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National Museum of Ireland

*Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann*

**Preventive Conservator – Natural History  
Museum Capital Project  
(Assistant Keeper Grade II)**

National Museum of Ireland

**INFORMATION BOOKLET**

# National Museum of Ireland

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The **National Museum of Ireland (NMI)** is seeking applications from suitable candidates to fill the post of **Preventive Conservator – Natural History Museum Capital Project (Assistant Keeper Grade II)** in the National Museum of Ireland. This is a full-time, two years, fixed-term contract position and will be filled by open competitive interviews.

## **Job Title**

Preventive Conservator – Natural History Museum Capital Project (Assistant Keeper Grade II)

## **Location**

The candidate will be a staff member of the Conservation Department, in the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) headquarters in Collins Barracks (CB), Benburb Street, Dublin 7.

However, the post holder will be located jointly in NMI sites housing Natural History collections, primarily at the Natural History (NH) Museum on Merrion Street, the Collection Resource Centre (CRC) in Swords Co. Dublin, and also at the off-site stores off Haddington Road and the NMI headquarters, Collins Barracks.

## **Reporting to**

The post-holder will report to the Head of Conservation.

## **Background and Strategic Context:**

The NMI was established following the Dublin Science and Art Museum Act of 1877.

The NMI currently comprises 8 sites housing collections across four curatorial areas: The museum of Decorative Arts and History, Collins Barracks; The Natural History Museum, Merrion Square, The Museum of Archaeology, Kildare Street and the Museum of Country Life, Co Mayo as well as storage facilities in Dublin and the Collection Resource Centre, Co. Dublin with further stores in Co. Roscommon and Offaly.

The NMI is engaging in an extensive programme of Capital Projects, which necessitate major building renovation, and new build construction works, building decants and collections moves, extensive and comprehensive conservation works together with exhibition development.

Each of the above programmes of works rely on major decant projects and collections moves. The Redevelopment of the Natural History Museum, Merrion St will be the priority project for the period of this fixed term contract.

## **Natural History Museum:**

The NMI, Natural History (NH) on Merrion Street is a significant 1856 building embarking on an ambitious programme of redevelopment. **This project aims to refurbish and improve both the historic fabric of the museum building together with its listed internal furnishings and display cases in order to address the conservation and care needs of the collections.**

**Over 1 million objects have been decanted since 2017, and several thousand remaining objects** are to be moved in a final major decant phase to our Collections Resource Centre at

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Swords, Co. Dublin. The historic museum will be conserved and upgraded to higher standards of collections care before the collections are returned for re-display.

## **Purpose of the job**

The Preventive Conservator, Natural History (NH) will play an important role in relation to this major capital project, working on behalf of the Conservation Department and alongside the wider project team of NMI staff and contractors to support the management of collections care and conservation through all phases of the project. The Preventive Conservator (Natural History), will be responsible for management and delivery of preventive conservation and collection care measure, ensuring the protection and safeguarding of collections in relation to the NH Capital Development Project with particular focus on the decant of Merrion Street. They will undertake a series of condition and risk assessments especially as they pertain to collections moves; will lead on collection care requirements to ensure improvement in standards and safeguard all collections in the Collections Resource Centre (CRC) and other storage or display destinations. The NH Preventive Conservator will be responsible for assisting in the planning, monitoring and delivery of storage provision and environments across NMI sites. The Conservator will also be required to lead on collections management and care in respect of freezing, quarantining and other preventive measures and controls with particular reference to the CRC. They will work closely with and be guided by the Capital Projects Conservation Manager and/or other Conservator colleagues and will form an integral part of the NH project team. The Preventive Conservator will contribute to the training and instruction of the NH Project collection assistants. The Preventive Conservator will be required to participate in the development and implementation of policies, standards, procedures and protocols for all aspects of collection care.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The principal duties of this position will include:

- To assist Conservation Department staff in the management & delivery of conservation care with special reference to the NMI's Capital Projects Programme - NH Project.
- To support continuous improvement in the standards for care of collections
- To upgrade and promote NH collections through Preventive and Remedial Conservation Care.
- Examine and assess objects using a variety of investigative and analytical techniques to further understand collections and inform practice.
- To undertake a range of condition assessments of specimens and objects prior to collections moves or conservation, for potential acquisitions; objects for loan, exhibition; handling and reserve collections.
- To undertake risk assessments and produce method statements (RAMS) as required for the handling, movement and conservation of NH objects and specimens.
- To undertake, instruct and supervise others how to assess, photograph, condition check and carry out first level cleaning, handling and packing of collections and specimens as appropriate throughout the NH Capital Project.

