

National Museum of Ireland

Official Languages Act, 2003
Language Scheme 2017-2020

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This Scheme was prepared in accordance with Section 11 of the *Official Languages Act, 2003* (“the Act”) by the National Museum of Ireland.

Section 11 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory Scheme detailing the services they will provide and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

1.1 Guidelines/Preparation of the Scheme

Section 12 of the Act provides for the preparation of guidelines by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs and their issue to public bodies to assist in the preparation of draft Schemes. This Scheme has been drawn up with due regard to those guidelines.

The Scheme has been developed taking account of the submissions received through a public consultation process and the views and suggestions of staff. A Working Group, comprising representatives from a range of functional areas of the Museum, assisted in drafting the Scheme. Historical demand for services through Irish was also considered by the Working Group.

In addition to assessing the existing level of service provided both bilingually and in Irish, the National Museum has carried out a survey of staff competencies in the language that has also been used to determine Irish language training requirements. This will shape the increased level of service which it is intended to provide. In addition to interpersonal and printed material, a re-designed version of the Museum website was launched on 20th November, 2015 to which significant Irish language content was added.

1.2 Commencement Date of the Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Scheme will commence with effect **from 1 April 2017** 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 later.

1.3 Overview of the National Museum of Ireland

1.3.1 Mandate

The origins of the National Museum of Ireland lie with the enactment of the *Dublin Science and Art Museum Act, 1877*. This led to the transfer of the buildings and collections of the Royal Dublin Society (R.D.S.) to state ownership. These were further enhanced by the transfer of other notable collections from institutions such as the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College Dublin. The Dublin Museum of Science and Art was renamed the National Museum of Ireland in the early twentieth century.

The National Museum of Ireland today consists of five separate museum sites: The National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology, Kildare Street, Dublin; The National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts and History, Collins Barracks, Dublin; the National Museum of Ireland - Natural History, Merrion Street, Dublin; The National Museum of Ireland - Country Life, Castlebar, Co. Mayo and the National Museum of Ireland - Collections Resource Centre, Swords, Co. Dublin.

On 3 May 2005 under the *National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997*, the National Museum became a body corporate with a Board appointed by the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. The Board has certain responsibilities under the Act in relation to the Irish language, i.e.

Under section 11(2) (L) of the *National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997*, one of the powers of the Board to enable it to perform its functions under section 11, is to foster and promote the Irish language in the course of the performance of its functions.

Section 30(1) of the Act provides in relation to staff appointments by the Board that an adequate number of the staff should be competent in the Irish language so as to provide service through Irish as well as English. The National Museum provides services through the medium of Irish across all its areas of operation. During the period of this Scheme there will be a significant increase in the level of Irish language service provided, particularly relating to online and interactive content.

Section 36(1) of the Act provides that the annual report to be prepared and submitted by the Board to the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs shall be in both the English and Irish languages.

The role of the National Museum of Ireland is extensive but the following core elements may be selected as fundamental:

- Securing the portable heritage of Ireland
- Facilitating study of the objects in the collections
- Communicating information relating to the collections and the disciplines they represent

Along with other National Cultural Institutions, the Museum has primary responsibility at a national level for ensuring the security of objects which reflect Ireland's heritage. In practice this involves the accumulation of collections of such objects and their safe keeping in perpetuity. The principal point of access for the public to the collections is through exhibitions. Objects are also available for study either by Museum staff or researchers and the results of that research come to be made available in publications, in the mass media or in academic papers.

