Director of Research

Organisation Overview



[Link to Application Procedure]

Enquiries in relation to this role should be directed to:

Forvis Mazars Executive Recruitment Team
Email: execrecruit@mazars.ie
Phone: +353 (1) 449 4400

About Teagasc

Teagasc is the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority, a national body providing integrated research, advisory and education services to the Irish agri-food sector and circular bioeconomy. Teagasc has a statutory remit under the Agriculture (Research, Training and Advice) Act 1988 to support the knowledge and technology needs of the food chain from production to consumption. We provide integrated research, advisory and education services to deliver the innovation support necessary to create and maintain value for Ireland's agri-food sector. With a presence in 26 counties and 56 locations in the Republic of Ireland, and collaborations in over 40 countries internationally, Teagasc combines an important national sector support footprint with a strong international network to strive towards its vision, deliver on its mission, while grounded in Teagasc's core values.

Our Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2025-2028 "***Innovating for Impact****: Improving competitiveness and resilience in the agri-food sector*", is focused on supporting a competitive and climate-resilient agri-food system through scientific leadership, expert knowledge and innovation support. Our future success depends on attracting and identifying the best people and, to help achieve this, our employment policies and practices are of the highest standard. We are committed to ensuring that our recruitment and selection practices are fair, consistent and in line with legislative requirements and that they follow best practice. All appointments are made on merit and through fair and transparent recruitment processes.

Teagasc aims to be an employer of choice and offers a wide-range of challenging career opportunities, merit-based promotions, excellent learning and development programmes, and a wealth of e-learning courses on our bespoke learning management system, to assist staff members to achieve their full potential. We offer a range of flexible working options, tuition reimbursement, on-site training courses to enhance job-related skills, access to job-related conferences and seminars and accredited customised Leadership Development and Management Development Programmes.

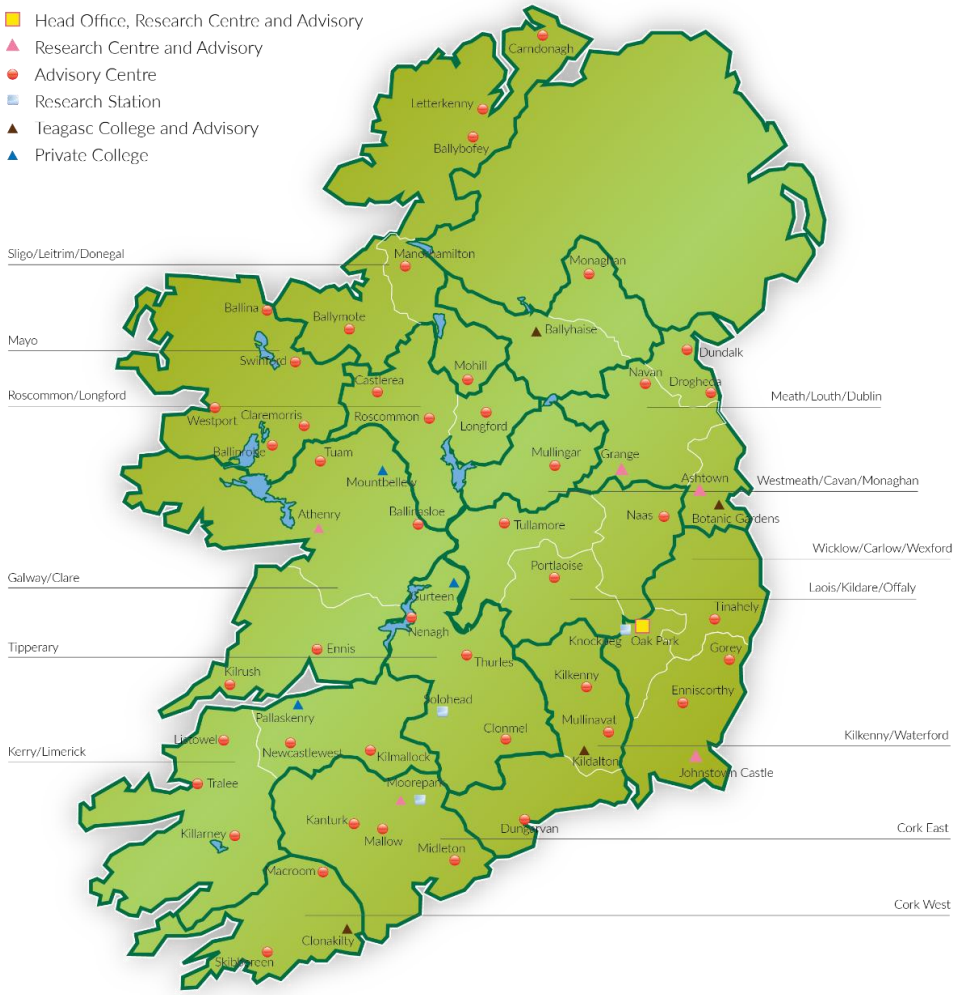
Across all levels in Teagasc, we are committed to advancing a culture of gender equality and to fostering an open and inclusive workplace that respects all individuals and values diverse perspectives, for the benefit of the organisation as a whole. This commitment is underpinned by our core values of Respect, Excellence and Integrity.

