



CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

AFBI DIRECTOR 02/17

Director of Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division (Grade 5)

AGRI-FOOD AND BIOSCIENCES INSTITUTE (AFBI)
NORTHERN IRELAND

Completed application forms must be returned to AFBI HR no later than
12 noon (UK time) on Tuesday 7th March 2017

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Foreword from the Chief Executive

Thank you for your interest in this important senior executive post of Director of Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division (Grade 5).

The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) is an internationally renowned multidisciplinary scientific organisation, based at seven locations across Northern Ireland. In line with our mission of “scientific excellence in Northern Ireland serving the world”, AFBI works with a range of partners to provide scientific solutions to the global challenges of climate change, food security and environmental protection. Our staff undertake scientific research, surveillance, and analytical and diagnostic testing for a wide range of customers in the fields of sustainable agricultural systems, animal health and welfare, plant science, food innovation and safety, environmental protection, fisheries and aquatic ecosystems and agricultural and rural economics.

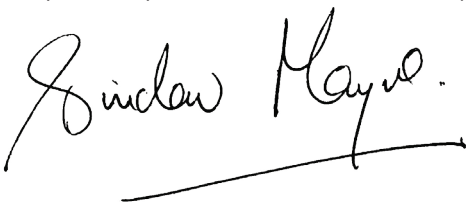
As part of its “2020 Strategy” the Institute has recently embarked on an ambitious programme of capital investment, with plans for a new AFBI headquarters and significant investment in upgrading research facilities across its estate.

The Institute is now seeking an outstanding research scientist to join its Executive Management Team to lead, coordinate and develop AFBI’s research strategy, inspire scientific staff and provide vision, leadership and strategic direction for its Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division. This is a very senior post within the organisation and the appointee will have a key role in strategic planning and leadership, implementing change, building collaborative research partnerships and driving stakeholder engagement.

The person appointed to this high profile position will be critical to AFBI’s long term success as it continues to raise its profile by further developing the quality and range of services offered to AFBI’s local, national and international customers. This is a challenging and rewarding post, which will provide the opportunity to operate on a global stage, build international research consortia and links with leading universities and science organisations whilst influencing the global science agenda. The appointee will also play a key role in increasing scientific capacity and revenue within AFBI through innovation and commercialisation.

The Director of Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division will, along with the Directors of Veterinary Science Division and Finance and Corporate Affairs Division, be designated as Deputy Chief Executive Officer. They will be a member of the Executive Management Team, which is responsible for the corporate management of the organisation and will deputise for the Chief Executive Officer when required. Candidates for this position should be internationally recognised scientists with a strong track record of leading and managing collaborative research programmes and stakeholder networks, with the ability to project a clear and compelling vision of the role of science in creating a more profitable, sustainable and environmentally sensitive agri-food industry.

Thank you for your interest in this competition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sinclair Mayne". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends to the right.

Dr Sinclair Mayne Chief Executive

About the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) is an internationally renowned multidisciplinary scientific organisation that delivers research and other scientific services to a wide range of local, national and international customers in the public and private sectors. In line with the Institute's mission of "scientific excellence in Northern Ireland...serving the world", AFBI is engaged with the international research community in providing scientific solutions to the global problems of climate change, food security, and environmental protection. To fulfil these goals, AFBI staff undertake world class scientific research, surveillance, and analytical and diagnostic testing in the areas of animal health and welfare, sustainable agricultural systems, plant science, food innovation and safety, environmental protection, fisheries and aquatic ecosystems, and agricultural and rural economics.

AFBI was established in April 2006 as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) (now part of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, DAERA) in Northern Ireland and has a staff complement of circa 630 and revenue of £50m. AFBI currently receives approximately £33m resource and £1.5m capital in annual funding (2016/17 data) from DAERA, its sponsor department. The Institute generates a further £18m from a range of sources including competitive research grants, commercial contracts and royalty streams. Further details of AFBI's income and expenditure are available in its 2014/15 Annual Report and Statement of Accounts which is available at

www.afbini.gov.uk/publications-annual-report-2014-2015.htm

AFBI is based at seven sites in Northern Ireland and in addition operates a marine research vessel as follows:

Newforge Lane, Belfast; corporate headquarters, food science, agricultural and food economics, freshwater and marine fisheries, environment, agricultural and rural economics, biometrics and information systems, and plant science (including plant pathology).

Hillsborough, Co. Down; sustainable livestock systems (dairy, heifer rearing, beef, sheep, pigs and poultry research), modern dairy and anaerobic digestion units, biomass production, long term environmental monitoring sites, environment and renewable energy centre, 315 ha farm platform.

