



**An Roinn Caiteachais  
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe**  
Department of Public  
Expenditure and Reform

**Appointment to the Major Projects Advisory Group**

**Closing Date: 15.00 on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2021**



**Project Ireland 2040**  
Building Ireland's Future

**Entity:** Major Projects Advisory Group.

**Meeting Location:** Meetings will be primarily held in Dublin. Meetings will be held on virtual meeting platforms such as WebEx or Skype for Business as required by public health advice.

**Number of Vacancies:** Three to Four Members.

**Remuneration:** See Section 4.

**Time Requirements:** It is anticipated that the Group will be convened up to eight times a year. Members will be remunerated at the rate of one day per meeting plus one day's preparation time for each meeting.

## 1. Background

Investment by public bodies as part of Project Ireland 2040 must comply with the requirements and guidance on capital project appraisal as set out in the Public Spending Code (PSC) *A Guide to Evaluating, Planning & Managing Public Investment December 2019* which is available here - <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/public-spending-code/>

The PSC is designed to ensure that the State gets the best possible value in the achievement of critical policy goals. The requirements of the PSC are based on employing good practices at all stages in the expenditure lifecycle.

The PSC is regularly updated to reflect lessons learned and developments in international best practice to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Given the increase in capital expenditure, the National Investment Office (NIO) in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) updated the capital requirements of the Public Spending Code in 2019, following an extensive consultation process. This update has strengthened the requirements and guidance to better align with the realities of project delivery and with a particular focus on improved appraisal, cost estimation and management.

The update of the PSC highlighted the need for more structured scrutiny of major public investment proposals. Major public expenditure proposals are those estimated to cost in excess of €100 million. There are at least 50 such proposals in the Exchequer funded element of the National Development Plan, many of which are bespoke and high profile. Cost overruns and/or delays on these can have a significant knock on impact on the rest of the capital programme.

The domestic and international evidence shows that the better the analysis of cost and risk at the upfront stage the more considered decisions on projects and better outcomes. Trying to rescue a project during construction is difficult and costly, where even possible. Systems to anticipate risks at the outset are much more efficient. External reviews from an independent party can be instrumental to enable good project and investment governance.

The assurance process for major public investment proposals should ensure that Government has the fullest information possible on costs, risks, governance and delivery feasibility before a decision is taken. The NIO has conducted detailed work to determine what elements of the existing assurance process should be retained and which elements need to be strengthened to support decision making on and better delivery of major public investment proposals. This has included an assessment of international approaches, engagement with major project delivery practitioners, and is supported by a working group of key public service stakeholders.

Two new elements will be introduced to strengthen the assurance process for major public investment projects, as part of the current review of the National Development Plan due to be published shortly:

- an external assurance element consisting of independent external reviews at two key stages in the project lifecycle (before approval in principle and pre-tender); and
- the creation of a Major Projects Advisory Group to support DPER's scrutiny and challenge role.

## **2. The Major Projects Advisory Group**

DPER currently conducts a scrutiny and challenge role on major public investment proposals in advance of the Government's consideration of such projects. This takes the form of technical reviews of the business cases for such proposals having regard to the requirements and guidance in the Public Spending Code. These reviews focus particularly on the proposal's strategic alignment with core Government policies and the quality and rigour of the economic appraisal having regard to methodological norms.

The purpose of the Major Projects Advisory Group is to support DPER's challenge role and advise the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (MPER) in advance of Government consideration of major public investment proposals in particular in relation to costs, scheduling and consideration of risk.

It will be supported by a Secretariat supplied by DPER's NIO.

The Group will consider the major public investment proposals which are intended to be brought to Government, the analysis supporting them, and the results of the independent external reviews. The outcome of that consideration will be captured by the Group's Secretariat and will inform the advice to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

These considerations will also support DPER's role in quality assuring the outputs of the new external assurance element of the assurance process for major public investment projects. The Group will also be called upon from time-to-time to advise on future reforms to the Public Spending Code.

The Group will consist of:

- the Head of the National Investment Office in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform;
- 3-4 experts in major public project delivery in Ireland; and
- experts from the National Development Finance Agency.

The Group will be established in Quarter 3 2021 and will meet primarily in Dublin, or through online platforms if required by public health guidance.

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform is seeking expressions of interest for three to four members to form the Major Projects Advisory Group.

### **3. Person Specification**

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform invites applications from suitably qualified candidates for membership of the Major Projects Advisory Group.

Persons expressing an interest in these roles must have extensive and relevant experience at senior levels in planning, managing, and/or delivering major public investment projects.

They must have familiarity with one or more of the following sectors – national roads, public transport including buses and light rail, water and wastewater, new and replacement hospital infrastructure, higher education, flooding, housing, historic properties, and regeneration.

They must have knowledge, expertise and experience relevant to public investment projects in:

- Project Development; OR
- Project, Programme and Portfolio Management; OR
- Stakeholder Management; OR
- Benefits and Cost Management; OR
- Procurement policy, strategies and process; OR
- Risk assessment and management.

