

IRISH LANGUAGE SCHEME FOR THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND

Scheme 2013 - 2016

Scheme as prepared under Section 15
of the Official Languages Act 2003

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Section 1 - Introduction and Background

This second scheme of the National Gallery of Ireland (NGI) has been prepared in accordance with Section 15 of the Official Languages Act 2003.

The Act provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing the services they provide

- Through the medium of Irish
- Through the medium of English, and
- Through the medium of Irish and English

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the NGI through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

Section 2 - Guidelines and Preparation of the Scheme

Section 12 of the Act provides for the preparation of guidelines by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and their issue to public bodies to assist in the preparation of the draft schemes. This scheme has been drawn up with due regard to those guidelines.

We are conscious of the need to ensure that the contributions we make add value and meet the needs of the individuals, groups and communities we serve. The NGI recognises that the public have a right to choose to do business in their preferred language and that they will be facilitated, in their dealings with us, whether in English or in Irish. As Irish is the national language and the first official language of the state, we are committed to maintaining and improving delivery of a higher standard of public service, through Irish state, to our visitors in the current challenging environment.

The NGI published a number of public notices under section 13 of the Act, inviting submissions in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme under Section 15 from any interested parties. These included bilingual advertisements on the NGI's website and on the social media channels Facebook and Twitter on 26th November 2012 and an advertisement in Foinse on 16th January 2013. In addition, an invitation was sent to seven organisations engaged in encouraging and promoting the Irish language on 26th November 2012. All submissions received are available upon request.

The Scheme has been developed having regard to this extensive consultation process as well as the views of visitors via the NGI feedback programme. The suggestions of staff at the NGI, and the current situation with regard to Irish language service availability and capability have also been taken into account. The NGI appreciates the time and effort put in by all concerned in this process.

It is important to note also that in preparing the present Scheme, the NGI considered the effect of a major renovation project that has closed two-thirds of the NGI space. This project is on-going until late 2016. It has affected and will continue to affect our capabilities both in regard to how we make the collection available to visitors and the delivery of the Scheme itself.

Context of the Irish Language Scheme 2013 - 2016

The NGI is committed to the aim of the Official Languages Act 2003 to improve over a period of time the quantity and quality of services provided for the public through Irish.

A number of commitments were given in the NGI's first scheme to improve the level of services through Irish. These commitments addressed the areas of Irish language signage, labelling, literature, stationery, tours, free audio-guides, website, e-mail, bookshop, research facilities, public announcements and staff training to accommodate visitors who wish to engage through Irish. The commitments in the second scheme are predicated on having delivered all the commitments in the first scheme. The objective of the second scheme is to continue the delivery of these commitments in the level of services available in Irish throughout the lifetime of this scheme. This scheme also builds on the principles of a quality Visitor Experience, and it will continue to ensure the facilitation of people who wish to conduct their business through the medium of Irish.

During the course of our first Scheme and in the preparation of this scheme we reviewed and evaluated the ongoing usage of our services available in Irish. Services that were reviewed and evaluated included guided tours booked in Irish, usage of the free audio-guides in Irish literature and communications received and. While this assessment revealed a very low level of interest in the availability of services through Irish, the NGI remains deeply committed to improving over a period of time the quantity and quality of services provided to the public through Irish.

Section 3 - Commencement of the Scheme

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The Scheme will commence on 16 September 2013 and shall remain in force for a period of three years from this date or until a new scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to section 15 of the Act, whichever is the later.

Section 4 - National Gallery of Ireland, an overview

The NGI was established in 1854 under the National Gallery of Ireland Act, which provided for 'the establishment of a National Gallery of paintings, Sculpture and

the Fine Arts...in Dublin'. This provision was broadened by the National Cultural Institutions Act 1997 to 'increase and diffuse, in or outside the State, knowledge of the visual arts by whatever means they [the Board] consider appropriate'.

The primary purpose of the NGI is embodied in its Vision and Mission Statement. The vision of the NGI is to provide an outstanding visitor experience that inspires an interest in and an appreciation of art for all. The NGI's mission is to care for, interpret, develop and showcase art in a way that makes the NGI an exciting place to visit. Further information on the vision, mission and activities of NGI is available on www.nationalgallery.ie

The NGI's key services for the duration of this scheme are as follows:

- Organisation of *Masterpieces from the Collection* exhibition and small temporary exhibitions during the Master Development Programme. This renovation project has closed two thirds of the NGI and has challenged the NGI creatively and effectively to make the collection available to visitors;
- Loans to other institutions in Ireland and abroad;
- Internal and external Education activities;
- Community outreach activities;
- Commercial activities including Bookshop, Restaurant, Facilities hire, Reproduction sales and hire.

The NGI is governed by a Board of Governors and Guardians appointed by the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. Executive management of the NGI is vested in the Director, who is appointed by the Board.

Located in Merrion Square, the NGI first opened to the public in 1864. The original Gallery (Dargan Wing) was extended in 1903 (Milltown Wing), in 1968 (North, now Beit Wing) and in 2002 (Millennium Wing). The Office of Public Works, in liaison with Gallery management, has primary responsibility for the buildings.

In addition to housing a major collection of western art, containing key examples of the work of the most admired masters and all the important schools, the NGI is also home to the most important collection of Irish art in the world. The NGI has achieved many awards and won favourable attention from the general public, for its special exhibitions, educational programmes, free admission and architectural merit.

Section 5 - Existing commitments to Services available in Irish, bilingually and in English

The NGI is committed to providing quality services in Irish and/or bilingually to its visitors. The following measures set out in detail what the NGI currently undertakes to ensure a high provision of service in Irish and/or bilingually to all of our visitors.

At the present time, the NGI provides a broad number of public services in Irish and bilingually. In accordance with the NGI's Customer Charter adopted in 2006, the NGI's policy is to endeavour to provide a service through Irish where such a service is requested. Information services currently provided reflect the multi-national nature of the NGI's visitorship.

The NGI Customer Charter is to inspire, educate and inform And in this context, the NGI is committed to:

- Providing a quality visitor service.
- Displaying and managing an inspiring national art collection.
- Offering an excellent information and educational service.
- Provide a knowledgeable and trained staff.
- Providing a safe and accessible Gallery for all.

All information and services currently offered are made available bilingually where feasible. If the cost of a bilingual project in any individual case is deemed excessive due to cost in the current limited funding environment, the NGI will continue to use its discretion to make available services in alternative ways if possible.

1. Printed materials

Quarterly Information Newsletter prepared by the NGI.

Gallery News features section headings bilingually in Irish and English.

Temporary exhibition information brochures

The founding statement of the NGI in Irish is incorporated in the text.

Essential Guide to the NGI

The Essential Guide was republished in 2009. This incorporated a front page and foreword in Irish and English.

Labels for artworks in the Permanent Collection and temporary exhibitions

Bilingual titles, provenance and descriptive passages are contained on labels for 100% of the '*Masterpieces from the Collection*' exhibition. Where space constraints, capabilities and availability of funding make it feasible, information labels on paintings in the temporary exhibitions have been made available in Irish and English.

Internal and external Gallery stationery

Letterhead, Compliment slips, Business Cards and internal Memo forms incorporate the bilingual form of the NGI title.

Annual Reports

The Annual report is published simultaneously in Irish and English.

Free audio guides

Information on fifty eight pieces in the collection is translated into Irish and made available free to visitors.

Large text booklets

Large text booklets are available in Irish and English in the majority of the exhibition rooms.

Comment cards

The NGI makes available visitor feedback comment cards in Irish and responds to feedback on services available through Irish if the communication is initiated in Irish.

2. Other NGI Events

We endeavour to work with events that promote the Irish Language. The NGI participates in Culture Night annually. In 2012, the NGI collaborated with Temple Bar Cultural Trust and projections of works by three Gaeltacht-based artists Andrew Duggan, Ríonach Ni Néill and Ronan Ó Snodaigh were projected on to the exterior walls of the Millennium Wing building. These works featured performances shown inside NGI, in the Ballroom, and were simultaneously shown at locations in Donegal, Kerry and Connemara on the night. Culture Night was attended by nearly 3,000 visitors. Raidió na Life were based in the NGI from 12 midday to 8pm on the day. Throughout the day visitors were interviewed through Irish about the arts and Culture Night.

3. Services available to the public

Front of House Services

Information Desk staff, Volunteers, Receptionists and Attendants are the first points of contact with the public.

- Information Services are available in English and Irish and a fluent Irish language speaker is available upon request at the Information Desk.
- A number of Volunteers at the Information Desks are familiar with greetings and can conduct some conversation in Irish, or direct visitors to appropriate Gallery staff if a request is made to conduct business in Irish.
- Training has been provided for Information Desk volunteers on key greetings and key questions that could be asked by visitors through Irish.
- The name of the NGI is given in Irish and English on signage and in a verbal response where appropriate and feasible.
- Reminders and clarifications of our obligations under the Official Languages Act and our Irish Language Scheme are communicated to staff regularly.
- We endeavour to raise the profile of the Irish language in the NGI by giving more prominence to the Irish language text in publicity and informational materials.

- The NGI will continue to provide all staff with easy access to information and language resources, in addition to the list of greetings and common phrases in Irish already provided on the Information Desks.

Public address systems

Public Address Announcements made daily are announced in a bilingual format.

