

Agriculture and
Food Development
Authority

Teagasc

People Strategy



2018-2022



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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Foreword

Teagasc achieves remarkable outcomes for its clients and stakeholders in all areas of its activities through the talent and dedication of the exceptional people who work for this organisation.

In 2003 Teagasc developed its first five year HR Strategy which brought about considerable changes in policies, systems and resources focused on how Teagasc manages and develops its people. The People, Leadership & Change (PLC) Strategy launched in 2011 built on these themes and much effort was focused on developing accredited Leadership and Management Development programmes to support the continuous development of our managers and staff.

This new five-year **Teagasc People Strategy** is focused on enablers of high performance and on new capabilities that deliver greater value for our clients, stakeholders, staff and the organisation at an individual and at a team level. Highly engaged staff understand the importance of *being at the top of their game* and of leading and delivering in a complex organisation and industry environment. The pace of change within the technological environment in which Teagasc operates is increasing exponentially. I strongly believe the end is near for any technologically based organisation such as ours that does not respond and plan for the impact of these changes on its people. Staff who are currently in the organisation have to be increasingly adaptable, resilient and continually developing their knowledge, skills and experience. Staff recruited in the years ahead will have to be selected on the basis that they are not only excellent at what they do, but also that they are comfortable and have the ability to cope with the rapid level of technological change that is impacting on how we do our work and deliver value.

This strategy aims to support staff to embrace their unique talents and to continually move forward with their own personal development to achieve great outcomes for themselves, clients, stakeholders and the organisation. The underlying concept is one of being driven by *purpose*, finding meaning in what we do, leading by example, and developing successfully in our roles. The central focus of this strategy is based around; **(i) supporting self-directed, purpose driven staff and (ii) supporting teams to utilise the strengths and capabilities of all its members to the full.**

Teagasc has high staff retention levels and we want this to continue in the future by encouraging initiatives that will provide staff with excellent career development opportunities. The staffing initiatives, including promotions that have already been implemented under the Delegated Sanction arrangements have been of critical importance in providing career progression for staff and need to be built upon. I believe staff are either flourishing in their careers or regressing – we don't stand still. Therefore, we will support staff to develop their careers to the full while acknowledging that career opportunities for some staff in Teagasc, in common with all other organisations, may not materialise at the appropriate time.

Teagasc is particularly fortunate to have staff who are absolutely committed to supporting the agriculture and food sectors. We all recognise the key importance of these sectors to our economy and this drives a powerful force for action amongst our colleagues. This is a unique asset that needs to be fostered and protected in the years ahead.

I wish to acknowledge the hard work, commitment and creativity of those who contributed to the development of this strategy. I encourage staff members to embrace the initiatives and to develop their careers to the full.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "G. E. Boyle", written over a horizontal line.

Professor Gerry Boyle
Director

Preface

Teagasc, through its Statement of Strategy (2017-2020), is committed to the introduction of new technologies, tools and techniques to address the many challenges facing the agri-food sector and the wider bio-economy, not least of which is long-term competitiveness and sustainability which are key priorities of concern for national policy. New technology will significantly impact on how we will all work in the future in a leading edge scientific and knowledge based organisation such as Teagasc. This requires a strategic human resource management response that identifies the future trends and the appropriate organisational responses. The objective has to be to create a future workplace in Teagasc that is dynamic and responsive to the rapid rate of change within our operating environment. It must recruit and develop existing staff in a way that ensures at all times we have a match between the ever increasing technological and other demands of our operating environment and the capability of our staff to fully deliver the required programme. Teagasc understands that its future success is dependent on its entire staff being empowered to make the greatest possible contribution to the organisation. This will require a new understanding of the formal management structure within the organisation to ensure it assists rather than inhibits the operation of high performance teams within and across business units. The critical responsibilities of the formal management structure within the organisation in terms of good governance, budget control and achievement of performance goals should be enhanced rather than diluted if managers are equipped and encouraged to demonstrate empowering leadership practices that support teams within their areas of responsibility. Empowerment is not about staff doing whatever they want, it is about staff being sufficiently trusted to have enough knowledge of governance, budget and organisational goals to not only 'do things right' but to have the freedom to do 'the right things'.

As an organisation we achieve great outcomes through the passion and commitment of our knowledgeable and highly skilled staff whose collective talent is widely recognised for excellence and impact both in its research, knowledge transfer and support functions. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the strategic human resource management response of this **Teagasc People Strategy** is focussed on supporting self-directed, purpose driven staff to develop successfully as **individuals** and as **high-performing team members**.

