

IRISH LANGUAGE SCHEME FOR THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND

Scheme 2009 - 2012

Scheme as prepared under Section 11
of the Official Languages Act 2003

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Section 1

Introduction & Background

The scheme was prepared in accordance with Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 by the National Gallery of Ireland.

Section 11 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing the services they provide

- Through the medium of Irish
- Through the medium of English, and
- Through the medium of Irish and English.

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the Gallery through the medium of the Irish Language will be so provided within an agreed deadline.

Section 2

Guidelines / Preparation of the Scheme.

Section 12 of the Act provides for the preparation of guidelines by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht affairs and their issue to public bodies to assist in the preparation of the draft schemes. This scheme has been drawn up with due regard to those guidelines.

The Gallery published a notice under section 13 of the Act, inviting submissions in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme under Section 11 from any interested parties. All submissions received are available upon request. The Gallery appreciates the time and effort put in by all concerned in this process.

The scheme has been developed taking account of the submissions received throughout the consultation process, the views and suggestions of staff at the National Gallery of Ireland, and the current situation with regard to Irish Language service availability and capability.

Section 3

Commencement of the scheme.

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The scheme will commence on 1st March 2009 and shall remain in force for a period of three years from this date or until a new scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to section 15 of the Act whichever is the earlier.

Section 4

Overview of the National Gallery of Ireland.

The Gallery was established in 1854 under the National Gallery of Ireland Act, which provided for [the establishment of a National Gallery of paintings, Sculpture and the Fine Arts] in Dublin. This provision was broadened by the National Cultural Institutions Act 1997 to [increase and diffuse, in or outside the State, knowledge of the visual arts by whatever means they [the Board] consider appropriate].

The primary purpose of the gallery, embodied in its Mission Statement, is:

- to display, conserve, manage, interpret and develop the National Collection;
- to enhance enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts;
- to enrich the cultural, artistic and intellectual life of present and future generations.

The gallery fulfils its functions in these different areas as follows:

- The collection is displayed in a pleasant and appropriate environment;
- Conservation of the collection performed by a dedicated department;
- Curatorial, library, archival and research services;
- Acquisitions policy.

The gallery's key services are as follows:

- Organisation of permanent and temporary exhibitions;
- Loans to other institutions in Ireland and abroad;
- Internal and external Education activities;
- Community outreach activities;
- Commercial activities including Bookshop, Restaurant, Facilities hire, Reproduction sales and hire.

The gallery is governed by a Board of Governors and Guardians: seven ex-officio members and ten appointed by the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. Executive management of the gallery is vested in the Director, who is appointed by the Board.

Located in Merrion Square, the gallery first opened to the public in 1864. The original gallery (Dargan Wing) was extended in 1903 (Milltown Wing), in 1968 (North, now Beit Wing) and in 2002 (Millennium Wing). The Office of Public Works, in liaison with Gallery management, has primary responsibility for the buildings.

In addition to housing a major collection of western art, containing key examples of the work of the most admired masters and all the important schools, the gallery is also home to the most important collection of Irish art in the world. The gallery has achieved many awards and won favourable attention from the general public, for its special exhibitions, educational programmes and architectural merit.

Section 5

Services currently available in Irish, bilingually and in English at the National Gallery of Ireland.

The primary objective of the Official Languages Act 2003 is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

At the present time, the National Gallery of Ireland provides a broad but limited number of public services in Irish and bilingually. In accordance with the National Gallery of Ireland's Customer Charter adopted in 2006, the Gallery's policy is to endeavour to provide a service through Irish where such a service is requested. Information services currently provided reflect the multi-national nature of the Gallery's clientele.

The National Gallery of Ireland has assessed the various services and means of communications with the public in respect of Irish and English. These are set out below :

1. Printed Materials available to the public

Gallery Plans

- Gallery Floor plans are available in Irish and English.

Quarterly Information Newsletter prepared by the National Gallery of Ireland.

- Quarterly Gallery News features bilingual section headings and founding statement in Irish.

Temporary Exhibition information brochures

- The founding statement of the gallery in Irish is incorporated in the text.

2. Other Printed Materials.

Labels for Artworks in the Permanent Collection

- Bilingual titles and provenance are contained on labels for over 60% of the permanent Collection. The schools with bilingual labels are the Irish, 20th Century Irish Art, Dutch, British, the Yeats Museum and Sculpture collection.

Internal and external gallery stationery.

- Letterhead, Compliment slips, Business Cards and internal Memo forms incorporate the bilingual form of the gallery title.

Corporate / Annual Reports.

- The Annual report is published simultaneously in Irish and English.

