



# Irish Seed Savers

*Protecting Ireland's food crop heritage for future generations*

## Job Description

<b>Title:</b>	Head of the Heritage Seed Bank
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Executive Director
<b>Responsible for :</b>	Heritage Seed Bank Team (currently 5 dedicated staff)
<b>Type of Contract:</b>	Full Time Permanent
<b>Location:</b>	Capparoe, Scariff, Co. Clare.
<b>Salary:</b>	€40,000 - €45,000 commensurate with experience

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We are Ireland's leading NGO working for the conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. Our vital work is conserving Ireland's heritage food crops – open pollinated seed and apple trees - and contributing to sustainable food systems through a range of interventions including training, education and public awareness. Along with our dedicated conservation work, we operate as a social enterprise, producing Irish Heritage apple trees and organic open-pollinated seed for sale, ensuring the organisation's financial viability while practicing Conservation Through Use.

### JOB DESCRIPTION

**Overall purpose of the role:** The dynamic management of ISSAs Heritage Seed Bank, its people, systems and processes; liaising with the Heritage Seed Garden team to plan the horticultural operations from seed production to harvest, while actively contributing to ISSAs strategic direction and the everyday running of the Organisation as a member of the management team.

### Specific Duties

1. Overall responsibility for the effective management of the Heritage Seed Bank.
2. Manage the departmental budget efficiently ensuring compliance with the current organisational business plan.
3. Supervise and manage all work by Heritage Seed Bank staff and volunteers, including seed officers.
  - Plan and manage the grow out of seeds each year to perpetuate the collection.
  - Agree what new additions can be accepted to the collection based on accession policy.
  - Choose which varieties will be listed in the ISSA Seed Catalogue each year.
  - Collaborate on the production of the annual Heritage Seed Bank catalogue.
  - Responsible for characterisation and trialling of new varieties.
  - Manage seed production for grow-out including overseeing seed cleaning and packeting.
  - Oversee the Seed Guardian programme (network of seed growers).
  - Provide timely reports to the Executive Director, and management team on various aspects of work carried out by the Heritage Seed Bank.



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- Maintain staffing levels to ensure appropriate cover for all seasons, recruiting additional support from volunteers where required. Responsible for interviewing and recruiting staff within department.
  - Ensure training and skill development for all staff and volunteers within the Heritage Seed Bank.
4. In collaboration with the management team, identify and secure appropriate streams of funding for research, development and conservation.
    - Actively participate in external groups relating to issues of plant genetic resources and collections.
    - Develop and supervise research projects
    - Act as the Organisation's point of reference for technical liaison with research institutes and other relevant bodies.
    - Ensure opportunities to promote the work of the Heritage Seed Bank are developed and resourced appropriately.
  5. Contribute to the ongoing development of ISSAs vocational and educational offerings in seed growing and seed saving.
  6. Provide articles and content for the ISSA Newsletter on a regular basis and contribute to other social media E.g., Twitter, Instagram etc.
  7. Present talks about the Heritage Seed Bank both internally and externally and contribute to demonstrations in seed saving.
  8. Manage and respond to technical queries by mail, email or telephone.

It is the nature of work at ISSA that tasks and responsibilities are, in many circumstances, unpredictable and varied. All staff are expected to work in a flexible way when the occasion arises where tasks are not specifically covered in the Job Description and have to be undertaken.

Evening, weekend and bank holiday working will be required on an occasional basis.



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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Educational Requirements

An MSc or equivalent in Botany, Ecology, Plant Genetics or a related discipline.

### Skills & Abilities

1. Excellent communication skills
2. Commitment to quality standards.
3. People management skills
4. Proven organisational skills, project management and the ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines.
5. High level of initiative and efficiency and an ability to work with minimal guidance.
6. Proven ability to form strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
7. Ability to determine and implement process improvements within the parameters of the role.
8. Ability to create and maintain effective, fit-for-purpose record management systems.
9. Skill and confidence working with Microsoft Office, custom databases and GIS software.

### Knowledge & Experience

1. Expert and current knowledge and experience of best practice in heritage seed collection, processing and storage techniques.
2. Experience in growing plants for seed
3. Prior experience locating suitable plants/remnants to collect from.
4. Good understanding of relevant policy, industry codes and legislation relating to native seed collection, conservation and supply.
5. Understanding of predicted climate change impacts on food systems in general and seed in particular.
6. Awareness of Workplace Health & Safety (WHS) legislative requirements and a strong understanding of WHS policies and practice applied in the field.

### Personal Attributes

1. Practical and organised.
2. Flexibility with a willingness to take on new challenges.
3. Diligence; value accuracy and attention to detail.
4. Physically fit to a level enabling safe completion of the duties.
5. Strong team player within a diverse environment.
6. Personal commitment to good environmental management.