The Teagasc Statement of Strategy (2017-2020) is the overarching document which sets the context for the strategic initiatives presented in this **Teagasc People Strategy** which spans a period of five years (2018-2022). Planning and research on the goals and actions for the first three years (i.e. 2018 to 2020) are outlined in this strategy booklet. A review will follow at the end of 2020 and the priorities for the following two years will be identified at that time. The **Teagasc People Strategy** has been developed in consultation with Teagasc managers and staff, and informed by the challenges and opportunities available to the organisation. This Strategy is intended to equip the organisation to deliver on its strategic goals and to reach new heights through a talented, innovative and diverse workforce in the years ahead.

Our **People Vision** is to:

‘attract, empower and grow purpose-driven staff with passion and capability to pursue excellence, to embrace technology, innovation and change, and to work collaboratively in teams to develop new knowledge and advance science-based innovation in the agri-food sector and the wider bioeconomy’.

The **Teagasc People Strategy** comprises of five inter-connected goals, which together put **purpose-driven staff** and **teams** at the centre of everything we do:

Goal 1: Recruit & Retain the Right Staff.

Goal 2: Achieve Your Potential.

Goal 3: Grow the Team.

Goal 4: Stay Safe & Well.

Goal 5: Excellence in HR Practices and Service Delivery.

The first strategic goal **Recruit & Retain the Right Staff** is informed by the challenges currently facing Teagasc in the recruitment of the best talent available in the marketplace. It is specifically targeted at recruitment strategies/branding, pay arrangements and retention strategies (within the limitations of public policy) deemed necessary to attract high calibre candidates with drive and purpose to achieve great outcomes for Teagasc, clients and stakeholders.

The second strategic goal **Achieve Your Potential** is focused on engaging and growing purpose-driven staff to take personal responsibility for their own performance and development by increasing their self-awareness and self-leadership skills through, for example, career coaching and mentoring. This will assist staff to make inspiring choices to maximise their career potential within or outside of Teagasc and to flourish in the work environment. Barriers that negatively impact on staff development and career progression will be challenged, a diversity strategy that brings together a number of diversity initiatives will be developed and progressive proposals under the banner of ‘gender equality’ will also be advanced.

The third strategic goal **Grow the Team** is designed to support and equip managers and staff with the necessary skills and empowering leadership practices deemed necessary to successfully develop as high-performing team members. Initiatives will include the development of a tailored teamwork programme and focused endeavours that engender collaborative behaviour where all members of a team feel collectively responsible for team outcomes.

The fourth strategic goal **Stay Safe & Well** is concerned with developing a fit for purpose approach to workplace health, safety and well being. This approach will build on existing initiatives to offer stimulating advice, knowledge and activities that inspire more staff to take care of their health and wellbeing. A new Safety Management System will also be

introduced to ensure a safe place to work that supports the safety and well being of all colleagues, visitors, students and the public.

The fifth strategic goal ***Excellence in HR Practices and Service Delivery*** aims to achieve excellence in human resource service delivery through improved efficiency and effectiveness of HR processes and reporting functions. In addition to streamlining HR processes the actions under this goal will support and enable, through HR Analytics, more informed, higher quality decision-making on people related matters.

A visual of the Teagasc ***People Strategy 2018-2022*** architecture is presented on page 10 and the prioritised strategic actions under each of the five goals are outlined on the pages that follow. In total there are over 34 separate projects proposed in this strategy to be progressed over the next three years. Other initiatives may be added following a review in three years' time to further build on these initiatives.

The implementation of the ***Teagasc People Strategy*** will be led by the Human Resources Department (HR); supported by the National Partnership Committee (NPC), and management and staff across the organisation; which will report to the Senior Management Group (SMG) on a regular basis. HR staff look forward to working with colleagues across the organisation to build and develop new capabilities that will help staff *to be the best they can be*, and to deliver cutting-edge research, advisory and education services in the years ahead.



Margaret Lennon
Programme Manager

Operating Environment

Teagasc is funded by State Grant-in-Aid; fees for research, advisory and education services; income from national and EU competitive research programmes; and revenue from farming activities and commodity levies. When expenditure on pensions are excluded, around 70% of Teagasc's yearly budget comes from the Irish exchequer and EU funding with the balance generated from earned income. Some 40% of the budget is devoted to research with the vast bulk of the remainder split half and half between advisory and education services. Teagasc operates in partnership with all sectors of the agriculture and food industry and with rural development agencies and has developed close alliances with research, advisory and training agencies throughout the world. Teagasc, a client-based organisation employing approximately 1,200 staff, of which more than 200 are contract staff, at 55 locations throughout Ireland, has an annual operating budget in excess of €180 million. Arising from the terms of the Delegated Sanction (i.e. 2015 Staffing Plan) approved by the Departments of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), Teagasc has autonomy to manage its core pay bill with a reasonable level of flexibility under an agreed staffing framework. However, restrictions on Teagasc's ability to attract and retain high-performing, purpose driven staff, especially in regard to starting pay, remain.

