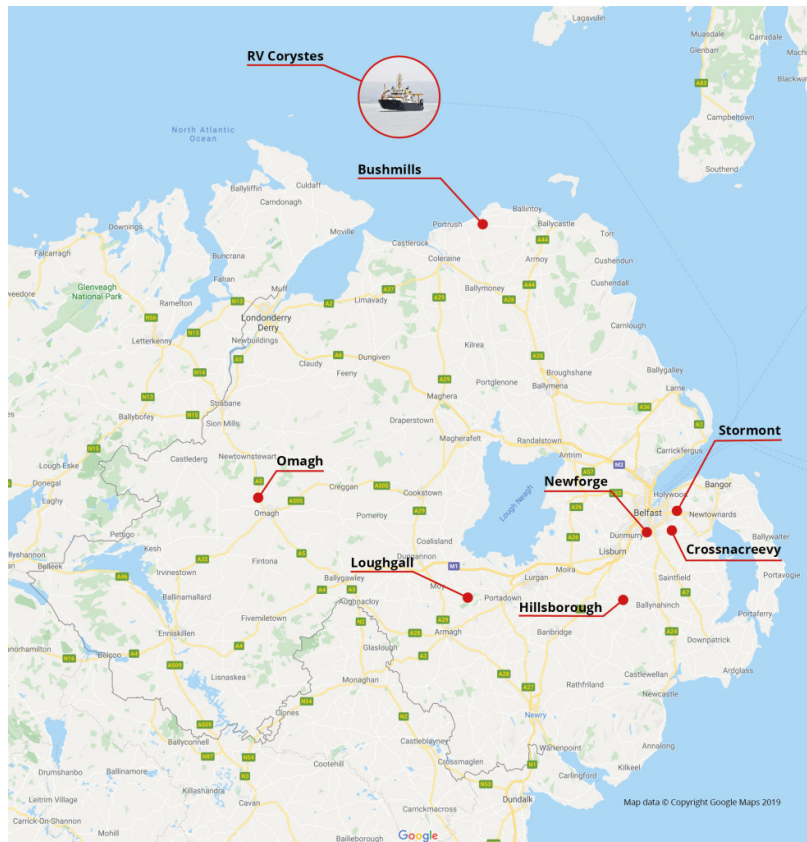
In order to fulfil these outcomes for our funders and stakeholders across society, the economy and the environment, AFBI enjoys access to highly instrumented laboratory, field and ship based scientific platforms. Furthermore, we are working closely with our sponsor department to take forward an ambitious programme of capital investment in AFBI's infrastructure including a new animal health sciences building at AFBI Stormont, enhanced research farm facilities at AFBI Hillsborough and a replacement sea-going research vessel.

AFBI has a current staff complement of approximately 700 people, with an annual turnover of approximately £60 million. We are currently organised across 4 divisions – Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division (SAFSD), Veterinary Science Division (VSD), Environment & Marine Sciences (EMSD) and Finance and Corporate Affairs Division (FCAD).

## AFBI SITES

AFBI is located on seven sites across Northern Ireland with its Headquarters at Newforge Lane, Belfast.

In addition AFBI has a dedicated marine research vessel, the RV Corystes, based in Port of Belfast.



- Newforge Lane (Headquarters)
- VSD Stormont
- Hillsborough
- Crossnacreevy
- Loughgall
- Omagh
- Bushmills

## **BRANCH BACKGROUND**

### **LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION SCIENCES BRANCH**

Livestock Production Sciences (LPS) Branch is one of five Branches within the Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division in AFBI and aims to address the global challenges of food security and sustainable intensification. The aims of the Branch are to develop and sustain an integrated research effort with national and international recognition in sustainable livestock production and welfare systems, thereby

- developing sustainable practices within a competitive industry
- providing a scientific basis for government policy and
- enhancing the quality of the environment.

The work of the Branch links fundamental science to systems level research to deliver innovations for the agri-food sector and scientific knowledge in ways that assist policy makers and industry partners. An innovative approach is taken linking large-scale applied research studies undertaken on farms across Northern Ireland to strategic research and development at AFBI's LPS Branch and further to more fundamental research in partnership with other AFBI Branches and external research organisations.

Work within LPS Branch continues to develop to meet the requirements of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), other government departments, NGO's and industry within a policy environment of ever increasing emphasis on promoting competitiveness in the marketplace, food security, delivering an improved environment and addressing animal welfare concerns. Scientific outputs from LPS Branch underpin government policy on livestock production, welfare, environment and renewable energy issues.