Stormont, Belfast; animal health diagnostic laboratory and research, and food safety (chemical and microbiological), modern laboratory accommodation incorporating animal biocontainment category 3 laboratories.

Omagh, Co. Tyrone; animal health diagnostic laboratory.

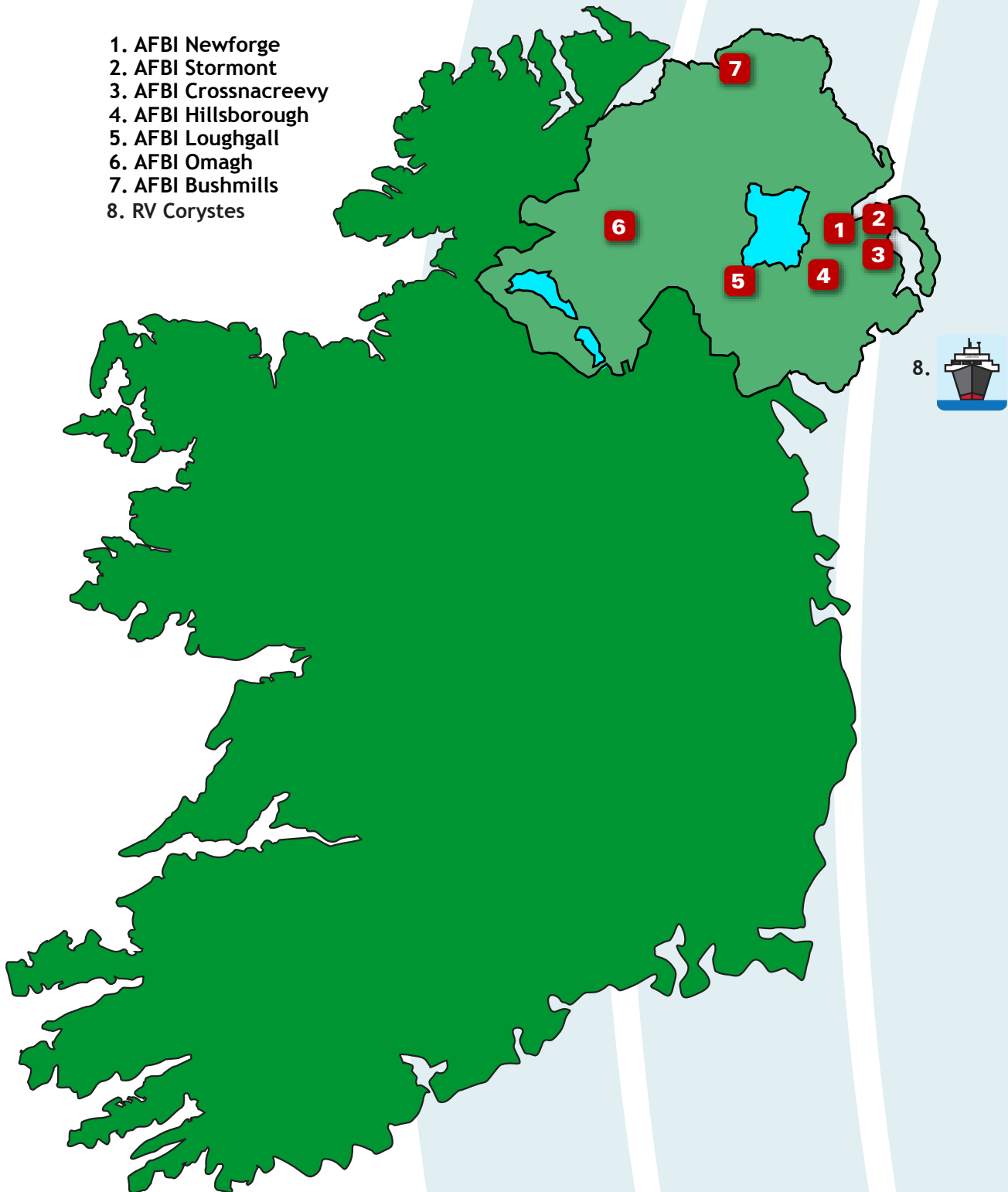
Loughgall, Co. Armagh; grass breeding, mushroom, apple, and agro-forestry research and biomass production on a total land area of 120 ha.

Crossnacreevy, Co. Down; plant variety trials, herbage distinctiveness and uniformity testing and official seed certification, on a 46 ha land platform.

