

# LANGUAGE SCHEME FOR THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND

2017 - 2020

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

## **CONTENTS**

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| <b>Section 1 - Introduction and Background</b>   | Page 3  |
| <b>Section 2 - Guidelines and Preparation of the Scheme</b>  | Page 3  |
| <b>Section 3 - Commencement of the Scheme</b>  | Page 4  |
| <b>Section 4 - National Gallery of Ireland, an overview</b>  | Page 4  |
| <b>Section 5 - Existing commitments to Services available<br/>in Irish, bilingually and in English</b> | Page 5  |
| <b>Section 6 - Schedule of proposed services for the<br/>duration of the new Scheme</b>                | Page 9  |
| <b>Section 7 - Monitoring and Review of the Scheme</b>   | Page 12 |
| <b>Section 8 - Publicising of the Scheme</b>   | Page 13 |

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## **Section 1 - Introduction and Background**

This third 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, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs 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 services we provide meet the needs and enhance the lives 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, within our resource capabilities.

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 in August 2016 and an advertisement in [www.Tuairisc.ie](http://www.Tuairisc.ie) for dissemination to the Irish language community.

The Scheme has been developed having regard to this consultation process as well as the views of visitors via the NGI feedback system. 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.

During the term of the third scheme, the NGI will reopen fully and we look forward to augmenting our provision of bilingual services to enhance our Visitor Experience.

### **Context of the Irish Language Scheme 2016 - 2019**

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 two schemes 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, all with the aim of enhancing our ability to serve gallery users who wish to engage through Irish. The commitments in the third scheme are predicated on having delivered all the commitments in the first two schemes. The objective of the third scheme is to continue to enhance 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 earlier schemes 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 audioguides in Irish, the extent of demand for printed resources in Irish, and the number and nature of communications received in Irish. This assessment indicates a continued low level of engagement with our services provided through Irish. Nevertheless the NGI remains deeply committed to improving over a period of time the quantity and quality of services provided through Irish and we acknowledge the principle of the 'positive offer' in making our services in Irish known to the public.

### **Section 3 - Commencement of the Scheme**

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Scheme will commence on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017 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 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](http://www.nationalgallery.ie)

The key pillars of the NGI's Strategic Plan, in force during the term of this scheme are:

#### **Collections**

- To care for and safeguard the national collection
- Actively manage and expand the collection so that it is relevant and accessible

#### **Public Engagement**

- Provide an excellent visitor experience on site and online
- Inspire and promote engagement with art with all individuals and groups in a respectful, non-discriminatory manner

#### **Development**

- Develop the Gallery's Fundraising Programme through active partnerships with supporters and donors across a range of sectors and geographic areas
- Expand the Gallery's accessibility and sustainability through collaborations

#### **Corporate Services**

- Develop a Corporate Governance framework
- Foster an informed, flexible and effective workforce in an environment of equality, inclusion and diversity
- Ensure the Gallery is properly resourced with fit for purpose processes and systems
- Ensure readiness for Gallery re-opening, preparing for Phase 4
- and optimal use of Gallery spaces
- Provide enhanced information and reporting on the Gallery's activities to all stakeholders

The NGI is governed by a Board of Governors and Guardians appointed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. 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 facilitates a broad range 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 visitor profile.

Under the NGI Customer Charter, 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 ongoing difficult 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, when it is included in a brochure.

### **Essential Guide to the NGI**

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

### **Information on artworks in the Permanent Collection and temporary exhibitions**

For the Permanent collection, bilingual titles as appropriate and descriptive passages for all of the paintings are contained in the form of a bilingual booklet prominently displayed in the galleries and also available for collection at the Information Desk.

For temporary exhibitions, where availability of resources make it feasible, an information booklet containing bilingual titles and descriptive passages is made available in Irish and English. Temporary exhibitions are regarded as those with a duration of less than six months.