Our new People Strategy (2026-2029) is currently in the design phase and will set a clear direction for strengthening organisational capability, leadership and skills development, advancing operational excellence, and other key initiatives supporting the delivery of Teagasc's Statement of Strategy 2025-2028.



Teagasc Values

Teagasc operates from 7 research centres, 7 colleges (4 owned and 3 Private colleges which are supported by Teagasc) and 13 regional advisory units (with over 50 advisory offices located around the country), as outlined on the map below. Further information on Teagasc can be located at www.teagasc.ie.



Research Directorate

The Research Directorate has a key role in contributing to Teagasc's mission to empower the Irish agri-food sector through scientific leadership, expert knowledge and innovation support, with a strong focus on enhancing the competitiveness and resilience of the sector in line with its Statement of Strategy 2025-2028.

Research is delivered through four integrated programme areas: Animal and Grassland Research and Innovation; Crops, Environment and Land Use; Food; and Rural Economy and Development. These programmes are closely aligned with Teagasc's strategic priorities of productivity, environmental sustainability, attractiveness and innovation, ensuring that research outputs are relevant, impact-focused and responsive to sectoral and policy needs.

Each of the programmes comprises research, development and knowledge transfer/industry development departments. Research is conducted at 6 dedicated locations (7 research centres), while knowledge transfer professionals (specialists and specialised advisers) are located throughout the country. The research programmes are supported by a Research Development and Walsh Scholarships Department; the Research Support Office which supports staff with external funding applications; and Engage@Teagasc, our Technology Transfer and Commercialisation Office, which manages Teagasc's commercialisation, industry engagement and entrepreneurship activities.

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).

A key priority for the Research Directorate is to ensure that research delivers measurable impact. This is achieved through close collaboration with farmers, industry, policymakers, and research partners, as well as through Teagasc's integrated model of research, advisory and education services, which supports the adoption of innovation and the delivery of sectoral outcomes.

Size and resourcing of the research programme: Our annual research portfolio comprises over 500 research projects carried out by approx. 750 scientific, technical, administrative and other support staff, along with approximately 250 Walsh Scholar graduate students in our 7 research centres throughout Ireland. The budget for the Research Directorate is €104m per annum which comes from grant-aid funding allocated by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), and competitive funding awarded nationally by DAFM, Research Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and other funders, and 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 the core grant aid. We have invested in state-of-the-art research platforms, laboratories and equipment.

Research performance and outputs: In 2025, Teagasc published over 600 peer reviewed publications and in terms of citations, Teagasc publications are performing above the global average for similar publications. Over a five-year period, 61% of our scientific papers had international collaborators. Teagasc is highly successful in competing for funding both nationally and at EU level, with new competitive funding awards averaging €36.3m per year for the last four years. In terms of Horizon Europe funding in the area of food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment, Teagasc is ranked 17th across all institutions in the EU for total funding secured and is the only Irish institution in the top 20.