As set out in Teagasc's Statement of Strategy, a major challenge presents itself in that there has been insufficient progress in improving the overall viability and profitability of farm enterprises in the primary agriculture sector, which underpins the entire agri-food industry. Low farm income, particularly in the non-dairy sectors, is a huge challenge facing the agri-food sector in its ability to deliver on the targets set out in Food Wise 2025. To achieve these ambitious targets, the focus of the Teagasc Technology Foresight 2035 strategy is on those technologies which, when embedded in our existing research and knowledge transfer programmes, will have the greatest potential for economic impact and transformation by 2035 and for addressing key challenges such as the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from our livestock sector.

The Statement of Strategy makes clear that harnessing the power of new technologies will require Teagasc to fill staff and expertise deficits in the areas of animal and plant genomics, in precision animal, grassland and crop agriculture and precision soil management, in modelling and data analytics, in microbiota research as it relates to soil, animal and food applications, in advanced food technologies, and in value chain analysis and development. The expertise required such as in sensor development and networking and 'big data' analytics are likely to be at least partially met by partnering with other institutions with expertise in these areas. All of these human resource needs have to be balanced with the Human Capital objectives set out in Food Wise 2025 (pp. 45-50) to maintain *'an effective, independent, national advisory service providing a locally-based contact point for all farmers through farmer education, consultation and a wide range of communication and influencing activities, using appropriate mechanisms to optimise service delivery to farmers'*. In addition Food Wise 2025 points to the importance of supporting the development of ongoing and lifelong education, training and knowledge transfer programmes to give farmers and forest owners the tools

and skills to develop their business enterprises, maximise their profitability and utilise their resources in the most productive sustainable manner by enabling them to integrate the latest technologies and processes into their day to day operations.

The delivery of Teagasc programmes to meet the needs and expectations of clients and stakeholders will present significant human resource challenges in the years ahead. We must continue to invest in our people and provide the physical and technological resources required for them to do their jobs. This requires strategic planning which is why this **People Strategy** is aligned with and supports the objectives set out in the Teagasc Statement of Strategy.



Vision & Operating Principles

The ambitious ‘People’ Vision set out below has determined our Operating Principles and has guided the prioritisation of the strategic goals as set out in this People Strategy.

‘People’ Vision

Our People Vision is to;

‘attract, empower and grow purpose-driven staff with passion and capability to pursue excellence, to embrace technology, innovation and change, and to work collaboratively in teams to develop new knowledge and advance science-based innovation in the agri-food sector and the wider bioeconomy.’

Our ‘People Vision’ is important as it underpins an organisational culture that drives self-directed, purpose-driven individuals to expend considerable discretionary effort to achieve their career potential and to deliver outcomes that are highly valued by the organisation, clients and stakeholders.

Operating Principles

Our Operating Principles will drive the actions of the organisation and colleagues around people issues.

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- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Best People | We recruit people with passion and capability to deliver great outcomes for staff, clients and stakeholders. |
| 2. Build Capability | We encourage and assist staff to be the best they can be. |
| 3. Teams | We empower people and build high-performing teams. |
| 4. Sustainable Workloads | Sustainable workloads require prioritisation. |
| 5. Innovation | Staff have the good ideas and make innovative things happen. |
| 6. Dignity & Respect | Respect for colleagues is non-negotiable. |
| 7. Diversity | Diversity, equality and inclusiveness enhance our core purpose. |
| 8. Health & Wellbeing | Positivity and wellbeing will enable staff to flourish and to have purpose. |
| 9. Responsible Action | Doing things in the right way is essential. |
| 10. Quality Customer Service | We listen to our customers and continually improve our services. |
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Strategy Goals

Goal 1: Recruit & Retain the Right Staff.