LPS Branch research and development is also promoting innovation in the agri-food sector and our outputs are key drivers of strategic initiatives in the industry including technology transfer programmes led by the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise. In addition, LPS Branch provides analytical services for livestock feedstuffs, manures and agri-food products for DAERA and the agri-food sector. The research platform comprises an instrumented research farm at AFBI Hillsborough with satellite facilities at AFBI Loughgall and AFBI Stormont. Livestock enterprises include dairying, beef, dairy, pigs, poultry and sheep.

The post will be based at AFBI's livestock research farm at Hillsborough. The dairy herd comprises approximately 300 predominantly Holstein dairy cows and young stock (numbers under review), with the herd within the top 1% of herds within the UK for £PLI. Calving takes place from September to April. Average herd performance will depend on on-going research studies however, the autumn-calving component of the herd typically produce 8500 – 9500 litres of milk per lactation, while the spring calving component typically produce around 6500 litres of milk per lactation. All herd replacements are reared on farm with a target age at first calving of 24 months. Following

weaning, dairy-bred beef calves are reared by the beef unit and used in research trials where appropriate. Current research programmes address a wide range of issues, including production efficiency, animal health and welfare, environmental issues, and grassland management.

The dairy facilities are equipped with good handling facilities, a 50 point rotary milking parlour, a milking robot, and an experimental byre facility. Cows are housed across a number of cubicle houses, while heifers are reared on-site within an adjacent heifer rearing facility. Approximately 60 ha of grassland equipped with good infrastructure is available for grazing, and is located next to the main dairy buildings. The herd is equipped with a number of technologies, including pedometers, feed intake bins and TMR feed management software to assist with herd health and nutritional management. Silage production, sward renewal and slurry management is undertaken by a general farm management team which services the whole farm platform.

Long term breeding strategies seek to maintain a high herd PLI, with sire selection focused on fertility, milk composition and longevity traits. Most research programs have the production of high levels of milk from quality forage as an underlying objective, while improving the productivity of the grazing platform is another key herd objective. There is an ongoing program of work to improve housing infrastructure, while a longer term 'infrastructure upgrade' plan is being developed for the site. Delivery of this plan will be subject to funding being secured in the future.

### **DAIRY HERD MANAGER**

The Dairy Herd Manager will have responsibility for all aspects of the day-to-day management of the AFBI dairy herd (dairy cows and dairy young-stock), dairy facilities (excluding specialised research equipment), dairy housing and dairy grazing platform. They will be responsible for coordinating and managing all aspects of the work undertaken by the dairy industrial team, including managing staff rotas. The post-holder will be responsible for ensuring that milk produced by the AFBI dairy herd meets all legislative requirements, and can be sold for human consumption. They will be responsible for ensuring high animal health, welfare and environmental standards are maintained across the unit. The work will involve inputting data/information into, and extracting data/information from a range of computer systems, so good IT skills will be required.

The post-holder will play a pivotal role in facilitating a wide range of research programmes (by working in partnership with the Dairy Technical Manager), ensuring that animals are available for use in experiments, and managed correctly (according to experimental protocols) while on experiments, in line with all legislative and welfare requirements. This may involve managing animals on potentially 'sub-optimal' nutritional or management regimes, to meet experimental requirements. The post-holder will also be responsible for ensuring that all herd facilities are well maintained, and are compliant with the Animal Scientific Procedures Act (ASPA), and will be required to obtain a Personal Animal Licence (under ASPA), and become fully familiar with the requirements of the ASPA.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

There is currently one permanent, full time vacancy. A reserve list will exist and will be held for a period of 12 months from the date of interview, to cover any further vacancies which may arise.

### **Salary**

Salary will be within the range £31,137 - £32,800, pay increases will be on an incremental basis provided staff performance reports are satisfactory.

Starting salary will normally be at the minimum of the scale except for existing AFBI staff for whom starting salary may be determined by either promotion or re-grading terms if these are more favourable.

### **Annual Leave**

In addition to the usual public and privilege holidays, there is an annual leave allowance of 25 days, increasing to 30 after five year's satisfactory service.

### **Working Hours**

The successful candidate will normally be required to work 5 days each week, totalling 37 hours. On occasions the duties will require some evening and weekend working. AFBI operates a flexi working system.