1.3.2 Mission and Goals

In light of its mandate, the Museum's mission is:

To collect, care for, manage and interpret the collections we hold in trust and make them accessible to everyone for inspiration, learning and enjoyment

The goals as outlined in the National Museum's Strategic Plan 2014-2017 are to:

- Establish the Museum at the forefront of Ireland's cultural life
- Protect and make accessible the national collections and ensure their future survival
- Develop a sense of common purpose and foster an organisational culture that is motivating and inclusive
- Embrace change and devise a model for the Museum appropriate to the conditions and challenges of the early 21st century

1.3.3 Customers and Clients

The delivery of services and outcome of policies and strategies pursued by the Museum ultimately impact on a wide array of people. The Museum's main client and customer base comprises:

- General Public
- Overseas and Domestic Tourists
- Specialist Visitors
- Researchers
- Special Needs Groups
- Families
- Formal Education Sector (Primary to Third level)
- Informal Education Sector
- Online audiences

1.3.4 Functional Areas of the Museum

The functional areas of the Museum comprise:

- Directorate
- Operations Division
 - Human Resources
 - Finance Unit

- Information Technology
- Corporate Affairs
- Marketing Department
- Facilities Department

■ Collections & Learning Division

- Art and Industrial Division
- Irish Antiquities Division
- Irish Folklife Division
- Natural History Division
- Conservation Department
- Registration Department
- Education and Outreach Department
- Photographic Department
- Design Department

Further information on the activities of the Museum is contained in the Museum's website – www.museum.ie.

2 COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC

The Museum has carried out an assessment of the various written means of communication with the public in use across the Museum. These are set out below.

2.1 Existing Bilingual Services

At present, the National Museum of Ireland provides a number of services in Irish versions and bilingually.

The services provided in bilingual versions are the following:

Printed / Electronic:

Annual Reports

National Museum of Ireland Strategic Plan 2014 - 2017

The majority of permanent exhibition text panels and labels

Temporary exhibition labels when generated from within the National Museum

The majority of orientation signs

Certain exhibition brochures / leaflets

Guidebooks to each of the four museums

Current postcards and greeting cards

Headed Museum Stationary

Invitations to exhibition openings and Museum functions

Designated Museums Brochure

Business cards

The standard disclaimer on e-mail communications

Interpersonal:

Close-down announcements in Museum of Country Life, Kildare Street and Collins Barracks

Voicemail messages of staff with Irish

Some storytelling workshops

Public talks during Seachtain na Gaeilge

2.2 Existing Services in Irish

The services provided in separate Irish versions are the following:

Printed / Electronic:

Floor plan visitor brochures to all sites

Guidebooks to all four sites

Correspondence is replied to in the language of the original correspondence

Recruitment notices for permanent posts

Application forms for licences to alter and licences to export archaeological objects

Licences to alter and licences to export archaeological objects issued by the Board of the National Museum of Ireland under the terms of the *National Monuments Acts, 1930 to 2004*

Short Guide to the *National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994*

Library and Archive Consultation Forms (Museum of Country Life)

Some Discovery and Activity Sheets

Language Interface Packs for Irish language versions of Windows XP are available to all members of staff.

3 COMMITMENTS OF THE SCHEME

Set out below are the commitments the Museum is making in relation to the development of an Irish language service policy for the duration of this Scheme:

Printed/electronic	Division/Department	Commitment
Website	Operations - ICT	The website has been redeveloped and designed and was launched on 20 th November 2015. Within three months of commencement of Scheme, all static material will be bilingual. This will include the Calendar of Events where the static material will be bilingual.
Guidebooks	Collections & Learning	Future guide books will be published bilingually or as separate Irish language versions depending on the publication.
Recruitment Notices for Permanent Posts	Operations - Corporate Affairs	An Irish version will be posted on the website from inception of Scheme.
Major policy documents and forms	Collections and Operations	To provide Irish Language versions of official policies and forms within one year of the commencement of the Scheme.

