

Marine Institute Job Description

Position	Scientific & Technical Officer (STO) – Phytoplankton Unit
Grade & Contract	Temporary Specified Purpose Contract for a duration up to 24th June 2025, providing Career Break Cover. Scientific and Technical Officer Grade.
Service Group	Marine Environment & Food Safety Services (MEFSS)
Location	Marine Institute HQ, Oranmore, Co. Galway (noting that we have currently introduced our blended working policy which may apply to this role)

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

The temporary Scientific & Technical Officer will be employed by the Marine Institute, reporting directly to Shellfish Safety section manager, to carry out work on the core statutory monitoring activities, primarily the National Phytoplankton Monitoring Programme and associated laboratory activities and research in this area.

This Career Break Cover role is an opportunity for interested individuals to gain experience of the Phytoplankton Scientific & Technical Officer role deliverables within the Phytoplankton unit across a 22-month period from September 2023 to June 2025. The Scientific & Technical Officer is responsible for managing a team of 4 Laboratory Analysts engaged in statutory monitoring and complementary research activities relating to the identification and enumeration of phytoplanktonic species (with a focus on Harmful Algal Bloom species) in Irish inshore and coastal waters, in particular those locations involved in the production of shellfish and finfish aquaculture. This monitoring is required to fulfil obligations under National and EU legislation, and commitments to protect the health of seafood consumers. In the course of this core statutory monitoring work, samples of water are collected and analysed for a full species identification and enumeration, with particular emphasis on toxic, harmful and bloom forming species. The work involves sampling, analysis, data assessment, quality control review of photomicrographs, decision making and reporting.

The results are reported from the Marine Institute’s Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Database through the publicly accessible HABs website to the competent authorities, Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) and Food Safety of Ireland (FSAI) and the aquaculture industry. Additionally, results and the

provision of scientific advice are reported and presented to National and International bodies and presented in the scientific literature.

A fundamental requirement for all research and monitoring programmes is the production of data of the highest quality. In this regard, a quality system is in operation and Scientific & Technical Officer will be familiar with and play a considerable role in maintaining the shellfish safety section's Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) ISO17025 standard

What Will You Be Doing Every Day?

Principal Tasks:

- The accurate taxonomic identification of marine phytoplankton to species level by Light Microscopy for National Monitoring Programme and Water Framework Directive samples.
- Interact with and manage on a daily basis the Phytoplankton team analysts to ensure monitoring and analysis objectives, and report timeframes are met.
- QC review and reporting of results from the HABs database
- Ensure the Phytoplankton laboratories operate to ISO 17025 standards and that existing accreditation is maintained.
- Preparation and conduct of regular Phytoplankton inter-comparison exercises for QC purposes.
- Review of QC photomicrographs to ensure correct identification of harmful and toxic species.
- Interact as required with other partners/stakeholders involved in the National Monitoring Programmes for both Phytoplankton and Biotoxins.
- Budget management and procurement.
- The supervision of the maintenance of the culturing facilities and algal culture collection.
- Participate and conduct relevant research as required including field sample visits and participation in research vessel surveys.
- Participate in conferences and other scientific meetings as required.
- Any other duties relevant to the role 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 degree in Science.
- Demonstrated relevant practical laboratory experience, specifically the taxonomic identification of marine phytoplankton.
- Experience of working in a Quality System Environment including working in an INAB accredited laboratory.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.

- Excellent communication, interpersonal skills and scientific/ technical report writing experience are required for the delivery and reports of scientific advice and reports to external stakeholders and the aquaculture industry
- High level of computer literacy (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Internet/Email).
- Technical troubleshooting skills.
- The ability to be well organised, flexible, demonstrate initiative, work to deadlines, identifying priorities and managing time effectively.

Ideally Nice to Have / Desirable:

- Budget management and procurement experience.
- Knowledge/experience of chlorophyll analysis
- Knowledge/experience of cell isolation, maintenance of algal cultures.
- Knowledge/experience of molecular methods of phytoplankton identification.
- Knowledge/experience of the operation and maintenance of high resolution microscopes and Scanning Electron Microscopes
- Experience of method development and validation in phytoplankton analysis.
- Experience in the coordination and monitoring of scientific projects/research
- Demonstrates strong presentation skills.
- Knowledge of the Irish Aquaculture Industry and Competent Authorities SFPA & FSAI.
- Current ENG 11 & Personal Survival Technique certificate.

What else do you need to know?

(Special personal attributes required for the role)

- An analytical approach to problem solving.
- An ability to work in an organised manner and progress work independently.
- Dynamic and reliable.
- Self-sufficiency, while being a good team player.
- Good interpersonal skills.

Description of Service Group: Marine Environment & Food Safety Services – The Wider Team

Marine Environment & Food Safety Services provide government agencies, industry and other clients with food safety, environmental and fish health scientific services, primarily through the implementation of monitoring programmes and research programmes and the provision of advice. The successful candidate will primarily be based within the MI Phytoplankton Section.

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

The successful candidate will report directly to the Section Manager, Shellfish Safety.

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.

Contacts:

Within the Marine Institute:

Director of MEFS, Section Manager, Shellfish Safety and other team members within MEFS, Team leaders, STOs, Senior Lab Analyst and Quality Manager.

External:

FSAI, SFPA, EPA and other external agencies including Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee, ICES, and other international bodies in the area of phytoplankton analysis and shellfish safety.

Salary:

Remuneration is in accordance with the Public Sector, Department of Finance approved Salary Scale for Scientific & Technical Officer, with a full time salary scale running from €35,336 - €72,999 per annum, pro-rated with time worked. You will 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 or are a member of another Public Sector Scheme.

Annual Leave:

The annual leave entitlement for the Scientific and Technical Officer post is 25 working days per annum prorated to reflect time worked. Annual leave entitlements are exclusive of Public Holidays. All leave must be approved by your manager or their authorised representative; in advance of being taken and in line with Marine Institute leave policies.

Duration of Contract:

The contract will be issued on a Temporary Specified Purpose basis providing career break cover for the post holder for a maximum duration up to 24th June 2025. There will be a 6-month probationary period for the duration 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 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. All correspondence for this post should quote reference **MEFS/STOPhyto/Aug23**

Closing date for Applications:

All applications for this post should be received by the Marine Institute in advance of **12 noon 30th of August 2023**. Unfortunately, late applications cannot be accepted.

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 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.