Bushmills, Co. Antrim; salmon population research, fish river trap and rearing tanks.

Research Vessel Corystes; AFBI also operates a 53m marine research vessel which is used to carry out a comprehensive programme of fish stock assessment, ecosystem research and commercial contract work, including seabed mapping, in the Irish Sea.

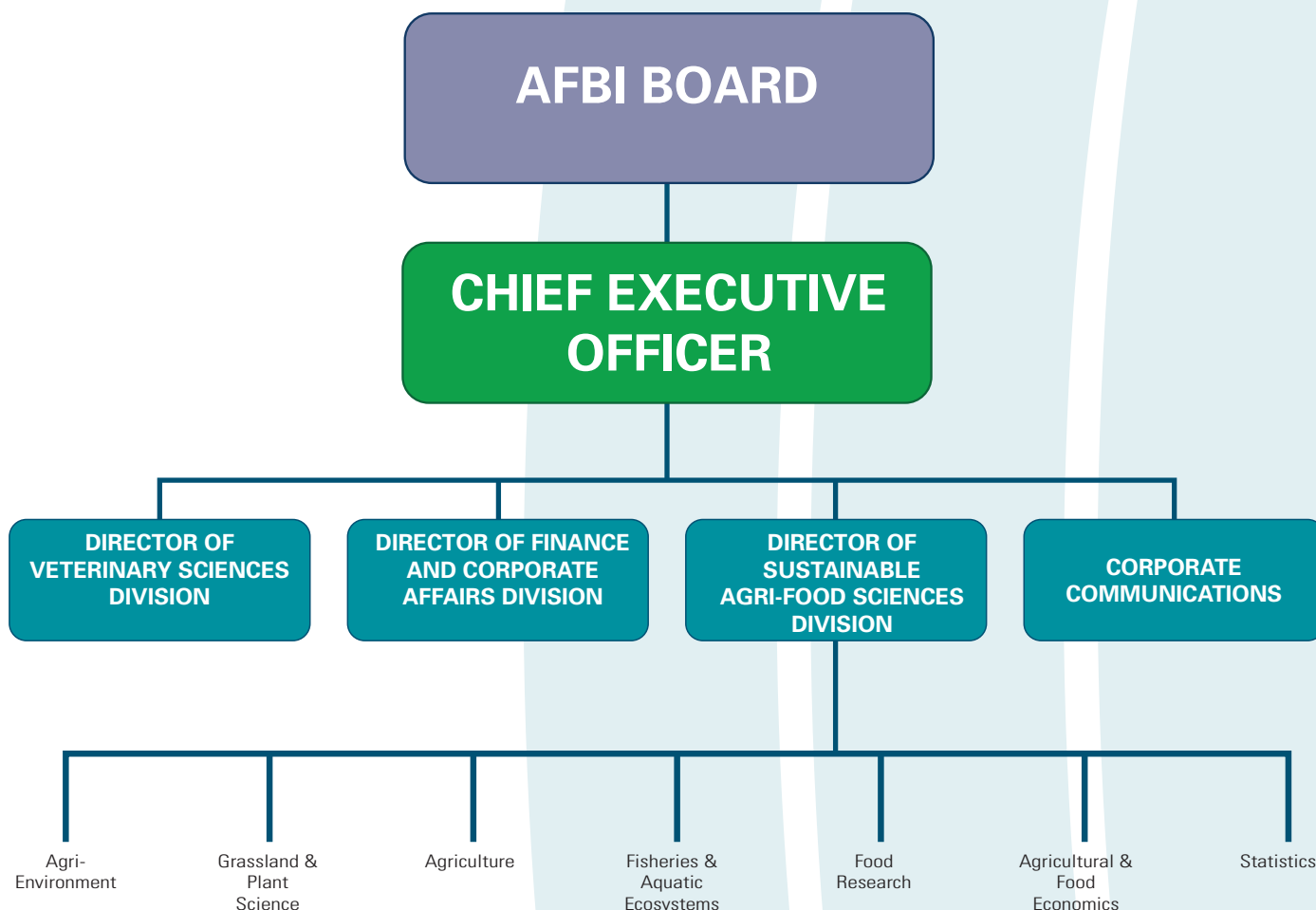
1. AFBI Newforge
2. AFBI Stormont
3. AFBI Crossnacreevy
4. AFBI Hillsborough
5. AFBI Loughgall
6. AFBI Omagh
7. AFBI Bushmills
8. RV Corystes



Preparations are well underway for a proposed large-scale capital investment in AFBI's estate which, on completion, will result in one of the most modern built estates and ancillary research platforms of any agri-food research Institute in Europe.

