



The National Library of Ireland is an Equal Opportunities Employer
Candidates' Information Booklet

Open competition for the appointment to a 2-year Fixed Term position of

Conservator at Assistant Keeper Grade 2 Level,

Special Collections Department,

in the National Library of Ireland

Closing date for applications: **31st July 2026, at 3pm**

The National Library of Ireland is committed to a policy of equal opportunity

Contact: HR Department

National Library of Ireland

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Dublin 2.

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Website: www.nli.ie/about-us/working-national-library-ireland

BACKGROUND

The National Library of Ireland (NLI) is the library of record for Ireland. Established in 1877, the NLI became an autonomous cultural institution on 3rd May 2005 under the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997, with a Board and a Director who operate under the Board's overall governance. The Board, made up of a chairperson and 11 ordinary members, reports to the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport. The Library employs some 125 staff who work to deliver five priorities under our current strategy, to collect, protect, reveal, engage and innovate.

The NLI shares the story of Ireland with the world through our unique collections. We care for more than twelve million items, including books, manuscripts, newspapers, photographs, prints, maps, drawings, ephemera, music and digital media. The Library's sites in Dublin, including the National Photographic Archive in Temple Bar, are open, free of charge, to all those who wish to consult and explore the collections - through reading rooms which are visitor attractions in their own right, via rich and varied exhibitions, and by means of an active public programme. Further information is available at <https://www.nli.ie/about-us>

THE ROLE

Reporting to the Conservation Services Manager, this role will provide expert conservation and preservation guidance and support in treatment of the NLI's collections, with particular focus on collections relating to the Normans in Ireland including material in parchment and papers. The role will involve providing hands-on treatment, the stabilisation of material for access, digitisation, display, loans, photography and research.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Liaising with NLI staff on conservation treatment priorities and options, and on appropriate preservation approaches for collections;
- Providing the conservation and preservation for parchment, archival documents, manuscripts, wax seals, binding structures and their materials, early printed books and published collections;
- Carrying out conservation treatments, while maintaining the highest technical and ethical standards;
- Carrying out in-situ repair on collections so that they may be available for public access, exhibition, loans, digitisation and research;
- Liaising with staff on storage options and solutions, coordinating custom-made boxing of bound material;
- Carrying out condition audits on collections, when required, to help prioritise resources and maximise preservation gains;

- Carrying out research to increase the body of knowledge about the NLI collections, when appropriate and with visible outputs;
- Promoting the NLI and the role of conservation and preservation by participating in outreach activities;
- Working with contract conservators, supervising interns and students in the lab to achieve the goals set by the NLI Strategic Plan;
- Supervising the preparation of collection items for exhibition, (including loan condition assessments), travelling on loan and acting as courier where necessary;
- Liaising with and offering specialist advice to colleagues regarding collection handling, suitability for imaging, storage and access;
- Participating in the delivery of advice and training on preservation matters;
- Contributing to the success of the Conservation Department through continuous professional development, assisting in administrative work, keeping conservation supplies up-to-date as required;
- Other duties as required.

The above is a general guide to the role and is not an exhaustive description of duties which are associated with the role or tasks which may be assigned to the role of Conservator, Assistant Keeper Grade 2 in the NLI.

QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Essential Requirements:

- Postgraduate book conservation qualification or equivalent;
- A minimum of 3 years' post-graduate experience in conserving paper, parchment, binding structures (books, albums) and their materials (wood, metal, leather, textile and wax seals), rare books and library materials;
- Excellent knowledge of the range of collection uses in a national cultural institution, including exhibition and reader access;
- Proven project management skills in the coordination and delivery of conservation projects;
- Competence in the use of information technology to achieve work objectives, including use of Microsoft Office software, and other electronic and presentation tools, familiarity with the use of relational databases for conservation condition audits and to prioritise workflows;
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of relevant professional standards and codes of ethics and practice, and relevant Health and Safety standards;
- Comprehensive knowledge of conservation treatment techniques and materials, preservation principles and methodologies, including a thorough knowledge of the conservation of paper, parchment, binding structures (books, albums) and their materials (wood, metal, leather, textile and wax seals).

Desirable Requirements:

- Professional accreditation or working towards accreditation;
- Research and analytical skills;
- Experience of preparing books for exhibition and external loans;
- Willingness to keep up to date with current conservation research and practice (CPD);
- An interest and enthusiasm to work in the National Library of Ireland and to raise awareness and advocate for preservation and conservation of documentary heritage in Ireland.

