



Roinn an Taoisigh  
Department of the Taoiseach

# Expressions of Interest in Membership of the National Statistics Board

Nomination of Persons for appointment to the National Statistics Board  
By Organisations Representative of Users of Statistics and Providers  
of Information under the Statistics Act 1993

Closing Date: 15:00 on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

## **Expressions of Interest in Membership of the National Statistics Board**

The Department of the Taoiseach is inviting expressions of interest from organisations and users of statistics to nominate individuals for membership of the National Statistics Board. In line with Section 18 of the Statistics Act 1993, the National Statistics Board shall consist of eight members, including three persons of proven ability and experience whom shall be nominated by such organisation or organisations as the Taoiseach/Minister of State considers to be representative of the users of official statistics and providers of information under the Act.

A vacancy has arisen on the Board, at this time, for one person of proven ability and experience whom shall be nominated by such organisation or organisations as the Taoiseach/Minister of State considers to be representative of the users of official statistics and providers of information under the Act.

### **What organisations/bodies can be considered representative of users of statistics and providers of Information under the Act?**

The Statistics Act 1993 does not identify specific organisations, and it provides that the Taoiseach/Minster of State shall consider if an organisation meets this criterion.

Many organisations use official statistics, and as such a wide range of organisations/bodies may be considered to fall within this category. This could include, for example:

- Civil society groups
- Academic institutions
- Business/trade union representative bodies
- Professional/technical groups
- Sectoral representatives
- Regional organisations
- Non-governmental organisations/charities.

## **Membership of State Boards**

High standards of corporate governance in all State Agencies, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall social and economic development.

Members of State Boards are appointed to act on behalf of the citizen to oversee the running of the affairs of state bodies. State Bodies must serve the interests of the taxpayer, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately), and act transparently as public entities.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the State body, subject to the objectives set by Government. In that regard and in accordance with 13.2 of the Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards, "it is advisable that no member of a State Board should serve more than two full terms of appointment or should hold appointments to more than two State Boards."

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016](#) (the Code) provides a framework for the application of best practice in corporate governance by both commercial and non-commercial State bodies.

In order to be an effective contributor on a State Board it is recommended that members should:

- bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of the organisation;
- be prepared to be challenging when necessary while being supportive to the delivery of organisational strategy and objectives;
- be equipped to offer considered advice on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

## Appointment to the National Statistics Board

- Location:** Dublin (one meeting per year may take place in Cork)
- Number of Vacancies:** 1
- Remuneration:** €5,985 per annum. Travel and subsistence is payable at normal civil service rates where relevant. (It should be noted that in line with the 'One Person One Salary' principle, no public servant will be entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees, save for situations that are statutorily provided for e.g. Worker Directors).
- Time Requirements:** Approximately 6 meetings/engagements per annum (half days); additional preparatory work/reading and follow up as required.

### 1. Background

The National Statistics Board (NSB) was set up as a non-statutory body in 1986 and established on a statutory basis in November 1994 under the [Statistics Act 1993](#). Section 8 of the Statistics Act 1993 provides the legislative basis for the Board. The role of the Board defined by Section 19 of the Statistics Act is to guide, with the agreement of the Taoiseach, the strategic direction of the Central Statistics Office.

Since the Board was first established, the role of the Board has evolved considerably. Previously, the Board primarily advised the CSO on the strategic direction and priority statistical outputs for the CSO. However, in recent strategies and papers the Board has highlighted the importance of data held across the wider public system, and its potential for both administrative and statistical purposes. The Board has developed the concept of an Irish Statistical System (ISS) involving the use of data from across the entire public sector to produce better official statistics. To give effect to this, it has promoted the idea of a National Data Infrastructure (NDI) with shared data management structures, standards and identifiers across the public sector.

The Board's current strategy is entitled *NSB Strategic Priorities for Official Statistics 2015-2020 'A World Class Statistical System for Ireland'* and can be found [here](#). In this document the Board sets out an ambition for the Irish Statistical System to become an example of best international statistical practice in the production and dissemination of official statistics.

### 2. Functions of the Board

It is the duty and responsibility of the board member to contribute to the work of the Board and to contribute to the development of priorities for official statistics in Ireland.

The role of the NSB is to guide the strategic direction of the CSO, with the agreement of the Taoiseach, and in particular, includes:

- establishing priorities for the compilation and development of official statistics;
- assessing the resources of staff, equipment and finance which should be made available for the compilation of statistics; and

- arbitrating, subject to the final decision of the Taoiseach, on any conflicts which may arise between the Office and other public authorities relating to the extraction of statistics from records or to the co-ordination of statistical activities.