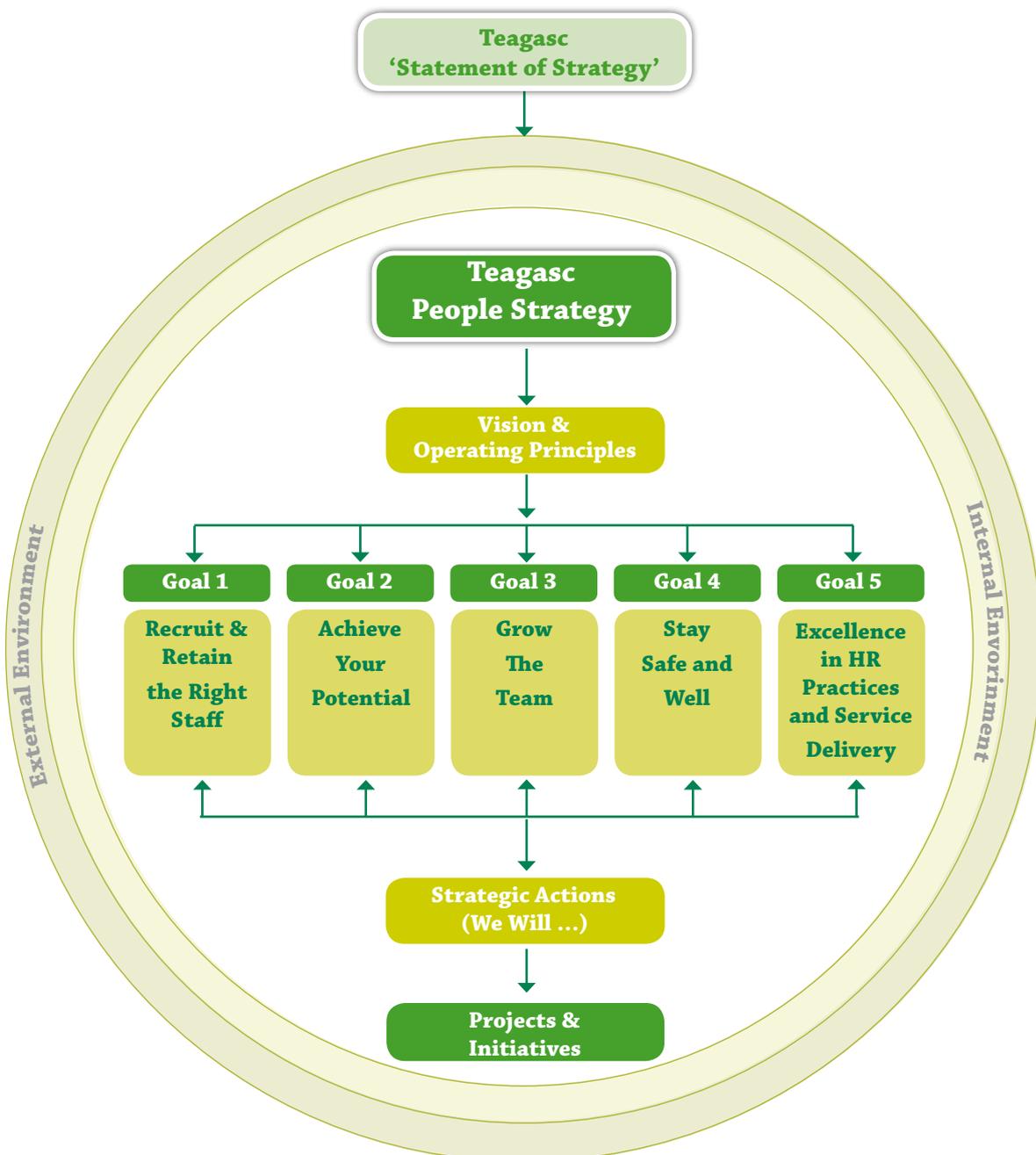
Goal 2: Achieve Your Potential.

Goal 3: Grow the Team.

Goal 4: Stay Safe & Well.

Goal 5: Excellence in HR Practices and Service Delivery.

A visual of the Teagasc People Strategy architecture is presented below.



Goal 1: Recruit & Retain the Right Staff

Our Vision

To attract and retain the most capable, talented and purpose-driven people, within Ireland and internationally, in the agricultural, food science and other disciplines. These candidates, who in addition to having the required knowledge and skills, will also have the necessary passion, energy and enthusiasm to achieve their highest potential and to deliver exceptional value for Teagasc's stakeholders. Teagasc is an attractive place to work and we must get this message across to potential candidates in the 'war for talent' in the agri-food sector. Our employer brand must send out a strong message that Teagasc is a dynamic and great place to work, full of interesting and challenging opportunities, where staff are afforded considerable developmental opportunities to grow their capabilities and enhance their career ambitions. Initiatives spread across the five goals in this strategy are intended to assist Teagasc to retain highly capable individuals within the constraints of public policy. Teagasc will continue to support these individuals in developing their careers and in continuing to achieve great outcomes for themselves, their colleagues, stakeholders and the organisation.

We Will

- Develop a strong employer brand to promote Teagasc and to help attract and retain talented staff members.
- Advance the argument for pay arrangements (within the constraints of public policy) to ensure we secure and retain the best candidates. It is imperative that we stay competitive with the Universities in the recruitment of scientists.
- Develop an efficient, fit-for-purpose recruitment model to include on-line recruitment software that delivers a better service to end users and the organisation.
- Maximise the use of social media to assist in sourcing the highest calibre candidates.
- Develop a selection process that is capable of providing an increased level of confidence that we are consistently identifying the best candidates.
- Secure the mandatory 'Excellence in Research'¹ accreditation deemed essential for attracting research funding for the future.

