# Director of Research

## Job Specification



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**Enquiries in relation to this role should be directed to:**
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# Director of Research

**Location:** **Teagasc Head Office, Oak Park, Carlow.**

The successful candidate will be based in Head Office (Carlow). However, due to the nature of the role, considerable travel to Teagasc research centres and other locations will be required. Flexible working arrangements may be available in line with Teagasc policy.

**Contract Type:** Permanent

**Reporting to:** Director of Teagasc

**Grade/Salary:** Head of Directorate scale
€171,517 (min.) – €196,205 (max.)

## Background:

Teagasc is a dynamic public service organisation built on partnerships and close working relationships with farmer and industry stakeholders, Government and other state agencies, research collaborators in Ireland and internationally, learners in its education system, and other collaborators in the agri-food system. Its cutting-edge research programmes across the agri-food and bio-economy sector are internationally recognised and result in 600 refereed publications annually and include 200+ industry engagements. Teagasc provides advisory services to all Irish farmers, including 43,000 fee paying clients. It has 3,600 enrolled learners in its education service, availing of full-time, part-time, distance and apprenticeship education offerings.

Teagasc is unique in a global context in having the three pillars of the Agriculture Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) within the same organisation (Research, Education, Advisory) and this structure has resulted in it being recognised internationally as an exemplar of best practice in knowledge generation and knowledge exchange.

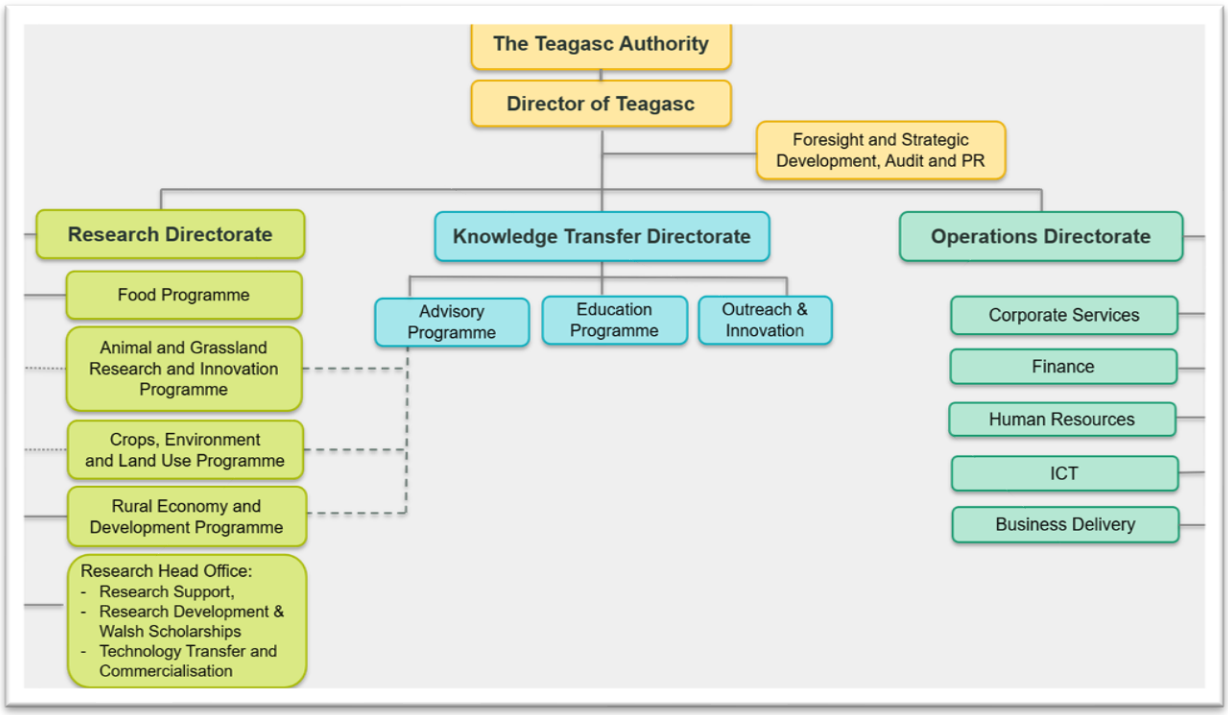
Teagasc's Statement of Strategy 2025-2028, ***"Innovating for Impact"***, reflects the evolving global and national policy environment, changing food demand, and the opportunities presented by new technologies including digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) across the agri-food sector and the bioeconomy. Its central thrust is to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the agri-food sector, enabling it to thrive economically while adapting to climate, environmental and market challenges. In response, Teagasc plays a key role in driving a competitive and climate-resilient agri-food system through scientific leadership, expert knowledge and innovation support, while advancing environmental sustainability and strengthening the economic viability and attractiveness of the sector and the well-being of rural communities.

To support its continued success, owing to an imminent retirement, Teagasc now wishes to appoint a Director of Research to its executive team to lead its research function.

## The Role of the Director of Research

The new Director of Research will join Teagasc's Executive Leadership Team, alongside the Director of Teagasc, the Director of Knowledge Transfer and the Chief Operations Officer. The scientific development and strategic management of Teagasc's research staff and resources are the core

functions of this post. The position of the Director of Research within Teagasc's organisational structure is shown below.