The Minister shall have regard to the desirability for gender balance on the Group 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 conflicts of interest likely to interfere with their ability to assume the role of member of the Group. Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may exist and address this in your cover letter.

### **4. Terms of Appointment**

- Appointments to the Group will be for an initial period of 2 years with an option to extend the term of engagement at the Minister's discretion.
- The membership of any member of the Group may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister.
- A member of the Group may resign their membership of the Group 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 Group shall hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Minister may, from time to time determine.
- A Group member shall avoid any conflict of interest between the Group member's duties to the Major Projects Advisory Group and the Group member's other interests.
- A Group member shall cease to be a member of the Group if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas, elected to the European Parliament, or becomes a member of a local authority.

- The Group will convene to consider public investment proposals before they are brought to Government for approval. It is anticipated that each Group member will have three to five working days to consider the background material, receive a presentation on, and give consideration as part of the Group to each proposal in light of their expertise in major project development and delivery. It is anticipated that the Group may need to convene circa eight times per annum.
- The daily rates are those as set out by DPER on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 for service on interview boards namely:
  - €377 for the first 60 days and €188.50 thereafter (in one calendar year)<sup>1</sup>
  - Members will be remunerated at the rate of one day per meeting plus one day's preparation time.

## 5. Submitting your expression of interest

Your submission should be made by email to [nio@per.gov.ie](mailto:nio@per.gov.ie) together with your **Curriculum Vitae** and a **cover letter** (of not more than two pages) outlining, with reference to criteria at 3 above, the specific expertise you would bring to the role of a member.

### 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 ensure your Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Group position(s) specified in this booklet. This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your candidature and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to the Major Projects Advisory Group.

Applications received after the deadline specified in this booklet will not be considered.

## 6. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel will be convened by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform to consider and assess the expressions of interest. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role;
- assess potential appointees 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
  - Any other selection method deemed appropriate.
- compile a list of people deemed suitable for appointment which will then be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

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<sup>1</sup> It is envisaged that the Group will meet circa eight times per annum.

Any questions regarding the application process can be sent via email to [nio@per.gov.ie](mailto:nio@per.gov.ie).

## **7. Data Protection & GDPR**

A privacy notice for applicants for the Open Data Governance Board is included at Appendix 1.

### **Privacy Notice for Applicants for the Major Projects Advisory Group**

This applicant Privacy Notice has been produced for applicants applying for a position as a member of the Major Projects Advisory Group. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is the Data Controller.

### **Personal Data**

The National Investment Office in the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform will process any personal data provided by you in connection with an application for membership of the Major Projects Advisory Group in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Acts 2018.

When applying for a position as a member of the Major Projects Advisory Group, applicants are asked to submit a number of documents, e.g. contact information such as email, name, address, phone number; their curriculum vitae; a covering letter.

### **Lawful Basis for Processing Personal Data**

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is responsible for setting the requirements and guidance for public bodies to secure value for money in the expenditure of public funds. The Department has identified the need to strengthen the existing assurance process for major public investment projects in excess of €100m to support Government in its decision making. The Major Projects Advisory Group is a key component of that strengthened assurance process. In this context, the legal basis for processing applicants' personal data is Article 6(1)e of the GDPR: it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority.

### **Recipients of Personal Data**

The National Investment Office in the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform stores the data that you provide and corresponds with you as an applicant. The National Investment Office Unit may share the data that you provide on the application form to external sources where there is an external assessor assisting in the assessment process as set out in Section 6 of this Information booklet. When the assessment process is complete, the external assessor will return the information provided to them to the National Investment Office. All data will be treated in confidence and all appropriate security measures will be applied. Your application data may also be used for statistical analysis and research. For this purpose measures such as data aggregation or anonymization will be applied to any personal data.

### **Applicant data rights**

You have rights under data protection law in relation to how we use your personal information. You have the right, free of charge, to:

- Request access to or a copy of the personal data held about you. This can be done by contacting the Department at the contact details below and completing a Subject Access Request Form.
- Rectify any inaccurate personal data held about you.
- Restrict processing of your personal data in certain circumstances.
- Request the erasure of personal data in certain circumstances.
- Object to the processing of personal data in certain circumstances.
- Not be subject to a decision which is based solely on automated processing where that decision produces a legal effect on you or otherwise significantly affects you. Your personal data submitted as part of this process will not be the subject of automated decisions of this nature.

**Data Storage and Retention**

The personal data submitted as part of the application process will be retained in accordance with our obligations under the National Archives Act, 1986.

**Contact Details**

You can contact the Department's Data Protection Officer by Email at: [dataprotection@per.gov.ie](mailto:dataprotection@per.gov.ie) or by post at: Data Protection Officer, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform, Upper Merrion Street, Dublin 2.

If you wish to make a complaint about the use of your personal data you can contact the Data Protection Commission (DPC). Further details are available at [www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie)