Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Job Specification

Graduate Scientist

Cork City Council

Closing Date:

4pm, Thursday 19th November 2026

To be read in conjunction with

Our Candidate Information Booklet

BACKGROUND

Located on Ireland's scenic south coast, Cork City is the country's second-largest urban centre and home to over 224,000 people. Since the 2019 boundary extension, Cork has entered a new phase of ambitious growth and development, with its population projected to reach 335,000 by 2040. Backed by over €2.5 billion in investment, this expansion is focused on sustainable, infrastructure-led growth-enhancing housing, transport, public amenities and cultural services across the city.

Cork City Council is a large urban local authority with 1,675 employees operating across more than 40 locations. The Council is made up of 31 elected members who represent five wards across the city and play a vital role in shaping local policy, decision-making and strategic priorities. The Council has an annual revenue budget of approximately €362 million for 2026 and delivers a broad range of public services including housing, planning, transport, libraries, parks and recreation, community development, culture and placemaking. Internal services include Finance, ICT, Human Resources, Legal Affairs, and Corporate Affairs.

Our work is guided by the Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029, which sets out a clear vision and values for Cork's future – placing sustainability, innovation, service excellence, and community wellbeing at the heart of everything we do. Cork's international recognition as a UNESCO Learning City, a WHO Healthy City and one of the EU's Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities reflects the city's ambition and global outlook.

Cork City Council is committed to delivering high-quality public services by working collaboratively with strategic partners, businesses, communities and neighbourhoods. Together, we are shaping a city that continues to thrive as a vibrant place to live, study, visit, and work.

We are now seeking applications from individuals who are passionate about public service and eager to contribute to Cork's ongoing transformation. If you bring relevant experience, a commitment to service excellence, and a forward-thinking approach to innovation and customer focus – we want to hear from you. Our people are committed to our values of public service, integrity, respect, a people centred approach, responsibility, and ambition. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to play a meaningful role in shaping the city's future, driving impact and supporting Cork's continued growth and success.

The Corporate Plan can be viewed here: Cork City Council Corporate Plan 2024–2029

Vision, Mission, & Values

Our Vision

Make Cork City Better

Our Values

Public Service

Provide high quality services and address peoples' needs in a manner that is both inclusive and equitable.

Integrity

We act honestly, openly and fairly in all our dealings.

Respect

We treat all people with respect

People Centred

We engage with people in a fair, courteous and timely manner. We strive for continous improvement.

Responsible

We are accountable and transparent and act responsibly in our dealings and decision making.

Ambitious

We work to attract investment to the City



Our Mission

People – A City of Welcomes where a Public Service ethos is at the core of how we do business.

Place – An Ambitious, Vibrant, and Sustainable City ready for the future while continuing to deliver high-quality services every day.

Prosperity – A Vibrant City of Neighbourhoods, Communities and Businesses working together to deliver on our economic and cultural potential.



THE ROLE

Cork City Council is experiencing a period of significant population and employment growth. In line with the National Planning Framework, Cork is expected to remain one of the fastest-growing areas in the country, with its population projected to increase by over 50% by 2040. This growth will require significant investment in new and upgraded infrastructure.

Cork City Council is responsible for the planning, delivery and management of a wide range of services and capital projects, including roads and transportation, urban regeneration and expansion, parks and amenity services, climate action, flood protection, housing and public realm improvements.

As a Graduate Scientist with Cork City Council, you will work alongside experienced Scientists and Engineers on a diverse range of projects and initiatives that will contribute to the future development of Cork City. The role offers an opportunity to gain practical experience and exposure to a broad range of scientific and engineering activities, while contributing to projects that support the city's sustainable growth and development.

Cork City Council is committed to the professional development of its graduates, providing opportunities to develop technical knowledge, practical skills and professional experience. The Graduate Scientist position represents the entry-level grade in the career progression pathway for Scientists within the local authority sector. Please refer to the career progression chart below for an illustration of the typical career pathway.

Senior Scientist (Hons Degree in Science & 8 years' experience)

Senior Executive Scientist (Hons Degree in Science & 7 years' experience)

Executive Scientist (Hons Degree in Science & 5 years' experience)

Assistant Scientist (Hons Degree in Science & 2 years' experience)

Graduate Scientist (Hons Degree in Science)