### **Location**

The successful candidate will be based at AFBI Hillsborough, Co. Down BT26 6DR, however, they may, on occasion, also be expected to work at other sites in Northern Ireland as required

### **Travel**

The post may entail some travel throughout Northern Ireland and for this reason the successful applicant will require access to a form of transport which will permit them to meet the requirements of the post in full.

### **Medical**

The successful candidate will be required to manage a large dairy herd on a day-to-day basis and should therefore be aware of the requirement to work in dairy houses, in fields and to work closely with dairy cows and calves. The successful candidate may therefore be required to undergo and pass a medical assessment prior to appointment.

### **Probation**

The post holder will serve 12 months probation in the new post. This will commence from the date of appointment. At the end of the probation period a



formal review will be conducted to determine if the posting will be made permanent.

### **Accommodation**

The post-holder may be required to live on site occupying rental accommodation, and to provide out of hours cover (requirements under review).

### **Further Information**

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone Linda Kemp on 028 9025 5588 or email [linda.kemp@afbini.gov.uk](mailto:linda.kemp@afbini.gov.uk)

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net)

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### *Herd management*

- Responsibility for the day-to-day husbandry of all dairy young-stock and dairy cows, from birth, and until they leave the dairy unit.
- In partnership with scientists, the dairy technical manager, the farm manager, veterinary surgeons etc. ensure that the AFBI dairy herd is managed to the highest standard, and provides a 'fit-for-purpose' resource for future research needs. This will include ensuring that policies and Standard Operating Procedures are in place for all key aspects of herd management e.g. calf rearing, breeding, health, milking routine.
- Maintain accurate, up-to-date records of key herd parameters such as performance, fertility, health, medicine usage.
- Ensure experimental animals are fed and managed, as per experimental protocols. Ensure that animals not on experiments are fed and managed in accordance with best practice, or in preparation for planned experiments.
- Ensure compliance with all legislative requirements associated with the operation of a dairy herd, including drug storage and recording of usage, chemical usage, animal health and welfare, milk hygiene etc.
- Ensure compliance with Red Tractor certification, and any other relevant certification schemes which may arise. Be aware of relevant emerging legislative requirements, and implement as and when necessary.
- Measure and report on a series of agreed key performance indicators for the overall performance and health of the dairy and dairy young-stock herd.
- Work closely with the Dairy Technical Manager to ensure there are sufficient and appropriate animals available for use in planned research trials.
- Work with scientists and Dairy Technical Manager to ensure all animals are managed, and all records are maintained, in compliance with the Animal Scientific Procedures Act and with ISO 90001.
- Seek to maintain the highest levels of Biosecurity throughout the dairy unit at all times.
- Most herd records are now maintained electronically (including using a new herd management system), and good IT skills, and a good working knowledge of Microsoft Excel will be essential.

### *Resource management*

- Liaise with farm management team to ensure farm management operation are carried out, as and when necessary (e.g. management of manure stores, silage harvesting from grazing paddocks), to manage procurement of herd inputs (e.g. feedstuffs, fertiliser and medicines),

and to manage collective resources (e.g. machinery, forage stocks, grazing areas).

- Manage the grazing platform to optimise productivity. Maintain detailed records of inputs to, and performance from, the grassland platform.
- Ensure dairy facilities are maintained in a tidy and presentable state at all times, prepare the unit for visiting groups, and knowledge exchange events, and give presentations to visiting groups concerning the AFBI Herd and facilities.

#### *Staff management*

- This position will require excellent staff management skills. Manage a team of industrial staff, and agency/contract staff, including planning work schedules, to deliver daily herd management and animal husbandry tasks. Supervise and mentor placement students.
- Ensure compliance with H&S related requirements such as risk assessments and COSHH. Includes ensuring awareness of H&S with industrial team and others that may utilise the AFBI-dairy facilities.
- Many staff management records are undertaken using electronic systems, and good IT skills will be required.

#### *Facilities management*

- Maintain and develop the dairy livestock facilities, including the milking parlour, milking robot, housing, machinery and land base, to meet the requirements of research programmes. Propose and help secure any relevant capital funding required to deliver the above.

#### *Finance management*

- Work with the farm management team and AFBI finance to accurately forecast income and expenditure associated with the Dairy herd, and in the procurement of good and services to comply with the AFBI Procurement Policy.

#### *Self-management*

- Comply with all AFBI policies in relation to own behaviour, time recording/management, annual performance review process etc.