Audio Visual Presentations.	Collections & Learning - (Exhibition Leader)	New audio-visual presentations will be bilingual wherever practically possible. (For example, historical film footage in English will not be translated to Irish.)
Exhibition Interactives	Collections & Learning - (Exhibition Leader)	New exhibition interactives will be bilingual wherever practically possible.
Exhibition texts and panels	Collections & Learning - (Exhibition Leader)	It is National Museum policy that all new permanent exhibitions are bilingual. Most temporary exhibitions generated from within the Museum are also bilingual, including the recently opened <i>Proclaiming a Republic/Dearbhú na Poblachta</i> exhibition.
I.T. assistance	Operations - ICT	To provide appropriate spell-check and syntax packages for Irish within one year of the commencement of the Scheme.
Discovery of Archaeological Objects forms	Collections & Learning - Irish Antiquities	To make bilingual version available after commencement of Scheme on depletion of existing stock and no later than December 2017 .
Educational Booking Form	Collections & Learning - Education and Outreach	To provide bilingual version within one year of commencement of

		Scheme.
Education Work Sheets	Collections & Learning - Education and Outreach	<p>To provide Irish language versions of any of the more popular work sheets (and not already in Irish), six months from commencement of Scheme.</p> <p>Any new worksheets will also be available in separate Irish versions. This material will be published as an online resource within six months of the commencement of the Scheme.</p> <p>We will consult with Gaelscoileanna and with Foras na Gaeilge in relation to our Irish language service with regard to events and worksheets to establish the needs of the Irish language community.</p>
Customer comment cards	Operations - Marketing	To publish bilingual versions online on depletion of current stock.
Press releases	Operations - Marketing	To issue press releases bilingually and simultaneously from commencement of Scheme.

Interpersonal	Division/Department	Commitment
Welcome, orientation and security	Operations - Facilities	<p>Telephonist will name the body in Irish and English. A course will be provided for switchboard staff in appropriate language skills.</p> <p>Reception staff in the Museum are drawn on a rotating basis from the Attendant Staff. They will be briefed on how to deal with Irish language enquiries and will be provided with a list of staff willing to answer oral queries in Irish. A bilingual enquiry form will be made available for follow up-action, if an Irish speaking member of staff is not available.</p> <p>Irish language courses will be made available to front of house staff.</p>
Irish Language training for Staff	Operations - Human Resources - All Divisions / Departments	<p>An appropriate Irish language training course for staff seeking to upgrade Irish will be provided within three months of commencement of Scheme. The development of a recruitment policy in 2017 will take Irish language proficiency into account.</p> <p>Having regard to Government policy for enhanced provision of services in Irish, the National Museum of Ireland will, by the end of year one of the Scheme, identify any posts for which Irish language competency is an essential requirement. Every effort will be made to fulfil these requirements by the end of this Scheme having regard to recruitment, promotion and training policies, as appropriate. This</p>

		will enable the National Museum of Ireland to plan and prioritise the incremental improvement of services in Irish in a more strategic manner.
Guided tours	Collections & Learning - Education and Outreach	A freelance Tour Guide who is competent in the Irish language will be appointed on a retainer arrangement for Dublin sites within one year of the commencement of the Scheme. Irish language competency was a criterion for the appointment of education assistants in 2015. At least three education assistants will undergo Irish language training in order to improve their existing competency to deliver services in the Irish language. The Museum will promote the availability of Irish language tours to Irish language schools and organisations.
Public talks	Collections & Learning - Education and Outreach	Talks will be provided in Irish during Seachtain na Gaeilge.
Close-down announcements in all sites	Operations - Facilities	Bilingually, six months from commencement of the Scheme.
Public Educational Programming.	Collections & Learning - Education and Outreach	Will continue to have occasional Irish / bilingual storytelling workshops. Irish language versions of online educational resources for students and teachers will be provided within one year of the commencement of the Scheme. The resources to be translated will follow consultation with Gaelscoileanna and Foras na Gaeilge regarding demand.

4 MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The day-to-day monitoring and implementation function of the Scheme will be carried out by Divisional or Departmental Heads in respect of individual areas for which they are responsible. Periodic monitoring will be maintained by an officer to be nominated in a central section.

5 PUBLICISING OF AGREED SCHEME

The contents of this Scheme will be publicised by means of:

- Press Release
- Public advertisement of availability of Scheme
- Circulation of appropriate bodies and
- Website

A copy of this Scheme has been forwarded to Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga. The English language version of this scheme is the official version.