Person Specification

The successful candidate will possess:

- Demonstrated ability to work to deadlines;
- Demonstrated ability to work collegially within a small team environment;
- Good organisational and prioritising skills with ability to manage complex workloads;
- Excellent attention to detail;
- Interest in creativity and innovation;
- Tolerant, flexible and positive attitude;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to clearly communicate conservation and preservation concepts to non-specialist peers;
- Self-motivation and initiative;
- Sound decision making and judgement when assessing risks;
- Initiative and drive to achieve objectives.

PRINCIPAL CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

PAY: The payscale applicable to the position is as follows (rates effective from 1st June 2026):

Personal Pension Contribution (PPC)

The PPC pay scale will apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6th April 1995 and is required to make a personal pension contribution. It will also apply to new permanent employees and fixed term un-established employees.

€40,374 €42,921 €43,602 €47,001 €50,412 €53,886 €57,526 €59,823 €62,132
€64,461 €66,776 €69,097 €71,418 €73,732 €76,066 €78,644* €81,218**

**LSI 1 is Long service Increment after 3 years on Max of scale*

***LSI 2 is Long service increment after 6 years on Max of scale*

Non-Personal Pension Contribution (Non-PPC)

The Non-PPC (Personal Pension Contribution) salary for the position will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6th April 1995 and who is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

€42,128	€45,002	€48,243	€51,483	€54,822	€56,977	€59,156	€61,348
€63,547	€65,755	€67,956	€70,159	€72,364	€74,827*	€77,273**	

**LSI 1 is Long service Increment after 3 years on Max of scale.*

***LSI 2 is Long service increment after 6 years on Max of scale.*

Important Note

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Candidates should note that different terms and conditions may apply if immediately prior to appointment you are a currently serving civil or public servant.

Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy (see Public Service Stability Agreement 2021 - 2022 paragraph 5.1 for recent changes).

The rate of pay offered will be payable fortnightly in arrears by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) into a bank account of your choice. Payment cannot be made until you supply an IBAN and BIC number to the HR Unit.

Statutory deductions from salary will be made as appropriate.

You will agree that any overpayment of salary or of travel and subsistence may be deducted from future salary payments due to you in accordance with the Payment of Wages Act 1991. You will be advised in writing of the amount and details of any such overpayment and you will be given at least one week's notice of the deduction to take place, which will be deducted at an amount fair and reasonable having regards to all the circumstances.

Tenure

The appointment is to a temporary position in the National Library of Ireland on successful completion of a 12-month probation. This does not preclude an extension to the probationary period in appropriate circumstances. During the period of probation, the appointee's performance will be subject to review by the relevant manager(s) to determine whether the appointee:

- (i) has performed in a satisfactory manner.
- (ii) has been satisfactory in general conduct.
- (iii) is suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Outside Employment

The position will be full time and the appointee may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which conflicts in any way with their official duties, impairs performance or compromises their integrity.

Location

The successful candidate will initially be based at the National Library of Ireland premises in Kildare Street, Dublin 2, but can be based at any of the Library premises in Dublin.

Organisation of Working Time Act 1997

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 will, where appropriate, apply to this position.

Hours of Attendance

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time but will amount, on average, to not less than 41.25 gross hours per week (35 net hours per week).

Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance is 25 working days a year. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave and is on the basis of a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Health

A candidate and any person holding the office must be fully competent and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the office and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Important notice:

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

COMPETITION PROCESS

How to Apply

Applicants should submit a copy of their current Curriculum Vitae with a letter of interest by e-mail to the Human Resources Unit of the National Library of Ireland at careers@nli.ie

Please note that all application documentation should be submitted in a single PDF document.

Applicants will be shortlisted on the basis of the information contained in the application. It is the responsibility of applicants to be available for interview on the allotted time and date.

The names and contact details of two referees will be required following an interview. The Library reserves the right to make such enquiries as it considers necessary in relation to an applicant before making an offer of a post to them.

Closing Date

Please note that the deadline for receipt of applications is **31st July 2026**, at **3pm**. This closing date and time will be strictly adhered to.

Canvassing will disqualify.

Panel

A panel may be formed from this competition from which vacancies at Assistant Keeper Grade 2, both permanent and temporary, should they arise may be filled.