Organisational Structure

The Chief Executive of AFBI reports to the AFBI Board on the performance of the Institute and implementation of corporate strategies and policies agreed by the Board. In addition to Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division, there are two other divisions within AFBI, Veterinary Sciences Division and Finance and Corporate Affairs Division, each headed by a Director. The successful candidate will join these directors (see chart below) in the Executive Management Team of the Institute. The Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division is based at AFBI Headquarters at Newforge Lane, Belfast BT9 5PX but with staff based at other AFBI sites including Hillsborough, Loughgall, Crossnacreevy and Bushmills.



Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division

The Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division (SAFSD) seeks to support an innovative and competitive agri-food industry, both locally and internationally, producing a secure supply of safe, healthy and nutritious food from sustainable systems, through an integrated, interdisciplinary science approach. The Division has approximately 300 staff and operates across six Branches: Agri- Environment; Grassland and Plant Science; Agriculture; Fisheries and Aquatic Ecosystems; Food Research and Agricultural and Food Economics. These Branches together provide a continuum of scientific expertise across the agri-food chain, from the growing environment, through to plant and animal production systems, aquatic ecosystems, food safety and quality, and profitability of the agri-food sector. The Division will also include AFBI's Statistical Analysis Unit from 1 April, 2017.

This integrated approach ensures that the Division is well placed to address the important challenges of sustainable intensification of food production both locally and globally.

The work of SAFSD is driven by the ongoing needs of a wide range of customers. Whilst DAERA is the major customer, the Division also carries out work for other government departments and agencies such

as the Food Standards Agency (FSA), Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) in Ireland, DEFRA in Great Britain, as well as for bodies such as AgriSearch, the European Union, and a wide range of private customers from the agri-food industry. This funding, along with Grant-in-Aid from DAERA, supports a broad programme of research and development work and statutory testing in addition to the provision of specialist advice and technical services to government and industry.

The key functions of SAFSD are to:

- Undertake basic, strategic and applied multi-disciplinary research for DAERA and other government departments and agencies, industry and commercial organisations, and bodies representing the agri-food industry. Research areas include: sustainable and welfare-sensitive livestock systems; food and non food crops; renewable energy systems for the agri-food sector and farming communities; management and protection of natural land resources; assessment and protection of fish stocks and the aquatic environment; and competitiveness in the agri-food industry by improving quality, safety and process development.
- Provide evidence-based scientific advice to government policy makers, regulators and industry, on agriculture, food, fishing and environmental issues.
- Provide a wide range of statutory, regulatory and commercial analytical services such as certification and monitoring of pasture, horticultural and agricultural crops and the wider environment. This also includes maintaining specific scientific preparedness for emergency responses in these areas.

The work of the SAFSD links fundamental science to systems-level research to deliver knowledge and innovation for the agri-food sector and policy makers, with a focus on food security, competitiveness in the marketplace, and improving the land and aquatic environments. Scientific outputs from the Division provide an evidence base for the development of government policy on livestock production, animal welfare, the environment and renewable energy issues and Irish Sea fish stocks. Senior staff also have an important role in the delivery of knowledge and technology transfer programmes in partnership with a range of other organisations.

Job Description

AFBI has an international reputation for providing leading edge scientific research and services. Maintaining and expanding this reputation is vital and the successful candidate will play a pivotal role in leading, coordinating and developing AFBI's research and development strategy, whilst setting the vision and strategic direction for the Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division. AFBI is a relatively young organisation and is currently at a critical stage of its development as it seeks to further develop its scientific reputation and investment in research funding from a wide range of funders; protects its Intellectual Property; and fully exploits its commercial potential through science/technology transfer. These are major challenges but they also provide the opportunity for AFBI to enhance its profile as an organisation with a clear and compelling vision of the role of science in creating a more profitable, competitive, sustainable and environmentally sensitive agrifood industry. Strong management skills will be required and the successful candidate must be able to demonstrate the ability to lead, motivate and inspire staff and to manage change effectively.

As Director of SAFSD and a member of the Executive Management Team (EMT) the post-holder will be corporately responsible for strategy development and implementation, driving AFBI forward towards higher standards of scientific excellence and opening up new markets and research opportunities. A key aspect of the role will involve further developing AFBI as an efficient, effective and accountable organisation, capable of providing DAERA and other key stakeholders with world leading research programmes and a swift response to any agri-food, aquatic or relevant environmental emergency in Northern Ireland.