The Statistics Act 1993 provides for eight members on the board: two members are nominated by the Taoiseach/Minister of State and three members are nominated by organisations representative of the users of official statistics and providers of information under the Act. The Chairperson of the NSB is appointed by the Taoiseach/Minister of State from among five members of the Board. Two members of the board are senior representatives of the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance. The Director general of the CSO is an ex officio member of the Board.

A vacancy has arisen on the Board for one appointment on the basis of nominations by organisations considered to be representative of the users of official statistics and providers of information under the Statistics Act 1993

Further information on the National Statistics Board can be found at [www.nsb.ie](http://www.nsb.ie).

### 3. Person Specification

Applications are invited from

- organisations which can be considered representative of users of statistics and providers of information under the Statistics Act 1993, who wish to nominate suitably qualified candidates who meet the below criteria; and/or
- individuals who meet the below criteria, and who have been nominated by an organisation which can be considered representative of users of statistics and providers of information under the Statistics Act 1993.

The nominated candidate must have significant demonstrable knowledge and experience of both the official statistical system in Ireland and the international statistical system and the ability to contribute effectively to the work of the NSB and to the development of priorities for official statistics in Ireland. A strong strategic focus and an understanding of the policy environment in which the Central Statistics Office operates is also required.

Candidates must also have experience of **one or more** of the following at an appropriately senior level:

- Statistics and/or Statistical Analysis
- Data Management and/or Data Analytics
- Macro/Micro Economics
- Social Science / Social Policy / Sociology
- EU and/or domestic Law
- Pure/Applied Mathematics
- Regional studies/spatial analysis
- Data Protection
- Strategic Management and Development
- Senior management experience in a public/private organisation
- Participation in International organisations/networks
- Previous board experience

#### 4. Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Board will be for an initial period of 3 years with an option to extend the term of engagement for a second term of 3 years, subject to:

- The membership of any member of the Board may be terminated by the Taoiseach/Minister of State at any time.
- A member of the Board may resign his or her membership of the Board by notice in writing sent or given to the Taoiseach/Minister of State, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Taoiseach/Minister of State receives the notice.
- Members of the Board shall, subject to the provisions of this Schedule, hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Taoiseach/Minister of State may, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, from time to time determine.
- A board member shall cease to be a member of the board if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or as a representative in the European Parliament, or becomes a member of a local authority.

#### 5. Submitting an Expression of Interest

Nominating bodies/individuals should submit

- a **Curriculum Vitae**
- a **cover letter** (to include the reasons for seeking a position on the National Statistics Board)
- and a **letter/document confirming the nomination of the individual** by an organisation which can be considered representative of users of statistics and providers of information under the Statistics Act 1993.

Expressions of interest may be submitted via email to [NSBapplications@taoiseach.gov.ie](mailto:NSBapplications@taoiseach.gov.ie)

Please take care when submitting expressions of interest, as decisions around appointment will take account of the documentation submitted. Organisations/nominated persons should ensure the Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how a person's particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Board position.

**Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may exist and address this in your cover letter.**

#### 6. Appointment Process

In line with the provisions of the Statistics Act 1993, appointment to the position will be made by the Taoiseach/Minister of State on the basis of nominations received from organisations considered representative of users of statistics and providers of information under the Act.

An Assessment Panel (the "Panel") will be convened by the Department of the Taoiseach to consider and assess the applications received. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role, as advertised in this Information Booklet;
- assess potential candidates further once they meet the specified appointment criteria by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
  - consideration of the written applications; and or
  - conference call; and or
  - Referee checks
- Any other selection or verification method deemed appropriate (this may include the Department requiring statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants as to bona fides of the qualifications and experience contained in their applications)
- Arrive at a shortlist of suitable candidates to be sent forward for consideration by the Taoiseach/Minister of State.

## **7. Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process. Certain information in relation to this process, not specific to any individual, is extracted for computer records for general statistical purposes.

## **8. Data Protection Act 2018**

If your application is assessed and you are considered to be suitable for appointment and your c.v. and cover letter (and any additional supplementary information requested as part of the application process), will be held in the Department of the Taoiseach. The Department will act as data controller of such data and will retain it for up to one year following the appointment. Unless you request withdrawal of your application such data may be used in considering your suitability for other similar vacancies/roles that arise for a period of up to one year for this Board.