

Marine Institute Job Description

Position	Shellfish Health Team Leader
Grade & Contract	Temporary Specified Purpose Contract for up to 12 months (Sick Leave Cover)
Service Group	Marine Environment & Food Safety Services (MEFSS)
Location	MI HQ, Rinville, Oranmore, Co. Galway We have a Blended Working Policy in Place which may apply to this role

Who will you Work With and What Will The Role Involve?

This important role supports our organisation in the delivery of its essential work programmes. This role provides candidates with the opportunity to work in a diverse organisation which invests in and celebrates its people.

The Fish Health Unit is Ireland's NRL for Finfish, Mollusc, and Crustacean Diseases. The laboratory monitors listed and emerging diseases, ensuring compliance with Council Directive 2006/88/EC and Regulation (EU) 2016/429. There is an ongoing requirement to maintain and develop capacity and expertise in shellfish diseases, particularly in response to national surveillance and EU reporting obligations.

The NRL is responsible for developing, validating and implementing appropriate methods for the testing of fish and shellfish diseases; monitoring for the diseases specified in Council Directive 2006/88/EC as well as for diseases of national importance. The laboratory is accredited to ISO 17025 standard. The FHU is also engaged in a number of research programmes related to diseases of significance for the fish and shellfish aquaculture industry in Ireland.

The successful candidate will lead the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for shellfish diseases, including molluscan and crayfish pathogens. The Shellfish Health Team Leader will oversee statutory testing, research, method development, quality compliance, and communication with stakeholders. The role also includes managing the crayfish health programme and contributing to EU regulatory compliance.

The Marine Institute is currently undertaking a review of organisation structure, which when complete may impact the roles and duties of employees and bring about change. Any impacts or changes will be communicated.

What Will You Be Doing Every Day?

Principal Tasks:

- Provide specialist support and advice on shellfish health and disease to the Marine Institute, Fish Health Unit and the FHU Competent Authority Office.
- Manage and coordinate all activities associated with the NRL for shellfish diseases.
- Manage the statutory testing programme for listed shellfish diseases including *Bonamia ostreae*, *Bonamia exitiosa*, *Marteilia refringens*, *Perkinsus marinus*, and *Mikrocytos mackini*.
- Act as Technical Manager for molluscan diseases within the Quality System (ISO 17025).
- Oversee pre-movement health checks and diagnostic testing for molluscs.
- Investigate reports of shellfish mortality and coordinate diagnostic testing.

- Support the Competent Authority in implementing EU animal health legislation and contingency plans.
- Manage, allocate tasks, support and motivate a team of FHU staff working in the NRL for shellfish diseases, noting that they may work across numerous activities with other Team Leads.
- Introduce and validate diagnostic methods for the detection of finfish diseases as required by EU regulation or WOAH standards.
- Manage the national crayfish plague monitoring programme.
- Develop and validate test methods, document review and ensure equipment is fit for purpose.
- Lead laboratory meetings and ensure effective internal communication within FHU.
- Train and mentor staff, including slide reading and diagnostics for listed shellfish diseases.
- Represent Ireland at international reference laboratory meetings.
- Lead the development of shellfish disease research projects and identify relevant funding.
- Provide Bonamia screening in support of native oyster restoration projects.
- Advise DAFM and stakeholders on shellfish disease issues and contribute to communications materials.
- Support project development with external partners and research organisations.
- Submit freedom-from-disease applications to the EU and coordinate related testing programmes.
- Publish research findings in relevant scientific journals/papers
- Represent Irish interests at national and international meetings.
- Participate in research conferences and other scientific meetings as required.
- Provide support to scientific and technical DAFM veterinary inspectors undertaking risk-based surveillance inspections at shellfish sites.
- Undertake ad hoc fish health inspection of aquaculture production business sites as required.
- Any other duties appropriate to the role and grade as required from time to time.