#### *Other duties:*

The post holder will be required to fulfil any other duties and responsibilities as determined by management that fall within the remit of the post. The job description is not intended to be rigid and inflexible. Rather, it should be regarded as working guidelines within which the post holder will work. The scope of duties may change over time, subject to a review of AFBI structures.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications, have:

1. GCSE (or equivalent) in Mathematics (Grades A-C, or equivalent);
2. A HND qualification or higher in Agriculture/Animal Science/Dairying, or an equivalent subject;
3. At least 3 years of recent experience (within the last 6 years) of being a manager of a dairy herd of at least 150 dairy cows, OR, at least 3 years of recent experience (within the last 6 years) of being the assistant manager of a large dairy herd (more than 200 cows);
4. At least 2 years recent experience (within the last 6 years) in a formal management role that involved the day-to-day management of a team of full time employed farm staff;
5. Experience of successfully managing a grassland platform supporting livestock production;
6. Experience of having used software programmes and/or computer systems to record livestock data electronically, and evidence of having used that data to implement farm management practices;
7. Experience in using spreadsheets in Microsoft Excel;
8. Experience of adopting scientific finding/best management approaches in livestock management;
9. A full driving licence which permits them to drive farm vehicles.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

**Relevant or equivalent** qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc so that a well-informed decision can be made.

## SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition, applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, eligibility criteria 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be scored and the highest scoring candidates will proceed to interview.

In providing evidence **for both eligibility and shortlisting criteria** it will be essential that candidates draw upon specific examples of work they have undertaken to illustrate the extent to which they possess the experience and skills required. It will not be sufficient simply to list the duties and responsibilities of posts held.

### **Please note:**

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.**
- **Further information on the Core Competences for this grade can be accessed through [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)**

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the eligibility criteria and shortlisting criteria. In addition, they will also be required to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competency framework at Level 3 for the purposes of personal and professional development.

Higher Scientific Officer is analogous to Staff Officer in the NICS.

### **What is the NICS competency framework?**

The competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results. Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed through [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

**It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of the assessment / interview criteria as outlined below.**

## **INTERVIEW CRITERIA**

The selection process will include a presentation and a competence based interview. In addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria and shortlisting criteria applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview:

### **1. Professional Knowledge and Skills**

**Marks available: 40**

**Minimum standard 24**

### **2. Making effective decisions**

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. For all staff, it means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well reasoned, justifiable decisions.

**Marks Available: 10**

### **3. Leading and Communicating**

At all levels, effectiveness in this area is about leading from the front and communicating with clarity, conviction and enthusiasm. It is about supporting principles of fairness of opportunity for all and a dedication to a diverse range of citizens.

**Marks Available: 10**

### **4. Delivering at pace**

Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes. For all staff, it is about working to agreed goals and activities and dealing with challenges in a responsive and constructive way.

**Marks Available: 10**

## **5. Changing and Improving**

People who are effective in this area are responsive, innovative and seek out opportunities to create effective change. For all staff, it is about being open to change, suggesting ideas for improvements to the way things are done, and working in 'smarter', more focused ways.

**Marks Available: 10**

**Total Marks Available: 80**

**Overall Pass Mark: 48 (60%)**

## **COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS**

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the above areas and award marks accordingly.

## **INTERVIEWS**

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in AFBI Newforge during week commencing Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Candidates should note that due to current circumstances with COVID 19, social distancing measures will be put in place. If this is not possible the use of video technology may be used as an alternative.



## **INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

**If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:**

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

**A competence-based interview does however require you to:**

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

**In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:**

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

## SELECTION PROCESS

### The Merit Principle

Appointments to AFBI are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

### Making your application

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

### Guidance for Applicants

- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- State clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. State "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

### Application Form Submission

You can apply online at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk).

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.
- **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.

- Please note - the session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

### **Changes in personal circumstances**

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

### **Communication between HRConnect and you**

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

### **Transgender Requirements**

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration in confidence to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

### **Further appointments from this competition**

Where a further position in AFBI is identified which is considered broadly similar to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration will be given to filling the position from this competition. The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for a period of up to one year.

### **Disability Requirements**

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact HRConnect.

### **Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form**

**Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.**

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement to which AFBI adheres please refer to page 23.

Applications are particularly welcomed from Roman Catholics and Females as these groups are currently under-represented within AFBI.

### **AFBI is an Equal Opportunities Employer.**

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

### **Assessment Information**

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

### **Employment Requirements**

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom.