1 **Excellence in Research** – European HR Excellence Award that recognises organisations that are committed to best practice recruitment strategies and career development. Once the award is attained, the logo can be used in job advertisements and can assist with attracting candidates as well as research funding.

Projects & Initiatives

Year	Action
Year 1/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Benchmark Teagasc starting pay and conditions with other relevant organisations with an initial focus on scientific recruitment. ● Develop a proposal on revised pay arrangements and commence discussions with DAFM and DPER. ● Scope, tender and select vendor for an eRecruit solution that delivers a better service to end users and the organisation. ● Review and revise current steps in the recruitment process to ensure compatibility with the selected eRecruit system. ● Develop and progress a plan to attain the HR Excellence in Research accreditation in consultation with Research Head Office.
Year 2/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pilot eRecruit solution. ● Identify and pilot use of social media platforms for advertising selected posts. ● Carry out in-depth industry analysis of ‘best practice’ recruitment and selection methodologies. ● Recommend revised recruitment and selection methodologies for implementation. ● Implement and progress actions to secure the mandatory ‘Excellence in Research’ accreditation.
Year 3/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Carry out a review of the e-Recruit pilot and implement actions as identified. Roll out e-Recruit solution across the organisation. ● Review effectiveness of current approach to recruitment advertising (from 2017/2018 data). ● Develop and implement an advertising and branding strategy to incorporate social media and other advertising avenues. ● Pilot revised selection methodologies and assess their suitability for organisation-wide implementation.

Goal 2: Achieve Your Potential

Our Vision

To flourish in the work environment, staff will take personal responsibility for achieving their full career potential either within or outside of Teagasc in the future. Teagasc hugely values the high calibre staff across the organisation who consistently deliver excellent performance. While Teagasc will endeavour to retain these staff, it recognises that it will not always be able to provide promotion or development opportunities to staff who feel they have reached the point in their career where such opportunities are appropriate and necessary for their career progression. In these circumstances, we want our staff to be sufficiently developed that they are capable of realising their career ambitions with other organisations if they so wish.

Each individual staff member will be supported by their line manager and the organisation in planning and building a successful career in their current role or where feasible, other roles aligned to their career ambitions. All reasonable supports in terms of stretch assignments/wider experience and formal and informal development opportunities will be provided to staff who seek them consistent with programme delivery. In particular, opportunities will be sought to engage staff in short term transfers/assignments across directorates which would be highly developmental and would make a valuable contribution to the work programme. The potential for formal staff exchange programmes with agri-food companies will be investigated as it is considered that these arrangements could potentially be of considerable benefit. Graduates of the Leadership Development Programme (LDP) will be formed into an *alumni* group from which future project teams for strategic organisational assignments will be selected. This is vital to ensure the organisation yields value from its investment in the LDP programme and participants get the opportunity to utilise the skills they have acquired on the Programme.

A staff member who has fully developed their potential with the support of the organisation will be highly marketable and their retention may, therefore, become an issue for Teagasc. In some areas, particularly within research, if we lack alternative internal candidates with sufficient technical knowledge and capabilities to maintain programme leadership, it will be necessary to offer promotion/joint appointments on an exceptional basis to retain the services of these staff as they would otherwise leave the organisation.

Teagasc must also ensure that managers understand the areas on which they need to focus to meet their responsibilities for the development of their staff and to meet programme delivery expectations. Other organisations have successfully utilised 360° feedback reviews as a developmental tool for managers and a similar approach will be introduced for managers at Teagasc.

The organisation will commit itself to be responsive to the requirements of staff who wish to proactively plan their careers to achieve their maximum potential. This will require that we develop consultation processes that give all staff an opportunity to participate and be represented in discussions on staff development related issues within the organisation. Approximately, 40% of Teagasc staff are not trade union members and are currently not represented on the National Partnership Committee. Therefore, we need to explore ways to seek their input on issues important to their development.

Gender equality is an area that the organisation must prioritise and immediate steps are required to promote this objective. National Partnership should take a lead role in identifying and making recommendations on how gender equality could be further progressed within the organisation. Bringing the female talent within the organisation upfront and central (e.g. speakers at events/chairpersons etc.) in itself serves to send out important messages both internally and externally and these opportunities must be exploited to the full.