What do You Need to Have Done to Apply for This role? (Education, Professional or Technical Qualifications, Knowledge, Skills, Aptitudes, Experience and Training)

Essential / Important:

- A relevant qualification degree in biology science or a related field.
- A minimum of three years of relevant post qualification work experience.
- Demonstrates extensive experience in shellfish disease diagnostics (ideally to include some of the following, histology, cytology, molecular diagnosis etc).
- Demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the shellfish aquaculture sector.
- Demonstrates extensive experience with ISO 17025 and QMS responsibilities.
- An ability to develop and validate new diagnostic techniques.
- Experience leading teams, managing staff and/or motivating people.
- High-level IT skills, project management, and scientific reporting.
- A demonstrated understanding of relevant national and EU legislation and other standards which relate to shellfish health including EU animal health legislation.
- A track record of effectively preparing scientific reports and publications.
- A proven ability to manage people effectively, in particular technical teams and ideally in an accredited, quality focused laboratory environment.
- High levels of I.T. skills to include MS Office and an ability to work with quality, document, financial, safety and people related databases and management information systems.

- Experience in digital data recording, decision-making and reporting of laboratory operations. Experience with tracking and reporting on budgets and with public sector procurement, good governance processes and audit readiness
- The ability to build professional relationships and communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with a range of audiences.
- The ability to manage time effectively and work to deadlines.
- A full clean Driving License.

Desirable:

- A post graduate qualification in a relevant scientific discipline.
- At least five years of experience working in an aquatic diagnostic laboratory.
- Proven record of sourcing external funding for research projects.
- Knowledge and experience of dealing with the aquaculture / fishing industry.
- Experience providing advice to competent authorities and other government agencies.

What else do you need to know?

(Special personal attributes required for the role)

- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate and present effectively at all levels.
- Enthusiasm and dedication to science.
- Demonstrates energy, dynamism reliability and a positive attitude
- Takes ownership of tasks and is determined to see them through to a conclusion.
- An ability to work in an organised manner and progress work independently, managing time effectively to deliver multiple outputs on time.
- An ability to manage a multi-disciplinary team and shared resources working across multiple programmes and projects.
- A collaborative and open approach to project and programme success.
- Self-sufficiency, while being a good team player.
- Willing to travel for international project meetings.
- Possesses sound, balanced judgement and strong analytical abilities.
- Possess a diplomatic manner, with the ability to resolve issues before conflict occurs with stakeholders.
- Strong leadership qualities.
- The ability to remain focused and deliver quality outputs when multiple important deadlines coincide.
- Solutions orientated with excellent initiative and problem-solving skills.

Description of Service Group and the Wider Team

Marine Environment & Food Safety Services

Marine Environment & Food Safety Services (MEFSS) is a service area of the Marine Institute that plays a pivotal role in ensuring the safety of seafood, preserving environmental health, providing a variety of policy supports and safeguarding fish health. Operating as an integral part of the Institute, MEFSS undertakes multifaceted responsibilities primarily through the execution of scientific monitoring and research programs, coupled with offering expert scientific interpretation and regulatory guidance to government.

1. Shellfish Safety

Shellfish Safety in MEFSS involves rigorous monitoring and testing to ensure the safety and quality of shellfish products, contributing to the protection of public health. This includes adherence to established standards and regulations while actively collaborating with relevant authorities to maintain Ireland's superior shellfish health status. Collaborating with organisations such as the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority, MEFSS actively monitors seafood safety, upholding the reputation of the Irish seafood industry for high-quality products while adhering to national and international regulatory standards.

2. Fish Health Unit

The Fish Health Unit in MEFSS serves as the national competent authority responsible for implementing EU and national aquatic animal health legislation, overseeing and monitoring the movement of finfish and shellfish into, out of, and within Ireland. Through comprehensive testing and disease surveillance, the unit aims to maintain Ireland's superior fish and shellfish health status, providing crucial support to the aquaculture industry and fisheries sectors.

MEFSS collaborates with various departments and agencies, including the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Environmental Protection Authority, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Sea Fisheries Protection Authority, National Parks and Wildlife Service, and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. This collaborative approach underscores the organisation's commitment to ensuring comprehensive and effective support across diverse domains. MEFSS ensures the highest quality standards with our laboratories accredited under EN ISO/IEC 17025:2017 for food safety, environmental monitoring, and fish health work. Furthermore, the Fish Health Competent Authority is ISO 9001:2015 certified, emphasising the organisation's commitment to excellence.

Who Will You Report to / Who will Manage and Support You?:

The successful candidate will report directly to the Fish Health Unit Section Manager or whomever the Director of MEFS designates as appropriate from time to time.

What we offer

We value our staff, and we value their contribution to the work of the Marine Institute. In return for this, we provide benefits that promote a healthy work-life balance and which we hope will help them to develop professionally. These include personal and career development, work/life balance policies, an employee assistance programme, "Bike to Work" Scheme, staff medicals and annual flu vaccination.