The person appointed will be a dynamic and pro-active leader, capable of both personally seizing the initiative where required and acting corporately as an effective team player. The role presents an exciting opportunity for a dynamic research leader given that the global food chain is currently facing many challenges and the successful candidate must be able to demonstrate strong interpersonal skills and the ability to paint a clear and compelling vision of the future. A key aspect of the role will be the development of an integrated interdisciplinary science approach in order to create novel applied solutions across the entire agri-food production chain.

The post-holder will manage staff across a wide range of scientific disciplines and also across a number of geographically separate sites, and a key challenge will be to develop an integrated, programme-based scientific approach. Staff based on these sites are engaged in laboratory and/or field based diagnostic, regulatory and research work in relation to plants, animals, agriculture, food, environment and economics. In managing staff, the Director will be expected to apply both scientific and managerial knowledge, skills and expertise directly and indirectly in the management and delivery of the work of their Division.

The Director of SAFSD will take the lead role in coordinating and developing AFBI's Research and Development Strategy, with oversight of the conduct and strategic management of scientific research. They will also work closely with the Director of Veterinary Science Division who leads on coordinating AFBI's statutory and regulatory work. The Director of the SAFSD will contribute to ensuring that AFBI is best placed to make recommendations related to policy, in order to deliver DAERA's research programmes, as well as marketing its services to a wide range of local, national and international customers, including attracting research funding.

In order to have the necessary credibility and authority, the Director should have significant practical and theoretical experience in management and the conduct of science; and have a recognised international standing within at least one relevant specialist discipline and a broad working knowledge of the remaining disciplines. This is essential to enable the Director to quality assure the work of other professionals across a wide range of specialisms, to establish collaborative contacts, and to represent AFBI on high level working groups and negotiate on its behalf. Advice and direction given must have a sound scientific basis.

The post offers the opportunity for a dynamic senior manager, with international standing in a relevant scientific discipline, to make a significant contribution, as Director, to the development of this important, multi-disciplinary organisation as it raises its international profile and expands its commercial activities on a world-wide stage. The successful candidate will be required to:

- Actively contribute to the development of AFBI's corporate vision, strategy and plans.
- Lead and direct AFBI's research and development programme across all areas of science, ensuring it's local and international relevance and visibility.
- Contribute to the raising of AFBI's profile, in line with the Business Development and Marketing Strategy, and in particular promote AFBI's scientific excellence in research and development, through interaction with a wide range of customers, including government departments, the agri-food industry, farmers, producers and research sponsors.
- Lead dialogue with Divisional staff to ensure that all understand the corporate aims and objectives and contribute to their achievement through robust business planning.
- Be accountable for the Division's performance against targets and ensure continuous improvement.
- Lead, manage and motivate staff to develop their capability and capacity in relation to organisational objectives and resources and ensure they continuously improve their service to customers.
- Proactively contribute to change management programmes, acting as a role model in the Division in the application of management information, tools and techniques to business decisions and performance assessment.
- Actively horizon scan to identify and, where appropriate, secure potential research and commercial investment opportunities, in line with the AFBI strategy, and identify innovation opportunities.
- Ensure that Divisional resources are deployed efficiently, effectively and economically to meet agreed objectives and targets.
- Monitor Divisional income streams and expenditure and keep the CEO, EMT and Board apprised of progress.
- Make regular reports on Divisional performance to the Board.
- Represent AFBI at relevant national and international networks and symposia and, where appropriate, negotiate on its behalf.
- Contribute corporately to estate development, maintenance, security, health and safety, laboratory quality and scientific advice.

A detailed description of the key responsibilities of this post is provided in the attached annex.

Terms and Conditions

The post is a permanent appointment to AFBI, which is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

Grade

The Director of Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division is analogous to Grade 5 in the Senior Civil Service (SCS).

Salary

The salary for the post will be within the range £68,961 - £79,058 (2016 SCS Payscale pending approval) within which pay increases will be on an incremental basis provided staff reports are satisfactory.

Starting salary will normally be at the minimum of the scale although, in exceptional circumstances, consideration may be given to starting at a higher point on the salary scale for applicants with additional relevant experience and/or qualifications. The relevance and extent of the additional experience will be determined by AFBI at the time of offer of appointment. If the successful candidate is an existing member of staff, normal pay on promotion/regrading arrangements apply.