3. Other Services available to the public.

Information Desk

- Information Services are available in English and Irish and a fluent Irish Language speaker is available on a rota basis at Information Desks.
- A limited number of Volunteers at the Information Desks are familiar with greetings and can conduct some conversation in Irish, or direct visitors to appropriate Gallery staff if a request is made to conduct business in Irish.

Public address systems

- Public Address Announcements made daily are announced in a bilingual format.

Guided Tours:

- We offer a Tour Guide service delivered by a fluent Irish speaker. This service is available upon request for booked tours.
- The Gallery calendar offers an Annual Tour in Irish on relevant national celebrations. In addition we offer a tour as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge.

Research Services

- The gallery's research facilities comprise of the Fine Art Library, the Centre for the Study of Irish Art, the NGI Archive and the Yeats Archive. These are all open to the public. The research collections retain some Irish language material and it is policy to collect published and unpublished Irish language material that is relevant to these collections.

Bookshop:

- We offer for sale seasonal greeting cards printed with message in Irish, and a small selection of children's books in Irish through the gallery Shop.

Website:

- The website has bilingual web page headings.
- The National Gallery of Ireland founding statement in Irish is included on the website.

4. Signage

External Signage

- The Irish version of the gallery title is displayed prominently at both building entrances to the Gallery.

Internal Signage

- All permanent signage is bilingual, and identifies areas of building, collections, facilities and visitor guidelines.
- Facility is in place for erecting temporary bilingual signs or signs in Irish as appropriate.

5. Written Communications (letters and e-mail)

Meetings and Appointments

- If a meeting or an appointment is requested through Irish, all efforts are made to conduct the meeting in Irish.

Assessment of demand

An assessment of the underlying demand for services to be made available through Irish was conducted from June □ August 2006. This has been used as a guideline in the prioritisation of services. It must be noted that this prioritisation of services takes into consideration limited resources and capabilities within the area of competency in Irish.

Section 6

Schedule of Proposed services for the duration of this scheme.

In this scheme the National Gallery of Ireland's main focus will be on building upon and enhancing the existing services provided, through the medium of Irish and on developing Irish language competency amongst staff to facilitate interpersonal Irish language service delivery on a general level. In practice this means that the Gallery will be in a position to provide general information through Irish. The gallery will not be in a position to conduct detailed service or programme-specific business through Irish.

The National Gallery of Ireland is committed to encouraging the development of Irish Language skills in the Gallery, and to facilitating the progressive development of a quality service in Irish.

The Gallery is, however starting from a relatively low base in terms of verbal and written communication competency, and in interpersonal Irish language service capacity. While the provision of written communications is primarily a cost and time issue, the development of Irish language competence among staff presents some challenges. It will take considerable time and effort to increase the core capability over the range of disciplines engaged in by the staff. The extent to which such interpersonal services should be developed will also be affected by actual demand for the services. The Gallery offers a wide range of services presently, in terms of providing access to the permanent collection, temporary exhibitions and research facilities. The extent and quality of services offered is governed by limitations on resources. However the gallery will endeavour to provide as wide a range of services in Irish as possible within these limitations.

Proposed enhancements and new services presently not available in Irish

General Services

Reception Staff

- Training will be made available to the Telephone Reception staff to enable them to give the name of the Gallery in Irish and English, to have the capabilities to deal with a basic greeting service through Irish, and subsequently to direct the public to appropriate Gallery staff if a visitor wishes to conduct business through Irish. This will be in place by 31 December 2009.
- The switchboard staff will be provided with a list of Gallery staff that can provide a service through the medium of Irish.

Information Services and Education Resources

- The Audio Tour will be translated into Irish and made available to visitors by 1st June 2009.
- The Visitor Comment Card and Feedback system will be reviewed. A comment card in Irish equivalent to the English version will be produced. This will clearly invite response in Irish and any correspondence initiated therein will be conducted in Irish. This will be made available to visitors by 1st June 2009.
- In this scheme we will commence providing Education Worksheets in Irish for students or visitors who wish to learn about the collection through Irish, as follows:
 1. We will provide one worksheet for primary level; and
 2. Two worksheets covering the collections (Irish and European) for the 10 to 14 age group.These will be available by 1st June 2009.

- We will provide a further three worksheets in Irish, covering the Permanent Collection, before the end of the current scheme and we undertake to complete the translation of all worksheets relating to the permanent collection in subsequent schemes.
- Additional personnel with competency in the Irish language will be provided in order to enhance the provision of educational tours in Irish. This will be in place by 1st June 2009.
- A bilingual information service will be provided at the Information Desks of the gallery. We will provide ongoing language training for the relevant gallery staff and volunteer personnel. This will be in place by the end of the scheme.