*High-Level Overview of Teagasc's Organisation Structure*

Teagasc's annual research portfolio comprises over 500 research projects delivered by approximately 750 scientific, technical, administrative and other support staff, along with approximately 250 Walsh Scholars (post-graduate students), in our 7 research centres throughout Ireland. The Research Programme also includes facilities such as Moorepark Technology Ltd, the National Prepared Consumer Foods Centre, the National Centre for Brewing and Distilling, and large externally funded research centres such as VistaMilk and Meat Technology Ireland (soon to be replaced by the proposed Enterprise Ireland-funded National Food and Drink Centre).

In addition, there are a number of Head Office departments which manage the Teagasc Walsh Scholarship Programme and other functions; Teagasc's portfolio of externally funded research (including both national and international funding); and Teagasc's intellectual property and portfolio of industry collaborations.

The budget for the Research Directorate is €104 million per annum, comprising grant aid allocated by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), competitive funding awarded nationally by DAFM, Research Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and other funders, and funding from EU sources, principally Horizon Europe. Other earned funding comes from contracts with industry, producer levies, and income from farm operations and laboratory services. In total, 48% of the budget comes from sources other than core grant aid. Teagasc has also invested in state-of-the-art research platforms, laboratories and equipment.

The Director of Research provides the necessary leadership to ensure that the organisation's scientific resources are fully leveraged and integrated with Teagasc's advisory and educational resources thereby optimising the successful and timely transfer of knowledge to farmers, and a range of other stakeholders who use Teagasc research, including policy makers and food and agri-businesses.

The Director of Research plays a pivotal role in Teagasc and in shaping the future of Irish agriculture. The appointee will be expected to develop a strong national profile and contribute in a significant way to the development of the Irish agri-food industry. They will possess a deep scientific understanding of agriculture and food, will have a clear vision of research priorities to advance agriculture and food. They will articulate Teagasc's science-based position on issues pertaining to agriculture, food and the bioeconomy to a range of stakeholders including scientists, farmers and industry representatives, food and ag-tech businesses, policy makers, and professionals in industry and other agencies.

As a member of the Executive Leadership Team, the Director of Research will adopt a corporate perspective and will contribute to the strategic development and implementation of the organisation's wider programmes. They will play a central role in advancing Teagasc's digital transformation and operational excellence agenda, and will ensure that research resources, infrastructure and public funding are deployed with diligence, achieving demonstrable impact and value for money while maintaining the highest standards of scientific quality, integrity and governance.

## Key Areas of Responsibility

- Lead the strategic development and implementation of relevant and excellent research programmes that meet the current and future needs of the Irish agri-food industry with a clear focus on generating demonstrable improvements and innovations in the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the sector.

- Work closely with the Director of Knowledge Transfer to ensure effective collaboration between the research, advisory and education functions of Teagasc for the benefit of stakeholders.

- As a member of the Executive Leadership Team, provide leadership to Teagasc through actively contributing to the achievement of overall corporate goals, including digital transformation, and the development of organisational strategy.

- Represent Teagasc and articulate its science-based position on issues pertaining to agriculture, food and the bioeconomy to a range of stakeholders including scientists, farmers and industry representatives, food and ag-tech businesses, policy makers, and professionals in industry and other agencies.

- Ensure that Teagasc conducts research of a very high quality, that it is peer reviewed and is demonstrably at a level that would stand comparison with the highest international standards.

- Keep up to date with international developments and trends in research, consumer demands, and the development of new technologies related to agriculture, food and the bioeconomy, and maintain an appropriate balance between applied and strategic research.

- Position Teagasc to be successful in securing national and international competitive research funding, with a strong awareness of emerging and future funding models, and proactively engage in collaborative and contract research with agri-food and ag-tech companies.

- Ensure that Teagasc plays a leadership role nationally and internationally in relation to research policy and strategy and is an active and successful participant in large-scale research funding initiatives such as the Research Ireland Centres Programme, the EI Technology Centres Programme, and EU Horizon Programme initiatives.

- Liaise closely with stakeholders to build external relationships and strengthen stakeholder involvement in research programmes.

- Proactively develop the linkages of the Teagasc research programme nationally and internationally with other research providers to optimise the value of the programme to stakeholders.

- Promote the commercial exploitation of Teagasc Intellectual Property (IP) through the Teagasc Technology Transfer Office, Engage@Teagasc.

- Lead and develop the research support structures within the Directorate, including the activities and responsibilities of the following functions: Research Support; Research Development and Walsh Scholarships; and Engage@Teagasc.

- Represent the Research Directorate and Teagasc in national and international fora and committees or other bodies.

- Foster a culture of effective leadership and staff development across the Directorate by providing coaching, mentoring, and professional development opportunities to managers and staff. Guide and support the Research management team in engaging their staff and enabling them to reach their full potential.

- Champion and advocate for diversity and inclusion, staff well-being, and safe and flexible working practices.