### **Internal and external Gallery stationery**

Letterhead, Compliment slips, Business Cards and internal notelets 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. 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. A fluent Irish language speaker is available upon request to provide a service at the Information Desk.
- The Visitor Experience team 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 2003 and our Irish Language Scheme are communicated to staff regularly.
- We endeavour to provide, where practical, Irish language text content 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.
- We have made available at front of house, a short leaflet summarising our services available in Irish. This can be consulted at our Information Desks, our Reception Desk and at our Cloakroom and is used as a means of promoting awareness of specific services available.

### **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 available for consultation by 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 some 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 present on the website. The website includes a welcome for correspondence through Irish.

### **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.

### **3. Signage**

#### **External signage**

The Irish version of the NGI title is displayed prominently on 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 operational bilingual signs or signs in Irish as appropriate.

### **4. 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.

### **5. 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. The Scheme 2016-19 will build on our existing service provision, identifying specific areas where improved Irish language service can be provided and putting in place procedures 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 developed its capability to deliver services through Irish in its delivery of the first two Schemes. This has been achieved against a background of the ongoing challenges presented by the gallery's Master Development Plan.

In the scheme for 2016-19, the NGI's main focus will be on continuing, building upon and enhancing the existing services provided, through the medium of Irish. It will be borne in mind that the current phase of the NGI's refurbishment is not yet completed but will be within the lifetime of the new scheme. The reopening provides the backdrop to the development of any significant new services, inclusive of Bilingual Services.

The first two schemes have succeeded in developing Irish language services from a low base in terms of verbal and written communication competency. The NGI has endeavoured to build an awareness of its services available in Irish, to increase the visibility of Irish in its public spaces and in its online presence. The limitations of the last few years, imposed by extensive room closures and the public service staff embargo has not diminished the NGI's commitment to developing enhanced services in the Irish language to meet the needs of its Irish-speaking audience.

While we continue to promote a positive culture for the use of Irish in the NGI, the development of Irish language competence among staff presents time and resource challenges. The extent to which such interpersonal services should be developed are also affected by actual demand for services, many of which are specialised in nature. 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 2016-2019**

All commitments to enhance services offered by the National Gallery of Ireland are given based on the current situation as highlighted in the Introduction above. It should be borne in mind 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 permanent 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 an updated list of Gallery staff that can provide a service through the medium of Irish. Temporary personnel will also have access to this list. This will apply during the normal opening hours of the gallery.

#### **Website:**

Over the course of the third 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.

The website will contain a statement prominently displayed on the relevant page that correspondence in Irish is welcomed. The NGI will ensure that such correspondence is dealt with 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.

### **Signage**

Our Signage and Wayfinding will continue to meet all statutory requirements.

### **Publicity materials**

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.

### **Promotion of Services in Irish**

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

### **Information Services**

The NGI will continue to provide all staff with easy access to information and language resources, including ready access to online resources such as [www.Tearma.ie](http://www.Tearma.ie) and [www.Teanglann.ie](http://www.Teanglann.ie).

A printed list of greetings and common phrases in Irish is available for consultation on the Information Desks and will be updated.

We have made available at the Information Desk and reception desk a short leaflet, setting out the services available in Irish, with the aim of raising the profile of the Irish language in the NGI and a means of promoting awareness of specific services available.

### **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, and awareness of the availability of tours in Irish will be promoted among Gaelscoileanna. 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 update and continue to offer Educational worksheets in Irish to visitors, available at the Information Desk and online.

### **National Gallery of Ireland Publications**

The NGI will publish in 2017 a concise guidebook for the collection entirely in Irish. This will be available for sale at the Gallery shop from the date of our full reopening in 2017.

The NGI will produce bilingually documents which come under Section 10 of the Official Languages Act 2003, 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.

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.

Staff, Interns and Volunteers are all 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 third 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.

We will expand on the number of staff using Irish in staff and departmental titles on email signatures.

### **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 third 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 who are responsible for the implementation of the Scheme in their respective departments and report to the Visitor Experience Manager.

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 Experience 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
- A short leaflet, available at the Information Desk and reception desk setting out the services available in Irish, with the aim of raising the profile and promoting awareness of the Irish language in the NGI.

A copy of this scheme has also been forwarded to Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga.

The English language version of this scheme is the original version.