Publicity Materials

All exhibition Publicity Materials, including Posters, Information Leaflets, and Flyers generated in relation to the Permanent Collection and Temporary Exhibitions will be produced bilingually within the one cover, except where this is not feasible because of the size, layout or nature of the document. This will be initiated with effect from 1st June 2009.

Request for Tender

Requests for tender will be made available in English only, unless the tender itself relates to an Irish language issue.

Staff training and Development

The National Gallery of Ireland will make available to all staff appropriate Irish language training courses and will aim to maximize attendance and course relevance to the mission of the Gallery.

The National Gallery of Ireland will include language awareness as part of both induction and customer training courses to ensure that staff understand why an Irish language service policy is in place, the context and background to the policy and finally to ensure that the staff are fully informed about how the policy is to operate.

Marketing

- The National Gallery of Ireland will actively endeavour to promote existence of its activities in Irish through bodies such as Foras na Gaeilge, with immediate effect.
- The National Gallery of Ireland will incorporate bilingual content on its Publicity / plasma screens.

Permanent Collection

- Where space constraints and capabilities make it feasible, bilingual introduction Panels to the Permanent Collection will be put in place. This will be in place by the end of the current scheme.
- Where space constraints and capabilities make it feasible, information Labels on paintings in the Permanent Collection will be in Irish and English. This will be in place by the end of the current scheme.

Press Releases:

The National Gallery of Ireland's Press Releases, where these relate to announcements of major exhibitions, important acquisitions, or important news relating to the collection or buildings will be produced bilingually. This will be enacted by 1st June 2009.

National Gallery of Ireland Publications

- The Gallery will produce bilingually documents which come under Section 10 of the Official Languages Act, namely Annual Reports, Audited Accounts, and Statement of Strategy.
- In addition the gallery will produce the Customer Charter and Freedom of Information manual in bilingual format.
- Art-related and other publications not mentioned above and not referred to in any other category will be considered for publication bilingually by the gallery on a case by case basis, with due regard to cost and public interest issues.
- If the cost of bilingual publication in any individual case is deemed excessive due to the size of the publication, or deemed not commercially or economically viable, the National Gallery of Ireland may choose to publish an executive summary / introduction / summary in bilingual format. This will be effected by the end of the current scheme.

Computer Systems

Any new computer systems being installed will be capable of handling the Irish language. Existing systems will, where necessary, be made compatible in conjunction with the next suitable planned maintenance or upgrade work. This excludes existing specialist and collections management systems, where it is technically impossible to upgrade the systems in the foreseeable future. Given the major technical and resource issues involved, this matter will be addressed by the Gallery over the long term.

Systems for checking spelling and syntax in Irish will be available by 1st June 2009.

Website:

The National Gallery of Ireland is in the process of replacing its existing website. All static material will be presented in bilingual format on the new website by the

end of the scheme. The static material will not include information generated by accessing an existing specialist and collections management system, via the website.

- The existing Gallery website does not contain interactive services. Interactive services which allow the general public to make enquiries online will be available on the new website in a bilingual format by the end of the scheme.
- The names of Personnel providing a bilingual service will be appended to the gallery's website. This will be in place by 1st June 2009.

E-mail:

- The gallery's external e-mail footnote will be generated in bilingual format by 1st June 2009.
- Staff will adopt a bilingual format for e-mail signatures on a phased basis during the term of the scheme.

Letters and other Written Communication

All written activities initiated through Irish will be conducted via written correspondence in Irish.

Section 7

Monitoring and Review of the Scheme.

The progress of the various areas of the scheme will be measured by means of:

- Monitoring public reaction through the gallery's existing feedback channels: comment cards, written and verbal response, and periodic surveys. Suggestions will be acknowledged and considered as appropriate;
- Monitoring staff perceptions of the scheme, the level of staff competence and compliance in the respective areas.
- In addition, an assessment of progress towards the implementation of the scheme will be made in the gallery's Annual Report.

Review of the Scheme

A Review of the scheme will be conducted as required, upon receipt of a written request from the Minister. The review will be conducted under the auspices of the Visitor Services department of the Gallery. The review process will be continual, utilising the monitoring mechanisms listed above. The information and suggestions derived from the process will inform the content of any new scheme.

Section 8

Publicising of the Scheme

This scheme will be publicised by means of :

- A Press release;
- Notice on the gallery's website; and
- Circulation to Irish Language bodies and other interested agencies.

A copy of this scheme has also been forwarded to Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.