We Will

- Carry out a review of the PMDS system with a view to scoping out a new personnel development system designed to support staff, in partnership with their line manager, to uncover new opportunities and identify real and important career development actions.
- Grow effective self-leadership skills across the organisation to help staff make inspiring choices to maximise their career potential, to flourish and be the best they can be in the work environment.
- Design career pathways and career supports for staff to assist them advance their careers and develop their skills.
- Develop a business case for the introduction into the organisation of a 360° feedback review system for managers.
- Challenge restrictive rules/arrangements on filling vacancies that adversely impact on career development. All vacancies should be filled by the most suitable candidates regardless of their current categorisation.
- Improve/enhance existing promotions processes as required. This will include benchmarking ourselves against arrangements in similar high-performing organisations.
- Ensure that effective procedures are in place to proactively address both the causes of under-performance and its impact on the workplace and so avoid colleagues having to carry an unfair workload.
- Develop a diversity strategy that brings together a number of diversity initiatives across the organisation into a coherent equality and diversity framework.
- Establish procedures that allow all staff to contribute to discussions and proposals on issues that impact on their development.

- Through National Partnership we will progress significant initiatives to promote gender equality in the organisation and seek to attain a relevant industry accreditation, e.g. Athena Swan.
- Establish an expert panel to consider the appropriateness of offering promotion/joint appointments on an exceptional basis to retain the services of key personnel from time to time.

Projects & Initiatives

Year	Action
Year 1/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop new PMDS/personal development system, train managers/staff and launch programme in December 2018. ● Scope and develop an outline Career Framework. ● Begin the process of introducing a 360° feedback review system for managers. ● Scope business case for a Mentoring Programme aligned to the Career Framework model. ● Critique existing grading structures and restrictive rules/arrangements to understand limitations to career progression and develop a business case to change. ● Develop proposal for a new grading structure in the Operations Directorate. ● Incorporate a self-leadership module in the customised Teamwork programme proposal included under Goal 3, Year 1/2018. Secure approval and develop tender for the programme. Additional actions are included in Goal 3, Years 2 and 3. ● National Partnership Committee to consider and make recommendations on how all staff can be provided with an opportunity to input on issues affecting their development within the organisation. ● Establish an LDP Alumni group and utilise for strategic projects. ● Commence work on developing a Diversity Strategy. ● National Partnership to take a lead role in identifying and making recommendations on how gender equality could be further progressed within the organisation. ● Analyse gender statistics and run a series of workshops to understand gender issues. ● Investigate the adoption of the Athena Swan accreditation system.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Benchmark against other organisations and recommend gender initiatives and agree a three-year action plan. ● Develop a proposal to proactively identify and address, through supports and actions, under-performance across the organisation at a line management level. ● Establish an expert panel to review the appropriateness of offering promotion/joint appointments on an exceptional basis to retain the services of key personnel from time to time.
Year 2/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop support tools for the Career Framework, including a career workshop and toolkit. ● Continue the roll-out of the 360° degree feedback review system for managers. ● Develop a Mentoring Programme and draft tender. ● Implement revised circulation/advertising rules for career opportunities/job vacancies. ● Implement new grading structure for the Operations Directorate subject to approval. Consider wider implementations across the organisation. ● Implement recommendations of the National Partnership working group on consultation arrangements for issues impacting the development of staff. ● Improve/enhance existing promotion processes to include benchmarking ourselves against arrangements in similar high-performing organisations and revise processes where required. ● Roll-out a proactive approach to identifying and addressing under-performance at a line management level across the organisation. ● Finalise and implement the Diversity Strategy. Raise awareness of diversity/equality through an appropriate forum (e.g. training/workshops). ● Commence the implementation of the gender action plan, measure impact and apply for a relevant industry award/accreditation. ● Implement the recommendations of the review of the appropriateness of offering promotion/joint appointments on an exceptional basis to retain the services of key personnel.
Year 3/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review progress and engagement with new PMDS and incorporate changes as required. ● Develop a communications/training plan for staff & pilot Career Framework. ● Pilot Mentoring Programme. ● Complete the implementation of the new grading structure for the Operations Directorate.

Goal 3: Grow the Team

Our Vision

The collaborative nature of so much of the work programme of the organisation requires that a team mind-set is embedded in our culture and that we are expert at building highly effective teams within formal business units, across programme areas, between disciplines, and with external partners. It is intended that all managers and staff will understand the characteristics of highly effective teams, for example, diversity and inclusiveness, a shared sense of purpose, shared leadership, individual and mutual accountability, open communication, trust and respect, and will display behaviours reflective of highly effective teams in team working activity in the future.