- Ensure strong financial stewardship and due diligence in the management of the Directorate's resources, including budgeting, forecasting, expenditure control, income generation, procurement, capital investment and financial risk management.

- Work closely with corporate functions to ensure the highest standards of governance and compliance across the Research Directorate, including effective financial management, procurement, risk management, data governance, and information security.

- Undertake such other duties as may be assigned by the Director from time to time.

*This job specification is intended as a guide to the general range of duties and is intended to be neither definitive nor restrictive. It will be subject to periodic review with the post holder.*

## Person Specification:

| Category | Specification |
|---|---|
| **Qualifications** | Candidates must hold a relevant qualification at PhD level, together with extensive scientific research experience at an advanced level.<br><br>An additional postgraduate qualification in business or related discipline would be an advantage.<br><br>Note: The shortlisting board may, at its sole discretion, accept substantial relevant scientific experience where a candidate does not hold a PhD, provided this experience reflects expertise, leadership, and achievement appropriate to the level and requirements of the Director of Research post. |
| **Knowledge** | Candidates should possess a deep, scientific understanding of agriculture and food and have an outstanding record of relevant scientific achievement. They should have excellent knowledge of:<br><br>• Agri-food Industry, competitors and stakeholders.<br>• The external context and factors that impinge on the organisation.<br>• The relevant relationships, stakeholders, and government departments.<br>• Existing and emerging technology of relevance to the Irish agri-food industry.<br>• Knowledge and technology transfer techniques.<br>• The public sector and its governance.<br>• Best practice in people and programme management. |
| **Skills / Experience** | • Outstanding publications' record and evidence of scientific leadership.<br>• Planning and implementation of large and diverse research programmes. |

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| | • Dissemination of scientific knowledge.<br>• Strategic awareness and influencing.<br>• Engaging and consultative leadership style.<br>• Working collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders.<br>• Empowering leadership focused on developing people and achieving results.<br>• Outstanding communicator and effective information conduit.<br>• IT literate with ability to use digital tools effectively in a professional. environment.<br>• Financial management and budgeting, and commercial acumen.<br>• Managing capital resources. |
| **Behaviour Competencies** | • Provides clear leadership and direction that engages others and inspires colleagues to achieve.<br>• Strong strategic and operational decision-making capacity with clear ability to develop a compelling vision based on a solid understanding of the organisation and the wider business context.<br>• A results-driven leader with a strong focus on goal setting, performance management and accountability.<br>• Resilient and resourceful with an ability to maintain control, concentration and performance levels under high demand.<br>• An ability to build and sustain a wide network of collaborative working relationships inside and outside the organisation.<br>• A change-agent with capability to lead, persuade and influence others to positively and proactively challenge the status quo and to promote innovation and new thinking within the business context.<br>• An ability to create effective structures and systems for gathering and sharing information and transferring technology.<br>• A strong commitment to teamwork and ongoing personal and professional development.<br>• Promotes an inclusive culture that values diversity, respects difference and enables all colleagues to contribute and reach their full potential.<br>• Leads by example and promotes continuous improvement with a quality customer service focus.<br>• Uses their influence to proactively position the organisation to best advantage.<br>• Critically evaluates complex information and makes judgements that reflect a wide understanding of issues. |

- While tailored to the specific requirements of the Director of Research role in Teagasc, competency requirements for this role are aligned at a comparable level to the Irish Civil Service Assistant Secretary Competency Model.

- At all levels in Teagasc, we believe in growing and keeping alive an open, diverse and inclusive workplace which is respectful to all and nurtures different perspectives, for the benefit of all in the organisation. We are committed to the principles of 'Equal Opportunities, No Barriers, Active Inclusion'. We actively welcome applications from people from diverse backgrounds.

# Additional Information

### Salary

The salary scale relevant to this position is the Head of Directorate scale.

Min - €171,517; Point 2 - €179,312; Point 3 - €187,760; Max – €196,205

Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and will not be subject to negotiation. The scale quoted above is the rate effective of 1st June 2026. The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Increments may be awarded annually subject to satisfactory performance. Different terms and conditions may apply, if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant or Public Servant.

### Probation

A 12-month probationary period will apply to this appointment. During the probationary period regular reviews will be undertaken.

### Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance for this position is 30 days. This allowance is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of public holidays.

### Flexible Working and Other Benefits

Teagasc operates a number of policies under its Flexible Working Programme including home working, remote office working, compressed working hours and core hours. Teagasc also offers a range of health and wellbeing benefits including paid sick leave and death in service benefits, together with an employee wellbeing programme, and a number of on-site benefits including subsidised staff restaurant, extensive grounds for lunchtime walks or running, shower facilities, and free parking.

### Superannuation and Retirement

The appointee will be offered public service pension terms and retirement age conditions in accordance with pension arrangements in Teagasc depending on the status of the successful appointee. In general, an appointee who has never worked in Public Service will become a member of the Single Public Sector Pension Scheme. Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable capacity (non- Single Scheme Terms) within the Civil or Public Service in the 26 weeks prior to appointment different pension terms may apply. The pension entitlement of the appointee will be established prior to appointment in the context of their public service employment history.