DUTIES

The duties of the Graduate Scientist will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Working as part of a team to implement national legislative requirements, European Union (EU) Directives and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards regard to management of water, air, noise & waste.
- Investigation and resolution of customer complaints.
- Legislative & Standards Implementation: Help enforce national and EU directives regarding water, air, noise, and waste management.
- Assisting in the preparation of designs and contract documentation, managing tendering processes and preparing recommendations for the appointment of service providers and contractors.
- Assisting with the supervision and administration of service and works contracts.
- Assisting in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of work programmes and budgets.
- Identifying opportunities to improve processes, enhance service delivery and achieve efficiencies.
- Promoting and maintaining a strong health and safety culture within the workplace and ensuring that health and safety requirements are observed in the delivery of projects and services.
- Communicating and engaging effectively, professionally and courteously with residents, businesses, community groups, elected members, local authorities, Government Departments and other relevant stakeholders.
- Pollution & Incident Response**:** Investigate environmental complaints, pollution events, or illegal dumping, and write technical reports for senior officers.
- Supporting the delivery of scientific projects, including national, regional and local capital infrastructure projects, across all stages of the project lifecycle. This may include project brief development, design, planning, procurement, scientific supervision, programme management, quality assurance and financial control, in accordance with best practice project management procedures.
- Undertaking any other duties of a similar nature and level of responsibility as may be assigned from time to time.

The above duties are not intended to be an exhaustive list of responsibilities. The postholder may therefore be required to undertake other duties appropriate to the grade and nature of the post, as assigned from time to time, and to contribute to the ongoing development of the role.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POST

Character

Candidates shall be of good character.

Health

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Education, Experience, etc.,

Candidates shall on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms for the post:

a) Hold an honours degree (level 8 or higher in the National Framework of Qualifications) in Science.

Desirable Skills

It is desirable that candidates demonstrate the following skills and attributes:

- Knowledge of health and safety legislation and relevant safety regulations.
- Strong analytical, problem-solving and IT skills.
- Effective planning and organisational skills, including an awareness of resource management.
- Good report-writing and presentation skills, with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively.
- The ability to work independently, evaluate proposals, identify opportunities for improvement and adapt to changing circumstances.
- The ability to manage competing priorities, meet deadlines and effectively manage multiple tasks.
- A full, clean Category B driving licence, free from disqualifications and relevant medical restrictions.

Competencies

Candidates should be able to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- Identifying Problems and Contributing to Solutions.
- Communicating Effectively.
- Delivering Quality Work and Services.

Desirable Knowledge and/or Experience

Knowledge and/or experience in some or all of the following areas would be an advantage:

- Climate change and its implications for local authorities.
- Air quality challenges and their implications for local authorities.
- Water quality issues in urban environments.
- Waste management licencing and regulation.
- Waste enforcement and reporting structures.
- Circular economy Irelands strategy 2026-2028.
- Noise Pollution in Urban areas.
- Producer responsibility initiatives

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate in their application and at interview (should they be called) that they possess these competencies through the experience and skills they have gained to date.

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS AND CONTRIBUTING TO SOLUTIONS

Evaluates issues and situations in a logical and objective manner in order to arrive at effective solutions. Makes decisions in a timely, clear, and well-informed way.

- Analyses issues in a logical and rational manner taking into account all relevant information, policies and procedures including legislation.
- Shows good judgement and balanced decision making.
- When evaluating a complex issue, takes into account a range of factors beyond the immediate situation.
- Has the conviction to make and stand over decisions based on limited information, where necessary.

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

Recognises the value of and requirement to communicate effectively. Has effective verbal and written communication skills. Has good interpersonal skills.

- Writes reports, memos, and emails in a clear and concise manner.
- Responds in a timely and accurate way to requests for information.
- Influence's others effectively to get support and commitment to proposals or suggestions.
- Makes a case in a confident and credible manner
- Effectively supports team members by communicating in a positive way.

DELIVERING QUALITY WORK AND SERVICES

Sets and implements high standards of service delivery. Closely monitors quality of activities and takes initiatives to improve work processes over time.

- Sets clear standards for the quality of work of all main work areas.
- Demonstrates a strong customer service ethic and example with internal and external customers.
- Reviews and measures the quality of work.
- Intervenes immediately and decisively where there is a problem with service quality.
- Ensures that all staff understand and comply with the required quality standards.

Salary

The salary scale for the post is:

€40,244 – €43,111 – €47,211 – €50,951

In accordance with Departmental Circular Letter EL 02/2011, a person who is not a serving local authority employee on or after 1st January 2011 will enter the scale at the minimum point.

Hours of Duty

- The standard working week is **35 hours per week**. The role may, on occasion, require evening or weekend work.
- Holders of the post may be required to attend for duty at any time, in accordance with arrangements made by the local authority. The Council reserves the right to alter hours of work from time to time.
- All hours worked will be subject to the provisions of the **Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997** and the **Organisation of Working Time (Regulations) Act, 2001**.

Garda Vetting

This post may come within the scope of the **Local Authorities Garda Vetting Scheme**. Further information is available in our **Candidate Information Booklet**, which provides details on vetting requirements, the format of the competition, the principal conditions of service, and data protection under the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Cork City Council is an **equal opportunities employer**. We welcome and encourage applications from suitably qualified candidates, regardless of gender, age, civil or family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, race, ethnic origin, membership of the Traveller community, religion, or belief.

Closing Date

The deadline for receipt of applications is **4:00pm on Thursday 19th November 2026**.