A new understanding of the formal management structure within the organisation is required to ensure it assists rather than inhibits the operation of teams that perform at a high level both within and across business units. The critical responsibilities of the formal management structure within the organisation in terms of good governance, budget control and achievement of performance goals will be enhanced rather than diluted by the development of a team culture. However, this requires that managers are equipped and encouraged to demonstrate empowering leadership practices that support high level performance by teams and trust our staff to have the knowledge of and to adhere to the policies and procedures that operate within the organisation to ensure good management of our operations.

We Will

- Equip our staff and managers with the skills and behaviours to enable empowering leadership practices to become the norm.
- Grow effective self-awareness skills and develop a tailored Teamwork Programme to enhance the performance of diverse teams across the organisation.
- Establish virtual Communities of Practice supported by the most effective technology as a means to facilitate focused collaborative engagement, knowledge-sharing, and the cross-fertilisation of ideas.
- Explore opportunities to invest in facilities or alternative initiatives that encourage time away from the mainstream of work activities for teams to have uninterrupted time and space to think and innovate. Considerable evidence exists that staff are more creative when they are provided for a short period of time with a physical space conducive to innovative thinking and removed from their normal day to day work responsibilities.

Projects & Initiatives

Year	Action
Year 1/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a proposal for a ‘Manager as Coach’ programme to assist managers to adopt a coaching style of leadership that equips them to engage and develop high purpose and talented staff to take on challenges outside of their comfort zone, enhance their performance and fully achieve their career potential. Seek approval for a Business Case and develop a tender. ● Develop proposal and Business Case for a tailored Teamwork Programme incorporating the self-leadership module referred to in Goal 2, secure approval and develop a tender.
Year 2/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and pilot the ‘Manager as Coach’ programme. ● Benchmark effective protocols and technologies to guide and facilitate the sharing of knowledge (e.g. a suitable mobile App) and make recommendations to management regarding implementation. ● Tender and pilot the tailored Teamwork programme.
Year 3/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review pilot, make necessary revisions and roll-out the ‘Manager as Coach’ programme across the organisation against an agreed schedule (e.g. three years). ● Develop guidelines and implement approved technologies to facilitate the sharing of knowledge. ● Roll-out the tailored Teamwork Programme per an agreed schedule across the organisation (e.g. three years). ● Based on the experience of other organisations, develop a paper and a set of recommendations for the Senior Management Group (SMG) outlining the benefits or otherwise of developing a facility(s) or introducing other initiatives to promote collaborative engagement and innovation away from the distractions of day to day work.

Goal 4: Stay Safe & Well

Our Vision

To provide a safe place to work and to encourage and support staff to proactively take care of their health and wellbeing. This will be achieved by building on existing initiatives and by promoting a culture and environment to support wellbeing.

We Will

- Bolster education and understanding of what it takes to stay well and avoid burnout by maintaining a healthy work-life-balance.
- Develop a Health & Wellbeing programme and a mid-career retirement programme.
- Develop a new Staff Excellence Reward & Recognition Programme.
- Ensure staff returning to work after long term absences (e.g. >3 months) are supported.
- Review and revise the Dignity at Work Designated Contact Persons' role to improve supports available to staff.
- Develop and implement a compliant Occupational Health & Safety Management System (SMS) in Teagasc and consider application for accreditation of the System in appropriate areas of Teagasc activity. Maintain Health & Safety standards into the future.

Projects & Initiatives

Year	Action
Year 1/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Survey managers and staff on wellbeing, reward and recognition and mid-career retirement planning options. ● Enhance health and wellbeing on-line resources, to include advice on what it takes to stay well and avoid burnout. Promote and encourage staff to engage and utilise these resources to maintain a healthy work-life-balance. ● Design and develop a Health & Wellbeing programme including a Business Case. Seek approval to implement. ● Develop a formalised approach to guide and assist line management to pro-actively engage with staff returning to work after long term absences (i.e. >3 months). Make recommendations and seek approval to implement the recommended approach.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a new Staff Excellence Reward & Recognition programme to include an award for excellence in customer service. ● Review/revise DAW Designated Contact Persons' role and retrain Designated Contact staff. ● Select a Safety Management System (SMS). ● Develop SMS Business Case & Implementation Plan. ● Submit SMS Business Case to senior management for approval. ● Pilot approved SMS Plan.
Year 2/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Design and develop a Mid-Career Retirement planning Programme. Seek approval to progress. ● Tender for External Service providers for Health & Wellbeing and Mid-Career Retirement Planning Programmes. ● Implement Health & Wellbeing Programme including health screening programme. ● Implement the Staff Excellence Reward & Recognition programme. ● Develop an incentive/reward plan to foster long term engagement in the wellbeing programme. ● Review SMS pilot, implement changes and roll out approved SMS Plan across organisation.
Year 3/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pilot Mid-Career Retirement Planning Programme as part of the PMDS process. ● Implement the Staff Excellence Reward & Recognition programme. ● Survey staff who returned from long term absence (> 3 months) in the previous 12-18 months to assess the level of pro-active line management engagement with staff to assist with re-integration into the workplace. Prepare and submit a briefing to management. ● Apply for OHSAS18001/ISO45001 Occupational Health & Safety accreditation if considered appropriate in specified areas within the organisation. ● Monitor, measure and maintain the Safety Management System against Occupational Health & Safety policy, objectives, legal and other requirements, and record the results.