Recent infrastructure developments: In recent years, investments in research infrastructure include a €12.7m National Agricultural Sustainability Research and Innovation Centre at Johnstown Castle (pictured below), a €9m National Food Innovation Hub at Moorepark, a €10m investment in the National Prepared Consumer Foods Centre at Ashtown, and the €12.6m Padraig Walshe Centre for Sustainable Animal and Grassland Research currently under construction at Moorepark.



NASRIC Building, Teagasc, Johnstown Castle, Wexford, Y35 HK54

The Walsh Scholars Programme: The Teagasc Walsh Scholars Programme supports postgraduate researchers undertaking projects aligned with Teagasc priorities in agriculture, food, environmental science and rural development. At the end of December 2025, the Programme supported 247 active scholars across 26 higher education institutions in Ireland and internationally (not including those on KT Masters programme). These scholars are predominantly based in Teagasc research centres. Expenditure on the programme was €7.7m in 2025. The scholars come from 43 countries and comprise 54% female, 46% male.

Industry engagement and commercialisation of research: In 2025, Engage@Teagasc supported activity which contributed €6.692 million in income to Teagasc. This comprised €3.08 million from collaborative research projects with industry, €2.44 million from technical services and consultancy activity, and €1.17 million in licensing income from intellectual property. In a national context, Teagasc performs strongly. It consistently generated approximately 16-17% of all industry-derived research expenditure between 2020 and 2024. It's licences, options and assignments (LOAs) represented 22% of all LOAs recorded nationally in 2024. Together, these indicators demonstrate Teagasc's strong capability to convert publicly funded research into tangible industry impact across the agri-food and bioeconomy sectors.

Collaboration and Partnerships: In order to maximise the impact of our research, Teagasc actively collaborates with research organisations across the world. This collaboration stretches from individual projects and publications right up to formal alliances and partnerships.

Commercial Services and Pilot Plants: Teagasc offers a number of specialist services to the Irish agri-food sector. Generally, these services would otherwise not be available in Ireland due to the sophisticated equipment or high-level expertise required. Teagasc also operates a number of pilot plants where food and beverage companies can rent time and facilities to carry out innovation trials at a pilot scale. The best established of these is Moorepark Technology Limited, a subsidiary of Teagasc, co-owned by Teagasc and the Irish Dairy industry. Teagasc also operates a meat processing pilot plant, a newly established Prepared Consumer Foods pilot-scale facility, and a National Centre for Brewing and Distilling. Teagasc is also a partner in the Bia Innovator located on the Teagasc campus in Athenry.

Knowledge Transfer Directorate

The mission of the Knowledge Transfer (KT) Directorate is to strengthen the competitiveness, sustainability and resilience of Irish agriculture and the wider land-based sector by providing science-based advisory and education services that support innovation, capability building and practice adoption. Through Teagasc's integrated model of research, advisory and education, the Directorate works across the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) to help farmers, learners and industry stakeholders identify priorities, evaluate options and implement solutions that deliver economic, environmental and social sustainability. In practice, this role extends beyond knowledge transfer alone to innovation support, capacity building and the facilitation of change across farming systems and rural communities.

KT Programme Structure and Objectives

The Teagasc Knowledge Transfer Directorate supports innovation, resource management and skills development through two major programmes – the Regional Advisory Programme and the Education Programme – supported by a small head office function and by specialist knowledge transfer and development teams. These specialist teams act as the conduits between research and frontline advisory and teaching staff, helping to coordinate national programmes, staff development, events, communications and targeted initiatives across sectors including dairy, drystock, tillage, environment, Signpost, farm management, forestry, horticulture and pigs.

Advisory Programme

The Advisory Programme is delivered through 13 regional advisory units and, in 2025, comprised almost 300 permanent advisory staff, plus additional administrative and management staff. Teagasc provided contracted advisory services to 43,000 clients, with front-line advisors supporting farmers through one-to-one engagement, office and phone consultations, farm visits, discussion groups, technical events, webinars, and public communications. Advisory work now encompasses substantial support for schemes, sustainability planning and compliance, while also maintaining a strong focus on technical performance, farm viability, climate action, water quality and generational renewal. Increasingly, advisory delivery is centred on helping farmers prioritise and implement actions through farm sustainability planning and through collaboration with other actors in the AKIS.