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- To assist with the delivery and supervision of collection movement and transfer with NMI and third party teams and to ensure standards in the management of quarantine and collection care control measures in the CRC.
- To undertake remedial conservation work within your specialist area on NH collections, as agreed with the Head of Conservation.
- To monitor and control the museum environment (temperature, relative humidity, light and air pollution) for collections whether on exhibition, in store or in transit.
- Developing and maintaining an IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Plan for NH collections.
- Assess storage and display conditions and materials used, and carry out such improvements to them as are required for the long-term conservation of the museum's collections.
- To operate and maintain the preventive conservation laboratory equipment and supplies.
- To produce and manage written, digital and photographic records, on all work carried out which document condition, conservation requirements and treatment as well as processes for collection care
- Collaborate on, develop and implement Preventive Conservation policy, strategies and procedures for Natural History Collections
- Compile and maintain systems and controls and create written procedures, protocols and advice notes for all areas of preventive conservation.
- Manage and supervise safe packing procedures and methods to conservation standards for collection moves and transport of artefacts and specimens.
- Contribute to the NMI's disaster management and implementation plans working towards 'First-aid for cultural property in times of crises with particular reference to the NH collections.
- Develop and maintain the Conservation Department's Risk Register for Cultural Heritage/Collection Care with specific reference to NH collections, in collaboration with the Head of Conservation
- To inform, instruct and supervise the collection assistants on a day to day basis, guiding and leading them in their work thus ensuring collections are protected and safeguarded through all stages and phases of the NH capital project.
- To work with Registration Dept. colleagues to ensure all appropriate protocols are followed as regards labelling, location control and object tracking procedures are maintained for collections across multiple sites
- To be flexible to include the occasional requirement to work outside of normal museum working-hours and undertake courier trips involving overnight absences as required.
- Liaising with architects / engineers / designers on case design materials and environmental control for exhibition work.
- To be responsible for, and undertake, personal development and training as necessary, ensuring the maintenance and development of requisite skills relevant to the post.

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Additional duties: as appropriate

- Participation in the education and training of others involved in preventive conservation; giving lectures and explanatory tours of the department and contributing to Conservation Education at university level as requested by the Head of Conservation.
- Undertake fieldwork as requested.
- Provide advice to local museums and heritage centres on environmental monitoring and control measures and inspecting such locations to assess potential for storage and display of NH collections.
- Assessing Facilities Reports for potential out-going loans and drafting the conservation sections of Facilities Reports for potential incoming loans.
- Keeping up to date with and contributing to current research and developments in conservation related to NH collections and in preventive conservation, and publishing relevant articles.
- Such other duties (such as relevant fieldwork, investigative examination and remedial conservation etc.) as may be assigned from time to time by the Head of Conservation.

## **Personal Specification**

### **Essential Requirements**

- Hold an honours degree in an object Conservation subject (natural history, mixed material collections or relevant conservation specialism), a sizable part of which must have addressed Preventive Conservation/Museum Environment and a minimum of 3 years preventive conservation experience.

OR

- Alternatively: A postgraduate degree in object conservation, a sizable part of which must have addressed Preventive Conservation/Museum Environment (with primary degree in a related subject e.g. Art History, Archaeology, Fine Art, Natural Sciences etc.) and at least 3 years preventive conservation experience.

- OR

- Alternatively: A Post Graduate degree in Preventive Conservation ideally together with a qualification in an object conservation subject or a closely related subject area and at least 3 years Preventive Conservation experience.

And

- Demonstrable training, experience and comprehensive knowledge in Preventive Conservation.
- A knowledge of museum collections and experience managing the delivery of preventive conservation preferably within a museum context.
- A willingness to work with dead natural history specimens, including taxidermy birds and mammals, dried insects and spiders, skeletons (including humans), and fluid preserved specimens.
- Proven organisational skills and an ability to plan effectively and prioritise.

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- Excellent communication skills including writing, editing and presentation and a positive approach to working in the National Museum of Ireland.
- Demonstrated ability to work to deadlines and to maintain focus under pressure.
- An ability to learn quickly, to self-motivate as well as to work effectively within a team.
- A demonstrable commitment to personal development and training.