Goal 5: Excellence in HR Practices and Service Delivery

Our Vision

The continuation of investment in a professional HR Department and its ongoing development to ensure that excellence in people management is central to how Teagasc increasingly develops its capacity to overcome challenges and exploit opportunities within its operating environment. The organisation will regularly survey staff and provide two way communication/consultation platforms to ensure it understands and acts on the results of staff surveys and other valuable information provided by staff. Teagasc understands that excellence in HR practices will be driven by having a greater understanding in real time of issues that are important to staff that may be inhibiting performance and programme delivery.

Excellent HR practices within the organisation will be supported by excellence in HR service delivery through improving the efficiency and effectiveness of HR operational, data management and reporting functions. We will use Lean methodology to fundamentally review current HR service delivery and processes.

We Will

- Regularly conduct staff surveys and develop action plans to respond to issues arising from the analysis of results.
- Become more expert at communicating and consulting with staff and utilise technology to do this in the most effective way and in real time to the greatest possible extent.
- Develop mechanisms for improving how the organisation communicates and maintains a relationship with retired staff that they value and that leverages retirees as a valuable resource for the organisation.
- Utilise Lean methodologies to ensure excellence in HR service delivery.
- Develop a more efficient approach to HR policy administration and the operation of statutory and non-statutory leaves and schemes.
- Ensure that HR data protection procedures are compliant with new data protection regulations/legal requirements.
- Develop an efficient system of information retrieval from various existing HR systems e.g. DMS/Core etc.
- Review Staff Training and Development administration including KT in-service training.
- Develop HR Analytics to improve the quality of people related decision making in the organisation.

Projects & Initiatives

Year	Action
Year 1/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commence a review, through National Partnership, of current communication and consultation processes and platforms and make recommendations on how improvements could be achieved to enhance the quality of engagement with staff and to make it happen in real time. ● Develop and roll-out a regular programme of staff surveys that allow trends to be evaluated over time and actions to be put in place following analysis of results. ● Develop a proposal for using Lean methodology to review current HR service delivery and processes. ● Conduct a review of the administration of HR policies, schemes and statutory/non-statutory leaves and make recommendations for changes. ● Conduct an assessment on current utilisation of DMS including HR record management. ● Carry out an assessment of new data protection/legal requirements in consultation with ICT and identify any requirements for change. ● Based on the findings, devise upgraded/new methodology for storage and retrieval of HR files and other HR data. ● Review and improve the induction and probation processes including enhancing the formal induction training programme to include an awareness session on the organisation’s Customer Service and Action Plan. ● Commence a review through National Partnership of how Teagasc currently communicates and interacts with retired staff and develop an action plan on how this could be improved. ● Implement the recommendations following the review of Staff Training and Development administration and KT in-service training.
Year 2/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National Partnership to make recommendations and action plan to be implemented to achieve required improvements in communication and consultation. ● Tender for and commence project to conduct a review of HR service delivery and processes using Lean methodology. ● Carry out an HR analytics benchmarking exercise with relevant external organisations. Prepare a Business Case and a plan to support the introduction of HR Analytics into the organisation. Seek approval to implement.

Year 3/2020

- Finalise Lean methodology review of HR service delivery and processes.
- Develop and roll out revised arrangements relating to administration of HR policies, schemes and statutory/non-statutory leaves.
- Streamline approach to the administration of Staff Training and Development.
- Implement Action Plan to improve communication and interaction with retired staff.
- Implement HR Analytics Plan as approved.



Cover Illustration

Creativity is intelligence having fun!

The latest findings in neuroscience suggests that large scale brain functions must be 'switched on' and chemicals released to ignite the creative process, namely; (a) the Reticular Activating System (RAS), (b) the Amygdala and (c) Dopamine. To successfully 'switch on' and activate these areas of the brain we must be in a good mood and in a relaxed environment conducive to the creative process.

This applies whether we are engaged in a creative process such as painting (e.g. the efforts of a talented group of Teagasc staff who crafted the illustration on the cover of this booklet!), or investigating a novel piece of research; developing an impactful educational programme; formulating a technical solution or devising a complex administrative process.



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY