



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

Expressions of Interest in Membership of the Gaisce Council

Closing Date: 15:00 on Thursday 11th February 2021

Expressions of Interest in Membership of the Gaisce Council

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is inviting expressions of interest for membership of the Gaisce Council. In line with Gaisce Articles of Association, the Board shall consist of fifteen members, including two who shall be nominated by the President and one who shall be nominated by the Taoiseach.

A vacancy has arisen on the Board, at this time, for one person of proven ability and relevant legal experience who shall be appointed by the Minister of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

The Gaisce Council

Gaisce – The President’s Award is a self-development programme for young people which is proven to enhance confidence and wellbeing through participation in personal, physical, community and team challenges. Gaisce is a direct challenge from the President of Ireland to young people to dream big and realise their potential.

Gaisce is a company limited by guarantee (CRO: 251020) registered with the Charities Regulator (CRA: 20020903) and with a charity number (CHY: 8482). The organisation is governed by a board of directors: the Gaisce Council. Gaisce - The President's Award comes under the remit of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth as, by its governing documents, the Minister appoints members to the Council. For this reason, although not a state body, the Public Appointments System is utilised to assist in recruiting Council members.

Membership of Boards

High standards of corporate governance in all agencies under the aegis of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State’s overall social and economic development.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the body, subject to the objectives set by Government.

The Charities Governance Code provides a framework for the application of best practice in governance by charitable bodies. Board members of charitable bodies are responsible for governance and should make sure that the following governance principles are applied:

- Advancing its charitable purpose
- Behaving with integrity
- Leading people
- Exercising control
- Working effectively
- Being accountable and transparent

Gaisce – The President’s Award recognises the importance of operating under high standards of corporate governance, and to this end, the Gaisce Council is committed to the standards outlined in the Charities Governance Code and is in compliance with the full range of corporate governance responsibilities. The role of all Council Members is guided by an internal Council handbook which was developed in line with best practice and the Charities Regulator’s Code.

Under the guidelines of its handbook, the Gaisce Council is responsible for leading the organisation in achieving its aims and objectives as set out in its strategic plan, over-seeing the establishment of appropriate executive roles, monitoring and reviewing levels and systems of HR and financial resources and ensuring that Gaisce is fully accountable to its funders, stakeholders and the general public.

Appointment to the Gaisce Council

Location:	Dublin
Number of Vacancies:	1 immediate vacancy
Remuneration:	Nil. Travel and Subsistence is payable at appropriate Civil Service Rates.
Time Requirements:	Approx. 1.5 days per month (including preparation, Council meetings and sub-committee meetings). There are 6 Council meetings per annum and board members are required to take an active part in sub-committees.

1. Background

Gaisce – The President’s Award is a self-development programme for young people which is proven to enhance confidence and wellbeing through participation in personal, physical, community and team challenges. Gaisce is a direct challenge from the President of Ireland to young people to dream big and realise their potential. Gaisce is non-competitive and self-directed: participants are encouraged to choose their own activities and goals with the support of a trained, adult President’s Award Leader (or PAL).

Gaisce’s Vision: An Ireland where young people dream big and fulfil their potential.

Gaisce’s Mission: To provide a positive youth development programme that encourages and guides young people so their innate talents and abilities, sense of citizenship and social agency can be fully realised.

Gaisce is driven by the following core values:

Empowerment: Making a difference, effective change and enabling young people to shape their path to self-discovery, through and with others

Inclusion and Equality: Every person having the opportunity to grow their potential through equality of access, participation and outcome

Respect: Valuing people equally, recognising diversity, and ensuring everyone is treated with dignity

Excellence: Making an impact through pursuing the highest standard, operating with integrity and in a transparent manner

Gaisce has identified the following Strategic Priorities for the term 2020-2025:

- Pillar I: Build on Achievement
Equality of Access

Responsible citizenship
Working in Partnership;

- Pillar II: Tell our Story;
- Pillar III: Excellence in What We Do.

The Gaisce programme is delivered by almost 1,500 PALs working and volunteering in a variety of organisations across Ireland. There are three levels of award – Bronze, Silver and Gold. Since its inception in 1985, more than 200,000 Awards have been achieved across all levels and every county in Ireland and, today, near to 25,000 young people participate annually.

Gaisce – the President’s Award was established under the patronage of Uachtarán na hÉireann by trust deed dated 28th March 1985. It was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital on 26 June 1996. It was granted Charitable Status on 30th March 1999. Gaisce came under the aegis of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, now the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, on the establishment of the Department in 2011. As a limited company, Gaisce is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association (a Constitution is pending). Gaisce receives a core grant from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. In 2020, the grant allocation was €720,000. Other sources of income include participant fees and statutory and philanthropic grants. Gaisce employs 17 staff, including the CEO.

2. Functions of the Council

The Articles of Association provide that there shall be 15 members of the Gaisce Council, appointed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Two nominations are received from Uachtarán na hÉireann and a single nomination from An Taoiseach.

The Council is responsible for governance of Gaisce – The President’s Award, setting its strategic direction and overseeing its implementation. A strategic plan for the period 2020-2025 has been approved and will be launched in the near future

The current composition of the Board is:

Name	First Appointed	Expiry Date	Position type	Basis of appointment
Denis Duggan	09/10/2017	09/10/2023	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Emma Farrell	09/10/2017	09/10/2023	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Feargal Hynes	09/10/2017	28/02/2021	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Jimmy McGovern	01/03/2018	28/02/2021	Board Member	Non-Statutory

John Cunningham	01/05/2018	30/04/2024	Chair	Non-Statutory
Justin McAleese	09/11/2015	08/11/2021	Board Member	Nominated by the President
Karen Buckley	09/10/2017	28/02/2021	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Marcella Bannon	01/03/2018	28/02/2024	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Maura Kiely	09/10/2017	28/02/2021	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Miriam Dollard	24/11/2016	03/06/2021	Board Member	Nominated by the Taoiseach
Paul Sweetman	09/10/2017	09/10/2023	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Pauric Dempsey	01/03/2018	28/02/2024	Board Member	Non-Statutory
Philly McMahon	11/04/2019	10/04/2022	Board Member	Nominated by the President
Samantha Briody	08/12/2020	01/03/2024	Board Member	Non-Statutory

Sub-committees are established, when deemed necessary by the Council, to deal with ongoing areas of work or to progress specific pieces of work. The following sub-committees have been established to assist the Board:

- Governance Sub-committee
- Finance and Audit Sub-committee
- HR and Remuneration Sub-committee
- Safeguarding Sub-committee
- Joint Award Initiative / Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award

Membership of sub-committees is comprised of Council members. External committee members may be invited to join based on their particular skills and/or expertise. Each Council Member is expected to sit on at least 1 committee. The committees meet between 2 and 5 times a year.

3. Person Specification

The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth invites applications from suitably qualified candidates with relevant legal expertise for an immediate vacancy arising on the Council.

Given the work of the Council and the aims of Gaisce, applicants who fall under the age of 35 (as per the EU definition of young people) are particularly welcome. It is intended that this campaign increase the diversity of the Council.

Candidates **must** demonstrate in their application evidence of:

- Interest in and experience of, policies and systems which enable and support young people, youth work and active citizenship
- Knowledge of the origins, rationale and role of Gaisce
- Knowledge and experience of the governance of a charity
- The ability to understand financial reports and accounts
- Knowledge and experience of risk management and of the main organisational risks
- Knowledge and experience of the role of a Council member, to act independently, in the best interests of the organisation at all times.

Desirable

- Experience of non-executive board membership
- Experience of chairing committees
- Experience of designing, implementing, operating or auditing Internal Control Framework
- Knowledge of best practice in Corporate Governance

In addition, candidates for the current vacancy **must** demonstrate evidence of **professional legal experience, at an appropriately senior level**, preferably in the Charity Sector and/or in a corporate setting. It is expected that candidates in this area will hold a relevant legal qualification. However, Gaisce may consider applications in some other circumstances, acknowledging that breadth of experience may suffice.

The Minister shall have regard to the desirability for gender balance on the Board as the Minister considers appropriate and determines from time to time when making appointments.

In order to qualify for appointment a person must not have any legal impediment or conflicts of interest likely to interfere with his/her ability to assume the role of a member of the Council. Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may exist and address this in your cover letter. The Assessment Panel may decide, based on the perceived level of conflict, not to forward your name for consideration.

Candidates are suggested to refer to the provisions in relation to the role of a Board member within the Charities Governance Code 2018. Particular attention is drawn to the roles and responsibilities of Board Members under principals 2 and 5, namely 'Behaving with integrity' and 'Working effectively'.

4. Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Council are generally for a period of 3 years from the date of appointment with an option to extend the term of engagement for a second term, subject to:

- The membership of any member of the Board may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister.
- A member of the Board may resign his or her membership of the Board by notice in writing sent or given to the Minister, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Minister receives the notice.
- Members of the Board shall, subject to the provisions of this Schedule, hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, from time to time determine.
- The roles and responsibilities of Board Members are described in the Charities Governance Code
- 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, elected to the European Parliament, or becomes a member of a local authority.

5. Submitting your Expression of Interest

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of the Gaisce Council, you should consider carefully how your background and experience fits with the specific appointment criteria set out in the Person Specification section in this booklet.

Interested persons should submit

- a Curriculum Vitae
- a cover letter (to include the reasons for seeking a position on the Gaisce council)

Expressions of interest may be submitted via email to youthaffairs@equality.gov.ie

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your expression of interest. As the Assessment Panel will generally make its recommendation(s) based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you do the following:

1. *Ensure your Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Gaisce position specified in this booklet, and*
2. *That you fully answer any supplementary questions which are presented to you as part of our online application process.*

6. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel (the “Panel”) will be convened by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth 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
 - meeting/conference call; and/or
 - referee checks; and/or
 - any other selection or verification method deemed appropriate.
- arrive at a shortlist of the most suitably qualified candidates (based on the information provided by the candidate) to be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

7. Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, 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 items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from 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, your CV and cover letter (and any additional supplementary information requested as part of the application process) will be held by Gaisce. Gaisce 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.