Pension

AFBI offers all employees an attractive pension package with new entrants to AFBI eligible to join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Alpha Pension Scheme. The current employer pension contribution for this pay band is 26.3% of salary and the employee contribution is currently 7.35%. Prospective candidates should be aware that the rates for future years are liable to change in line with changes to NICS Pensions Schemes.

Further details can be found on the Department of Finance and Personnel Northern Ireland Civil Service pensions website at:

www.dfpi.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/new-members

Reporting to

The post-holder will report to the Chief Executive on all operational activities, who in turn reports to the AFBI Board and is subject to the overall direction of the Minister with responsibility for DAERA.

Annual Leave

In addition to the usual public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, there is an annual leave allowance of 30 days.

Working Hours

The successful candidate will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours, where it is necessary, to fulfil the demands of the post.

Location

The successful candidate will be based at AFBI Headquarters, Newforge Lane, Belfast but will be required to work at other AFBI sites in Northern Ireland as required.

Travel

The post will entail travel within Northern Ireland, nationally and internationally, and for this reason the successful applicant will require access to a form of transport which will permit them to meet the requirements of the post in full.

Probation Period

This role has a probation period of 12 months.

Secondment

This role may be available on secondment.

Further Information

Further Information about the post may be obtained from Mr Philip White, AFBI Human Resources, +44(0)28 9025 5060

Person Specification

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the Essential Criteria. In addition they will also be required to demonstrate competency in Professional Knowledge and Skills pertaining to the post, together with the skills and competencies set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competency framework at level 5 for the purpose of personal and professional development.

Essential Skills and Experience

Applicants must by the closing date provide evidence in their application form which demonstrates that they satisfy the following essential criteria.

1. A PhD in a scientific subject relevant to the work of the Division;

AND

2. At least 5 years' post-doctoral experience, gained within the last 10 years (from the closing date of applications) of successfully leading, managing and delivering substantial, complex and multidimensional programmes of scientific work against demanding deadlines in a science-based organisation;

AND

3. Evidence of delivering national and international research funding and investment for research and development into an organisation from a range of prestigious funding bodies eg RCUK, European Union and government funding agencies;

AND

4. Evidence of international standing within a scientific area relevant to the post through publication of peer reviewed publications, other research outputs and representation on international committees;

*Candidates must provide evidence of eligibility criterion 4 by submitting a fully cited bibliography (authors, paper title, journal title, volume and page numbers) of **all** refereed and non-refereed publications. This should be sent by the closing date for applications as a separate attachment to: recruitment@afbini.gov.uk

OR

AFBI Workforce Planning
18a Newforge Lane
Belfast
BT9 5PX

The bibliography should be marked with the relevant competition reference number (AFBI DIRECTOR 02/17), competition title and your full name and candidate reference number.

AND

5. Evidence of successfully building both internal and external collaboration and leading a programme of stakeholder engagement at a senior management level in a large complex public, private or voluntary sector organisation.

The following additional clarification is provided:

Senior management experience is defined as experience gained at the top management level of the organisation e.g. reporting directly to a Chief Executive or a Senior Management Board or being an Executive Director and, in the case of existing Civil Servants or other public sector employees, be at least Grade 7 or equivalent.

Large and complex organisation is defined as a multi-disciplinary organisation having a customer base with diverse requirements and a budget of at least £5m.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

Relevant or equivalent qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc, so that a well-informed decision can be made.

Shortlisting Criterion

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criterion will be applied.

- The strength and breadth of evidence provided in response to eligibility criterion 2 (above), taking into account the evidence of successfully leading, managing and delivering programmes of work or projects, and the scale of the projects/budgets involved and project achievements.

Please note:

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.**

What is the NICS competency framework?

The competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results. Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 2 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed through:
www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk.

It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of the assessment / interview criteria as outlined below.

You should refer to the behaviours listed under level 5 of the relevant competence areas.

<https://irecruit-ext.hrconnect.nigov.net/resources/documents/n/i/c/nics-cf.pdf>

The Application and Assessment Process

The Application Process

Application is by completion of the application form and equal opportunities monitoring form which can be downloaded at: www.afbini.gov.uk/index/careers

The email address for applications is: recruitment@afbini.gov.uk

The closing date for applications is 12pm, noon, on Tuesday 7 March, 2017.

The application form is based on the criteria in the Person Specification set out above.

Please note that the equal opportunities monitoring form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

Candidate documentation and application materials may be available in alternative formats. For more information contact AFBI HR at 028 9025 5060, or email: recruitment@afbini.gov.uk

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit. AFBI is an equal opportunities employer.