Guided tours

We offer a Tour Guide service delivered by a fluent Irish speaker. This service is available upon request for booked tours. The NGI is committed to promoting cultural initiatives which support and encourage the use of the Irish language. The NGI will continue to participate in activities organised during Seachtain na Gaeilge; the NGI calendar offers an Annual Tour in Irish on relevant national celebrations.

Research services

The NGI's research facilities comprise of the Fine Art Library, the Centre for the Study of Irish Art, the NGI Archive and the Yeats Archive. These are all open to the public. The research collections retain some Irish language material and it is policy to collect published and unpublished Irish language material that is relevant to these collections.

Bookshop

We offer for sale seasonal greeting cards printed with a message in Irish, and a small selection of children's books in Irish through the NGI shop.

Website

The website has bilingual web page headings and content relating to the institution, its collection, public programmes and planning a visit. It also offers translation into Irish on key static pages on the NGI website. The NGI founding statement in Irish is also available on the website.

Computer systems

Any new computer systems installed where appropriate are capable of handling the Irish language. Existing systems will, where necessary, be made compatible in conjunction with the next suitable planned maintenance or upgrade work. This excludes existing specialist and collections management systems. Given the major technical and resource issues involved, this matter will be addressed by the NGI over the long term.

4. Signage

External signage

The Irish version of the NGI title is displayed prominently on all external signage and at the entrance to the NGI.

Internal signage

All permanent signage is bilingual, and identifies areas of building, collections, facilities, visitor guidelines and general information. Facilities are in place for erecting temporary bilingual signs or signs in Irish as appropriate.

5. Written Communications

Meetings and Appointments

Every effort is made to conduct meetings/appointments in Irish if so requested.

Letters and e-mail

All correspondence received in Irish is responded to in Irish.

6. Assessment of demand

The NGI continually makes an assessment of the underlying demand for services to be made available through Irish. The NGI makes available visitor feedback comment cards in Irish and responds to feedback on services available through Irish. An assessment of staff to measure proficiency in the Irish language was carried out during our first Scheme. The Scheme 2013 - 2016 builds on the existing service provision, identifies specific areas where improved Irish language service can be provided and puts in place structures to assist in this achievement.

The NGI continues from the previous scheme to use this on-going feedback and its assessment as a guideline in the prioritisation and development of services in the NGI through Irish. It must be noted that this prioritisation of services takes into consideration limited resources and capabilities within the area of competency in Irish.

Section 6 - Schedule of proposed services for the duration of the new Scheme

Introduction

The NGI has proven its capability to deliver services through Irish in its delivery of the first Scheme. In this scheme 2013 - 2016 the NGI's main focus will be on continuing, building upon and enhancing the existing services provided, through the medium of Irish. A consideration in the development of the Scheme is the effect of a major renovation project that has closed two-thirds of the NGI public space. This project is on-going until late 2016. In addition the NGI is required to continue to operate in the context of funding cuts from government sources and the public service staff embargo. These factors have affected, and will continue to affect our capability, as to how we make the collection available to visitors and the development of any significant new services, inclusive of Bilingual Services.

The first scheme began to develop Irish language services from a low base in terms of verbal and written communication competency. Midway during the first Scheme, the closure of Gallery space, the reduction in staff numbers and a public service staff embargo created on-going limitations. This did not hinder the

delivery of commitments made in the first scheme. The NGI remains deeply committed to developing enhanced services in the Irish language despite the continuing challenges.

The provision of written communications is primarily a cost and time issue, the development of Irish language competence among staff presents some challenges. It will take considerable time and effort to increase the core capability over the range of disciplines engaged in by the staff. The extent to which such interpersonal services should be developed are also affected by actual demand for the services. The NGI offers a wide range of services presently, in terms of providing access to the collection, temporary exhibitions, research facilities, Irish language tours and free audio guides. The extent and quality of services offered is governed by limitations on resources, both financial and human.

Proposed enhancements to services 2013 - 2016

All commitments enhancing services offered by the National Gallery of Ireland are given based on the current situation as highlighted in the Introduction above. It must be acknowledged that delivery on these commitments may be negatively affected by financial and staffing changes that may occur in the future, which are beyond the control of the National Gallery of Ireland.

Reception:

Training will continue to be made available to the telephone reception staff to enable them to give the name of the NGI in Irish and English, to have the capabilities to deal with a basic greeting service through Irish, and subsequently to direct the public to appropriate Gallery staff if a visitor wishes to conduct business through Irish. The switchboard staff will be provided with a list of Gallery staff that can provide a service through the medium of Irish.

Website:

Over the course of the second Scheme we will increase the present amount of static content on the website in Irish. This commitment does not apply to static content* requiring software changes (*static content refers to the general information available in the main text area of a webpage). There will be exceptions where this is not feasible because of the cost, size, layout or nature of the material required.