Objectives:

The strategic objectives of the Advisory Programme are:

1. To engage the widest possible range of farmers and land-based stakeholders in a way that improves farm technical performance, viability, resilience and sustainability.
2. To prioritise the quality, reach and impact of technical, business development and sustainability advisory services, including climate, water quality, biodiversity, soil fertility and diversification actions.
3. To retain high-quality support for schemes and compliance while protecting advisory time and capacity for technical improvement, innovation and practice adoption on farms.
4. To integrate regional advisory delivery with targeted national programmes and tools, including Signpost, ASSAP, Better Farming for Water, AgNav, PastureBase Ireland, profit monitoring and farm sustainability planning.
5. To extend the public-good role of Teagasc by strengthening events, communications, digital channels and collaboration across the AKIS.
6. To develop a modern, efficient and client-centred service through digitalisation, staff development, sustainable workloads and clear pathways for specialisation and leadership.



Teagasc Better Farming for Water Campaign – Tay River

In 2025, advisors delivered 140,577 client visits and consultations, facilitated 495 discussion groups and 3,084 discussion group meetings, completed 1,748 profit monitors, and supported 146,429 scheme and regulatory interactions. Discussion groups remain a core knowledge transfer mechanism, with 7,783 farmers participating across KT and non-KT groups, including growing numbers of young farmer and women-only groups. Climate and sustainability engagement also continues to grow through Signpost, AgNav, ASSAP and Better Farming for Water initiatives.

Education Programme

Teagasc is the primary education provider for the land-based sector in Ireland and is distinctive in combining research, advisory and education within one organisation. The Teagasc Education Strategy 2025-2030 reaffirms its role as the land-based sector educator of choice, delivering practical, science-based education and training that equips learners with the skills and knowledge for a profitable, sustainable and resilient future. The education service has 3,600 enrolled learners across four main streams: full-time further education, part-time and distance education, apprenticeships, and Teagasc-supported higher education programmes. Delivery through Teagasc colleges, private agricultural colleges and regional education centres (within advisory regions) extends national reach and progression opportunities, while recent priorities include curriculum renewal, strengthened learner supports, closer alignment with the wider further education and training (FET) and tertiary education system, and deeper collaboration with private colleges and higher education partners.



Teagasc College of Amenity Horticulture, National Botanic Gardens, Dublin

The strategic objectives of the Education Programme are:

1. To deliver high-quality, science-based and practically focused education and training programmes that meet the evolving needs of the land-based sector.
2. To update and revalidate curricula and strengthen progression pathways across further education, apprenticeships, higher education and tertiary routes.
3. To maintain strong capacity for trained farmer status, generational renewal and early-career skills development across agriculture and the wider land-based sector.
4. To provide accessible, inclusive and well-supported learning environments, including enhanced supports for learners with diverse needs.

5. To develop a more coherent framework for lifelong learning, continuous professional development, micro-credentials and targeted industry skills provision.
6. To strengthen operational partnerships with private agricultural colleges, higher education institutions and wider education stakeholders.
7. To enhance digitalisation, innovation and flexible delivery while protecting the strong practical element that is central to the Teagasc education model.
8. To invest in the capability, leadership and professional development of education staff and to promote the attractiveness of land-based careers and Teagasc education and training programmes.

The Operations Directorate

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) leads the Operations Directorate, which provides the corporate and enabling services that support Teagasc's research, knowledge transfer and education activities.

The Directorate comprises 116 staff and has an annual budget of approximately €24 million. It is structured around four departments: Finance, Human Resources, Information Communications Technology (ICT), and Corporate Services, and the Business Delivery Unit. Together, these functions cover a wide range of activities and play a central role in driving operational excellence, a core enabling priority in Teagasc's Statement of Strategy. The Directorate supports the Teagasc Authority and works closely with the Directors of Research and Knowledge Transfer. The Head of Directorate (Chief Operations Officer) is a member of the Executive Leadership Team, alongside the Director of Teagasc, the Director of Research and the Director of Knowledge Transfer.



Teagasc Head Office, Oak Park, Carlow, R93 XE12

Additional information is available on the Teagasc website at **www.teagasc.ie**.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
Let's grow together