Training

A full range of training will be provided as required, on the job and through appropriate courses. Training needs will be identified through the MI Performance Management Development System (PMDS).

Contacts:

Fish Health Unit team members, MEFSS Director, other MEFSS colleagues, colleagues across all service groups within the Marine Institute, the aquaculture and fisheries industries, BIM, EU Reference laboratory.

Salary:

Remuneration is in accordance with the Public Sector, Department of Finance approved Salary Scale at August 2025 for Team Leader Grade which runs from €74,701 -€91,100 on a full-time basis per annum pro-rated with time worked. You will commence on the first point of the scale €74,701 and become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme unless you are currently or have worked in the Public Sector in the past 6 months and are a member of another Public Sector Scheme.

Annual Leave:

Annual leave entitlement for a Team Leader Grade is 27 working days per annum pro-rated to reflect time worked. Annual leave entitlements are exclusive of Public Holidays. All leave must be approved in advance in line with Marine Institute leave policies and using time and leave management system in place, by your manager or their authorised representative.

Duration of Contract:

This temporary specific purpose contract of employment will be for up to 12 months in duration providing cover for sick leave. This is an estimation of the cover needed and may alter in duration subject to business needs. You will be advised with notice of any alternations to the term. The successful candidate will be on probation for the first six months of this contract.

Who is the Marine Institute?

The Marine Institute is a non-commercial semi-state body, which was formally established by statute (Marine Institute Act, 1991) in October 1992.

Under the Act, the Marine Institute was given the responsibility:

“to undertake, to co-ordinate, to promote and to assist in marine research and development and to provide such services related to marine research and development, that in the opinion of the Institute will promote economic development and create employment and protect the marine environment”.

The Marine Institute is Ireland’s scientific agency responsible for supporting the sustainable development of the state’s maritime area and resources. We do this through conducting applied research and providing scientific knowledge, advice and services to government, industry and other stakeholders and users. This policy advice capacity, our broad mandate, and the research programmes we fund and undertake, give us a unique insight into the science-policy interface and make us an exemplar in the provision of integrated ocean knowledge.

The Marine Institute provides a broad range of essential scientific support to its parent department, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). There is an increasing demand from the Government for the data and evidence that are essential to inform national policy and to underpin the state’s governance of our maritime area. Through laboratory, field and seagoing work, the Institute carries out statutory environmental, fisheries and aquaculture surveys, seafood testing and other monitoring programmes assigned by government. The Institute plays an important role in supporting the state’s response to the impacts of our changing seas and oceans, through working with the national and international scientific community to observe, study and understand our changing oceans. This essential scientific advice supports industry, protects consumers and underpins

legislative and other obligations aimed at the protection and management of the marine environment.

Our vision - *The Marine Institute is a national and international leader in ocean knowledge that benefits people, policy and planet.*

Our Mission - *The Marine Institute provides scientific, research and development services to government, agencies, industry and society that support the sustainable use of our maritime area, the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, and promote a shared understanding of the ocean.*

There are 6 broad service areas within the Marine Institute: (1) Ocean, Climate and Information Services, (2) Marine Environment & Fish Health Services, (3) Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services, (4) Irish Maritime Development Office, (5) Policy, Information and Research Services and (6) Corporate Services.

The Marine Institute 5-Year Strategic Plan (2023 to 2027) is available [Here](#)

How to Apply:

A C.V. and letter of application, summarising experience and skill set applicable to the position should be emailed to recruitment@marine.ie or posted to Human Resources at the Marine Institute, Rinville, Oranmore, Galway, H91 R673. All correspondence for this post should quote reference MEFSS/SHELLFISHTL/SEPT25.

Closing date for Applications:

All applications for this post should be received by the Marine Institute in advance of **12 noon, Monday, 22nd September 2025**. Unfortunately, we cannot accept late applications.

Use of Data - all personal data and the information submitted for this application will be used solely for the purpose of this campaign, after which it will be deleted in line with our General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy and data retention schedule. All information will be treated with the strictest confidence and accessed only by those involved directly in the campaign.

The Marine Institute is an organisation that champions Diversity, Inclusion & Equality for all. We encourage and welcome applications from anyone interested in this role.

Please do advise if there are any special accommodations required for the recruitment process. We are here to help you access opportunities with us.