A dedicated e-mail address for queries “as Gaeilge” will be established by December 2014. The NGI will ensure that such queries are addressed promptly.

Computer systems

Any new computer systems installed where appropriate are capable of handling the Irish language. Existing systems will, where necessary, be made compatible in conjunction with the next suitable planned maintenance or upgrade work. This excludes existing specialist and collections management systems. Given the

major technical and resource issues involved, this matter will be addressed by the NGI over the long term.

Publicity materials

Exhibition publicity materials including posters, information leaflets, and flyers generated in relation to the collection will continue to be produced bilingually. There will be exceptions where this is not feasible because of the cost, size, layout or nature of the material. This will be delivered on an ongoing basis for the duration of the Scheme.

Marketing

The NGI will actively aim to promote existence of its activities in Irish through bodies such as Foras na Gaeilge. The NGI will incorporate bilingual content on its publicity / plasma screens.

Information Services

We will aim to raise the profile of the Irish language in the NGI by creating a short leaflet, setting out the services available in Irish, this will be made available at our Information Desks and reception desks and on our website and will be used as a means of promoting awareness of specific services available. This will be made available by December 2013.

The NGI will continue to provide all staff with easy access to information and language resources, in addition to the list of greetings and common phrases in Irish already provided on the Information Desks.

Guided Tours

We will continue to offer a Tour Guide service delivered by a fluent Irish speaker. This service is available upon request for booked tours. The NGI is committed to promoting cultural initiatives which support and encourage the use of the Irish language. The NGI will continue to participate in activities organised during Seachtain na Gaeilge; the NGI calendar offers an Annual Tour in Irish on relevant national celebrations.

Provision of Worksheets

We will continue to offer Educational worksheets in Irish to visitors, available at the Information Desk. .

National Gallery of Ireland Publications

The NGI will produce bilingually documents which come under Section 10 of the Official Languages Act, namely Annual Reports, Audited Accounts, Statement of Strategy and Customer Charter. Art-related and other publications not mentioned above and not referred to in any other category will be considered for publication bilingually by the NGI on a case by case basis, with due regard to cost and public interest issues. If the cost of bilingual publication in any individual case is

deemed excessive due to the size of the publication, or deemed not commercially or economically viable, the NGI may choose to publish an executive summary / introduction / summary in bilingual format. This will be continued in the current scheme.

Request for tenders

Requests for tender will continue to be made available in English only, unless the tender itself relates to an Irish language issue.

Staff training and Volunteer Development

The NGI acknowledges the importance of having a highly trained workforce to ensure efficient and effective delivery of service. This involves significant investment in training and development. The NGI will make available to all staff appropriate Irish language training courses and will aim to maximize attendance and course relevance to the mission of the NGI.

The NGI will include language awareness as part of both induction and visitor experience training courses to ensure that staff and volunteers understand why an Irish language service policy is in place, the context and background to the policy and finally to ensure that the staff are fully informed about how the policy is to operate.

The Visitor Services Team and Volunteers and all staff are provided with a list of Gallery staff to be contacted in the event of a demand for service through Irish. The NGI will continue to deliver on these commitments during the course of our second Scheme.

Letters and other written communication

All written activities initiated through Irish will continue to be conducted via written correspondence in Irish. The NGI will initiate correspondence in Irish with those who are known to prefer correspondence in Irish.

Section 7 - Monitoring and Review of the Scheme

We will continue to monitor the demand for services through the Irish language during the course of our second Scheme with a view to the provision of service in Irish in line with the level of demand identified.

The progress of the various areas of the Scheme will be measured by means of:

- Monitoring public reaction through the NGI's existing feedback channels;
- comment cards;
- written and verbal responses;
- and periodic surveys.

Suggestions will be acknowledged and considered as appropriate.

The NGI will monitor staff perceptions of the Scheme, the level of staff competence and compliance in the respective areas. In addition, an assessment of progress towards the implementation of the Scheme will be made in the NGI's Annual Report

The day-to-day monitoring function of the Scheme will be carried out primarily by line managers in each of the sections who are responsible for the implementation of the Scheme within their own areas and report to the Visitor Services Officer.

A Review of the Scheme will be conducted as required, upon receipt of a written request from the Minister. The review will be conducted under the auspices of the Visitor Services department of the NGI. The review process will be continual, utilising the monitoring mechanisms listed above. The information and suggestions derived from the process will inform the content of any new scheme.

Section 8 - Publicising of the Scheme

This scheme will be publicized by means of:

- A bi-lingual Press release;
- Bi-lingual notice on the NGI's website;
- Circulation to appropriate Irish language bodies, other interested agencies and individuals, and
- a short leaflet setting out services available in Irish to be made available at the Information Desks.

A copy of this scheme has also been forwarded to Oifig Choimisinéir na Teangacha Oifigiúla.