Entry to the United Kingdom is controlled under the Immigration Act 1971. Everyone who does not have the right of abode is subject to immigration control. You should check whether there are any restrictions on your stay or your freedom to take or change employment before you apply for a post. If you are invited to interview we will ask you to provide documentation confirming that you are entitled to work in the UK, under the terms of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

Advice on entitlement to work may be obtained from the Home Office website, [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

### **Nationality Requirements**

There are no nationality requirements for AFBI posts.

### **Vetting Procedures**

#### 1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For this post the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- a) Your passport OR

- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) **AND** your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) Other acceptable documents are listed on [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).
- d) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI through Experian. HRConnect will provide your details to Experian who will undertake this check. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is:

### **Basic Disclosure Certificate**

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made. Further information regarding policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the vetting process is available at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk) in Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

Security Policy for AccessNI Disclosure Information is available at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk) under Useful Information.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni)

For more information, the address of the AccessNI website is: <http://www.accessni.gov.uk/>. Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment. Failure to complete the application form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

### **Order of Merit**

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Pensions**

New entrants who join the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) are eligible to join the NICS pension scheme.

Further details can be found on the Civil Service Pensions (Northern Ireland) website at:

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/civil-service-pensions-ni>

or

if you are unable to access the website please contact Civil Service Pensions as follows:

Civil Service Pensions  
Waterside House  
75 Duke Street  
Londonderry  
BT47 6FP  
Tel: 02871 319000  
Email: [cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk)

### **Feedback**

AFBI is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All requests for feedback are welcome.

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF  
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

**Contact details:**

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect by;

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## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

### **Policy Statement**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy statement to which AFBI adheres is set out below:

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) has a strong and clear commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere where they are treated with dignity and respect. We aim to provide opportunities for all sections of the community and continue to strive to create an inclusive working environment in which difference is recognised and valued. Bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and giving each person the opportunity to contribute their skills and experience will help us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve”.

We all want to work in an harmonious workplace where we feel valued, respected and included, irrespective of gender, including gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race/ethnic origin, religious belief or political opinion, disability, having or not having dependants, sexual orientation and age.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to attract, recruit, develop and retain the very best people at all levels. Our approach is based on three key principles:-

**Equality** – we promote equality of opportunity by seeking to remove barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups of people.

**Diversity** – we accept each person as an individual. Our success is built on our ability to embrace diversity – and we believe that everyone should feel valued for their contributions. By working together we will deliver the best possible service for our staff, customers and stakeholders.

**Inclusion** – we create a working culture where differences are not merely accepted, but valued; where everyone has the opportunity to develop in a way that is consistent with, and adheres to NICS values of impartiality, honesty, integrity and objectivity. Our aim is to be an organisation where people feel involved, respected and connected to our success.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.



## **Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Monitoring equality and diversity in the workforce enables the NICS to examine how our employment policies and processes are working and to identify areas where these appear to be impacting disproportionately on certain groups of staff.

### **Legislative Context**

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

### **Gender**

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also provided in the annual statutory monitoring the, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

### **Age**

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different ages and age groups.

### **Community Background**

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The Order also requires the NICS to submit an annual monitoring return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. This takes the form of a statistical return, providing information on the gender and community background composition of all people working in the NICS at the 1st January each year.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality

Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

### **Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

**Physical Impairment:** this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

**Mental Impairment:** this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability, and social functioning.

**Substantial:** put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carryout normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

**Long-term adverse effect:** the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

**A normal day to day activity:** this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

### ***What sort of effect must there be?***

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; ability to take part in normal social interaction and form social relationships; or perception of risk of physical danger.

### ***What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?***

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

***Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?***

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

***Are any conditions not covered?***

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

***What if someone has recovered from a disability?***

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without.

***Race***

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group(s).

***Sexual Orientation***

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies

information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

### **Marital Status**

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended), makes it unlawful to discriminate against married persons and civil partners in employment. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status.

### **Dependants Status**

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions in NI, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with dependants and persons without.

### **Confidentiality of Monitoring Information**

The following general principles will be applied to all individual monitoring information:-

- individual monitoring information will be afforded a high degree of confidentiality;
- misuse of monitoring information will be viewed as a disciplinary offence; and
- individual monitoring information will only be disclosed to members of staff or officials of a trade union, members of which are employed in the NICS, if it is necessary to do so for the appropriate discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

In addition to the above internal safeguards on the protection of equality monitoring information generally, the confidentiality of community background monitoring information is protected through Regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained, or is used, for the purpose of monitoring under FETO.

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.