### **Desirable Requirements**

- A qualification in Preventive Conservation.
- A qualification in project management
- A knowledge of museum functioning and the objects likely to be found in the Natural History collections
- Previous experience of working with Natural History specimens, including taxidermy birds and mammals, dried insects and spiders, skeletons (including humans), geological specimens and fluid preserved specimens.
- An interest and enthusiasm to contribute to raising awareness about the activities of the Conservation Department and the NMI in general.
- Excellent research and analytical skills.
- Management of teams and budgets

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## Selection Process

In the event that the number of applications received significantly exceeds that required to fill existing and anticipated future vacancies over the lifetime of the panel, the National Museum of Ireland may implement a shortlisting process to select a number of candidates to be invited to interview on the basis of the information contained in their application. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable, or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that, on this occasion, there are some candidates who are, on the basis of the information provided, better qualified, and /or have more relevant experience.

The National Museum of Ireland does not reimburse the cost of travel to interview.

## Citizenship Requirements

Eligible Candidates must be:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- (b) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- (c) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- (d) 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
- (e) 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 Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

To qualify candidates must meet one of the citizenship criteria above by the date of any job offer.

***Note in respect of UK citizens:*** The recently concluded EU/UK Brexit negotiations have confirmed that the longstanding Common Travel Area Agreement between the UK and Ireland remains unchanged post-Brexit. Accordingly, UK citizens remain eligible to work and reside in Ireland without restriction and, as such, to make an application to compete for this competition where they meet all other qualifying eligibility criteria. Further information regarding the Common Travel Area is available [here](#).

## Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under the Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

## Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider Public Service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public funds. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

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### Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants:

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the public service by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility) and the Minister's consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any public service body.

Declaration: Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a public service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other public service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any public service employment.

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## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Applications are submitted on the vacancies section of the **National Museum of Ireland website**: <https://www.museum.ie/en-IE/About/Careers/Vacancies>

Applicants must submit the completed application form (Appendix 4), an up-to-date CV, and a cover letter. **We request that all three documents be combined and submitted in one single PDF.**

The application form must be completed in full and submitted in typescript. Handwritten applications and applications in the incorrect format type will not be accepted. Failure to do so will render the application incomplete, and the application will not be considered.

To commence the application process, visit our [Vacancies](#) page.

### **Steps to apply:**

- Go to the Vacancies page and select the position you wish to apply for.
- Read the Information Booklet for full details of the position.
- The documents required for your application appear on this page as links.
- Click each document, which will open in a new window. Download/Save each document to your computer/device.
- Complete the documents required and combine them into **one single PDF** along with your CV and cover letter.
- When this is complete, return to the NMI website to finish the application process.
- Again, from the [Vacancies](#) page, find the position you wish to apply for.
- Click the **Apply Now** button.
- Complete the Form.
- Upload your single combined PDF.
- Complete the Captcha check and then click **Submit Your Application**.

Please provide a **valid, monitored email address**. The email address will be used to acknowledge receipt of the application and as the main form of contact to liaise with applicants.

**Closing Date for Applications**  
**Applications must be received no later than 17:00**  
**On Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Please note that late applications will not be accepted.** The date and time will be strictly adhered to, and therefore, the onus is on the applicant to ensure that the application is received before the deadline. **Canvassing will disqualify.**

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## Assistant Keeper Grade II

### Principal conditions of service

#### Pay:

The salary scale for this position is as follows Assistant Keeper Grade II National Museum PPC Scale (Building Momentum Extn. 1st October 2023 – Greater of 1.5% or €750):

€36,086	€38,558	€39,220	€42,519	€45,829	€49,139	€52,479	€54,575	€56,683
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
€58,807	€60,918	€63,036	€65,154	€67,264	€69,393	€71,745	€74,094	
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15 NMAX</b>	<b>16 LSI1*</b>	<b>17 LSI2**</b>	

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy.

\* After 3 years satisfactory service at the maximum

\*\*After 6 years satisfactory service at the maximum

#### **Starting Salary**

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale - **€36,086** per annum, the 1<sup>st</sup> point on the Assistant Keeper Grade II National Museum PPC Scale (Building Momentum Extn. 1st October 2023 – Greater of 1.5% or €750). The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

#### **Tenure**

The appointment will be in a probationary capacity for a period of twelve months. Subject to successful completion of the probation period, a fixed term contract for a further twelve months will be offered. The appointment may be terminated at any time by either side in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts, 1973 and 1991.