Special Accommodations

If you require any special accommodations in relation to any aspect of this competition, please notify hr@nli.ie

Format of the Competition

The selection process for this competition may comprise of a number of elements. These may include one or more of the following:

- Completion of an online Assessment Questionnaire;
- Online and/or paper-based assessment test(s);
- Short listing;
- Interview(s);
- Presentation/Analysis exercise;
- Work sample test or any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

Shortlisting

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the National Library may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, the National Library provides for the employment of a shortlisting process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application forms against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements for the position and decide if you will be shortlisted, relative to the other candidates applying for the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather than there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience on the application form.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the National Library of Ireland requires in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature will have no further claim to consideration.

Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process

Requests for a review are dealt with in accordance with the "Code of Practice: Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service" published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments- the Code can be accessed at [CPSA-Code-of-Practice-2022.pdf](https://www.cpsa.ie/Code-of-Practice-2022.pdf)

The National Library of Ireland will consider requests (addressed to the HR Unit) for review as follows:

- Informal process to be availed of within 5 working days of the notification of initial decision or within 5 working days of the receipt of a decision in relation to an interim stage.
- Formal process: request for a formal review must be made within five working days of the candidate receiving notification of either the original decision or the decision on their informal complaint.
- The candidate may seek to have outcome of initial review reviewed by decision arbitrator and a request to this effect should be made within 7 working days of the receipt of the outcome of the initial review
- The Review/Appeals Procedures in relation to allegations of a breach of the Code of Practice is also outlined.

Candidate Feedback

In accordance with the principles of the above Code of Practice, the National Library of Ireland is committed to providing clear, specific and meaningful feedback to candidates. In this regard it is the National Library of Ireland's policy to provide written feedback to candidates. This will comprise of the candidate marks from the competition, benchmarking the mark relative to the performance of other candidates and a comment from the assessment board in relation to the candidate's overall performance under each of the Capability Framework headings.

Access to Information

One hardcopy of a CV and cover letter will be generated from the e-mail application and will be used by the interview board. Members of the interview board will receive softcopies of application material, with instructions to delete these copies as soon as the purpose for which they were required have concluded. On completion of the competition one copy of application material will be retained by the HR Unit for a minimum of one year.

All competition documents including interview notes are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Data Protection Acts 1988 - 2018 will apply.

APPENDIX 1

Conservator Assistant Keeper, Grade 2 – Key Performance Indicators

Team Leadership	Works with the team to facilitate high performance, developing clear and realistic objectives and addressing performance issues if they arise
	Provides clear information and advice as to what is required of the team
	Strives to develop and implement new ways of working effectively to meet objectives
	Leads the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required
	Places high importance on staff development, training and maximising skills & capacity of team.
	Is flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change
Judgement, Analysis & Decision Making	Gathers and analyses information from relevant sources, whether financial, numerical or otherwise weighing up a range of critical factors
	Takes account of any broader issues, agendas, sensitivities and related implications when making decisions
	Uses previous knowledge and experience in order to guide decisions
	Uses judgement to make sound decisions with a well-reasoned rationale and stands by these
	Puts forward solutions to address problems
Management & Delivery of Results	Takes responsibility and is accountable for the delivery of agreed objectives
	Successfully manages a range of different projects and work activities at the same time
	Structures and organises their own and others work effectively
	Is logical and pragmatic in approach, delivering the best possible results with the resources available
	Delegates work effectively, providing clear information and evidence as to what is required
	Proactively identifies areas for improvement and develops practical suggestions for their implementation
	Demonstrates enthusiasm for new developments/changing work practices and strives to implement these changes effectively
	Applies appropriate systems/ processes to enable quality checking of all activities and outputs
	Practices and promotes a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service, for internal and external customers
Interpersonal & Communication Skills	Builds and maintains contact with colleagues and other stakeholders to assist in performing role
	Acts as an effective link between staff and senior management
	Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues

	Projects conviction, gaining buy-in by outlining relevant information and selling the benefits
	Treats others with diplomacy, tact, courtesy and respect, even in challenging circumstances
	Presents information clearly, concisely and confidently when speaking and in writing
	Collaborates and supports colleagues to achieve organisational goals
Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development	Has a clear understanding of the roles, objectives and targets of self and team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department/ Organisation and effectively communicates this to others
	Has high levels of expertise and broad Public Sector knowledge relevant to his/her area of work
	Focuses on self-development, striving to improve performance
Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values	Strives to perform at a high level, investing significant energy to achieve agreed objectives
	Demonstrates resilience in the face of challenging circumstances and high demands
	Is personally trustworthy and can be relied upon
	Ensures that customers are at the heart of all services provided
	Upholds high standards of honesty, ethics and integrity