The Assessment Process

In the first instance, all applications will be considered by the Selection Panel. The Selection Panel will consider the evidence provided in the application forms against the criteria set out in the Person Specification.

The Selection Panel may invite to interview those candidates that the Panel considers have provided sufficient evidence against the criteria in the Person Specification.

The composition of the Selection Panel is:

- **Dr Sinclair Mayne (AFBI Chief Executive and Chair of the Selection Panel)**
- **Mr Colm McKenna (Chairman of AFBI Board)**
- **Professor Nigel Scollan (Director of the Institute of Global Food Security, Queens' University, Belfast)**
- **Mr Norman Fulton (Deputy Secretary, DAERA)**
- **Mrs Fiona Campbell (AFBI Head of HR)**

Presentation and Interview

Before interview, candidates will be required to deliver a short presentation lasting no longer than 7 minutes. Candidates will be advised of the presentation topic 30 minutes before interview. A choice of writing materials and a flip chart will be available to assist in preparation. No personal documentation may be brought to the pre-interview room. A flip chart stand will also be available in the interview room to enable candidates to present the prepared information. The only materials that candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be flip charts or written material prepared in the pre interview room.

The presentation will be used to assess against the following competencies: Seeing the Big Picture; and Leading and Communicating.

Marks available: 10

Minimum standard: 6

Interview Criteria

In addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria and shortlisting criteria, applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview.

Professional Knowledge & Skills:	Marks available:	30 (Minimum standard: 18)
Seeing the Big Picture:	Marks available:	20 (Minimum standard: 12)
Making Effective Decisions:	Marks available:	10 (Minimum standard: 6)
Collaborating & Partnering:	Marks available:	
Delivering at Pace:	Marks available:	
Leading & Communicating:	Marks available:	20 (Minimum standard: 12)
Total marks available: 110	Overall pass mark:	66

Further information on the competency framework can be obtained on the NICS website page: <https://irecruit-ext.hrconnect.nigov.net/resources/documents/n/i/c/nics-cf.pdf>

Interview dates

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place at AFBI Headquarters in Belfast on Monday 27 March. Requests for re-scheduling interviews will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Employment Requirements

AFBI HR will ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. Entry to the United Kingdom is controlled under the Immigration Act 1971. Everyone who does not have the right of abode is subject to immigration control. You should check whether there are any restrictions on your stay or your freedom to take or change employment before you apply for a post. If you are invited to interview we will ask you to provide documentation confirming that you are entitled to work in the UK, under the terms of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

Advice on entitlement to work may be obtained from the Home Office website: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Nationality Requirements

There are no nationality requirements for AFBI posts.

Vetting Procedures

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For this post in AFBI the level of vetting is a Counter Terrorist Check (CTC). For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- Your passport OR
- A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) AND your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants.

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

2. Counter Terrorist Check (CTC): as point 1 plus check of Security Service records.

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. The order of merit is valid for one year.

Selection Process

Making your application

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- AFBI HR will not examine applications until after the closing deadline.
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.

- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be explored at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your unique role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.
- Where qualifications form part of the eligibility/shortlisting criteria, candidates will be required to provide documentary evidence, if invited to interview.

-Application Form Submission

Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.

All parts of the application form must be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted. Applicants using the courier service should note that this does not guarantee next day delivery.

Only the eligibility section will be made available to the panel.

Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

Interview Guidance

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.
- A competence-based interview does however require you to:
- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

Disability Requirements

Any candidate who, because of a disability, cannot complete the application form in its current format should contact Philip White, AFBI HR on +44(0)28 9025 5060, or email philip.white@afbini.gov.uk

Equal Opportunities

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement to which AFBI adheres is set out below. "The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation."

Completed Application Forms should be sent to:

Philip White, AFBI HR, Workforce Planning Newforge Lane, Belfast, BT9 5PX or recruitment@afbini.gov.uk

Your application must be received no later than:
12 noon (UK time) on Tuesday 7 March, 2017.

Applications received after the due date will be excluded from the competition.

Annex: Key Responsibilities of the Director of Sustainable Agri-Food Sciences Division (SAFSD)

The main responsibilities of the Director of SAFSD include: leading and setting the research and development strategy for AFBI; developing a strategy to maximise stakeholder investment in research within AFBI (along with accountability for the research budget); planning, monitoring, reporting and control of implementation and outputs of the work programme for the Division.