#### **Annual leave**

Annual leave will be **25** working days a year. This leave is on the basis of a Five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

#### **Hours of Attendance**

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time in line with central agreements but will amount to not less than 43.25 gross hours per week (35 net hours per week). Where extra attendance is necessary, overtime payments, or time off in lieu, will be allowed in accordance with the civil service overtime regulations. Flexible working hours are available in line with the National Museum of Ireland's policy on flexible working hours.

You will agree to co-operate in assisting NMI to maintain accurate records of your working hours for the purpose of *Section 25 of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997*.

#### **Duties**

You will be required to perform any duties, which may be assigned to you from time to time as appropriate to the position. The position will be full time and you will not be connected with

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any outside business, which would interfere with the performance of official duties. You agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed.

## General

The appointment is subject to the Civil Service Regulation Acts, 1956 to 1996, the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the civil service. The appointee will be subject to the National Museum's policies in respect of Code of Standards and Behaviour.

## Superannuation and Retirement

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the National Museum of Ireland at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, and except for candidates who have worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment (see paragraph d below), this means being offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

### a. Pensionable Age

The minimum age at which pension is payable is 66 (rising to 67 and 68) in line with State Pension age changes.

### b. Retirement Age:

Scheme members must retire at the age of 70.

### c. Pension Abatement

- If the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil Service normal abatement rules will apply. However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER) or the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS which, as indicated above, renders a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.
- If the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service or in the Public Service please note that the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 includes a provision, which extends abatement of pension for all Civil, and Public Servants who are re-employed where a Public Service pension is in payment. This provision to apply abatement across the wider public service came into effect on 1 November 2012. **This may have pension implications for any person appointed to this position who is currently in receipt of a Civil or Public Service pension or has a preserved Civil or Public Service pension which will come into payment during his/her employment in this position.**
- **Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007**

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The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular documentation, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under **Strands 1, 2 or 3** of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme **will immediately cease**. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the ceasing of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

- **Ill-Health-Retirement.** Please note that where an individual has retired from a Civil/Public Service body on the grounds of ill health his/her pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement within the pension scheme of that employment.

## **d. Prior Public Servants**

While the default pension terms, as set out in the preceding paragraphs, consist of Single Scheme membership, this may not apply to certain appointees. Full details of the conditions governing whether or not a public servant is a Single Scheme member are given in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012. However the key exception case (in the context of this competition and generally) is that **a successful candidate who has worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) capacity in the public service within 26 weeks of taking up appointment, would in general not become a member of the Single Scheme.** In this case, such a candidate would instead be offered membership of the pension scheme for non-established civil servants ("Non-Established State Employee Scheme"). This would mean that the abatement provisions at (c) above would apply, and in addition, there are implications in respect of pension accrual as outlined below:

## **e. Pension Accrual**

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one existing public service pension scheme would apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. **This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.**

## **f. Pension-Related Deduction**

This appointment is subject to the pension-related deduction in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measure in the Public Interest Act 2009. For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme for Public Servants, please see the following website: <http://www.per.gov.ie/pensions>

## **Sick leave**

Full pay during properly certified sick absence, provided that there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, may be allowed up to a maximum 92 days in one year and at half pay thereafter, subject to a maximum of 183 days sick leave in any period of four years or less.

The appointee will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts direct to the National Museum of Ireland and payment during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims

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for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

## **Official secrecy and integrity**

The appointee will be subject to the provisions of the Official Secrets Act 1963, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 1997. The appointee will agree not to disclose to third parties any confidential information especially that with commercial potential either during, or subsequent to, the period of employment.

## **Prior approval of publications**

The appointee will agree not to publish material related to official duties without prior approval by the Director of the National Museum of Ireland.

## **Political activity**

During the term of employment, the appointee will be subject to the rules governing civil servants and politics.

## **Further details**

Detailed provisions regarding various other terms and conditions, such as categories of leave (including maternity, adoptive and health & safety leave), some or all of which may be relevant to the appointee, are set out in circulars available on [www.personnelcode.gov.ie](http://www.personnelcode.gov.ie).

This is intended only as a guide. Full terms and conditions will be issued as part of the contract of employment.