Research

- Act as the key adviser to the Board, Chief Executive and Executive Management Team on the development of AFBI's research and development strategy, including coordination of AFBI's postgraduate research programme.
- Identify, and engage with, existing and new sources of research investment/funding at both national and international level.
- Identify key collaborators at national and international level and establish partnerships and collaborations leading to grant applications and increased external investment in AFBI research.
- Responsible for setting and delivering key financial targets in research income.
- Take strategic responsibility and accountability for the output and quality of AFBI's research publications.
- Oversee an effective research management system, incorporating best practice in planning, data collection and reporting of research outcomes, including the use of electronic databases and reporting outcomes.
- Lead AFBI's research impact analysis and develop an effective strategy to communicate the impacts of AFBI research at both industry and policy level to stakeholders.

Corporate Planning, Strategy and Business Development

- Support and contribute to the development of AFBI's vision, strategies, and policies to enable AFBI to deliver its statutory and other functions effectively and efficiently.
- Active participation as a member of the Executive Management Team of AFBI with collective responsibility for corporate analysis and decision-making.
- Lead the development of strategic alliances and the raising of AFBI's profile with the local, national and international science, business and academic communities.
- Responsible to the Chief Executive for the performance of the Division and for supporting the implementation of corporate strategies and decisions in relation to the organisation.
- Contribute to the identification of key strategic priorities that will impact on the organisation within the corporate governance framework and risk management.
- Contribute to the planning, development, control and management of the AFBI's business strategy, its operations and finances.
- Clearly communicate corporate goals and objectives to key stakeholders and manage performance against agreed targets in line with strategic plans.
- Contribute to the development of AFBI's marketing strategy.

Corporate Governance

- Support a robust Corporate Governance Framework which is designed to reflect the changing needs of the organisation.
- Support any relevant changes to the regulatory environment which may require policy or new procedures, and ensuring that all staff are aware of these changes.
- Ensure compliance with the relevant legislation within the assigned area.
- Promote high standards of accountability, integrity and probity throughout the organisation and provide professional advice to support executive decision making.

Finance

- Maintain a sound system of internal control within the Division, for propriety, regularity in the handling of funds; for achieving value for money of AFBI's expenditure; for safeguarding AFBI's assets; for ensuring compliance with the requirements of Managing Public Money; and for the day-to-day operations and management of the Division.
- Responsible for all expenditure, budget planning and Branch allocations within SAFSD.
- Ensure that business cases for investment in resources (financial, physical, technological and human) are prepared and submitted for approval by the Chief Executive and Board.
- Lead, develop and implement a strategy to increase research investment in AFBI from all potential stakeholders.
- Implement effective systems for the management of intellectual property, contracts and licensing agreements.
- Ensure effective management of AFBI assets.

Leadership and People Management

- Lead and direct the development of AFBI's research and development strategy, including development of an integrated programme-based approach within AFBI's overall science strategy.
- Lead, manage and motivate the staff of the SAFSD and ensure they contribute effectively to the achievement of AFBI's objectives.
- Deliver a leadership style that promotes co-ordinated activities across teams, encourages open communication and results in staff being valued, supported and inspired.
- Provide strong and energetic leadership and vision to staff, innovatively and effectively leading and managing change.
- Create and maintain a positive working environment and a clear understanding of the business goals for all staff within the Division.
- Ensure effective staffing structures are in place within the Division with the appropriate levels of skills and expertise.

- Ensure that effective people management systems eg staff performance appraisal, developmental needs, succession planning, absence management etc are applied effectively.
- Ensure the implementation of good employment practice and compliance with Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedures across the Division.
- Develop and implement change management initiative programmes aimed at delivering fit for purpose, cost effective and efficient services.

Customer Service

- Ensure that continuous improvement proposals and programmes are in place, with regard to the core values of excellence, integrity and customer focus.
- Ensure delivery of research, analytical and diagnostic programmes to approved international quality and standards.
- Proactively manage and enhance AFBI's interaction with a wide range of customers, including government departments, the agri-food industry, farmers, producers, and research sponsors to promote the scientific excellence of AFBI and secure new investment.
- In agreement with AFBI's main customers, including DAERA, co-ordinate, agree and develop AFBI's research and development programme.
- Liaise with the Directors of the other Divisions in matters relating to Corporate Finance, Planning and Governance.

Public Affairs and Policy

- Provide representation at forums including Management Executive, Board, Committees, Sub-committees, and other bodies as required.
- Represent and negotiate on behalf of AFBI on scientific and policy matters at local, national and international level.
- As the organisational structure of AFBI continues to evolve, the management span and duties of the post may change and evolve over time. Occasional out-of-hours working may be required, particularly in relation to emergency situations.

