



Appointment of Chairperson and STEM member of The Irish Research Council

Closing Date: 15:00 on Friday 4th February 2022

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
Chapter House, 26 – 30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1**

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stateboards.ie operates under the auspices of the Public Appointments Service and is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS), established under statute in 2004, provides an independent shared service in recruitment, assessment and selection to organisations across the Civil and Public Services. PAS also has responsibility for providing an open, accessible, rigorous and transparent system to support Ministers in making appointments to State Boards. Our dedicated website, www.stateboards.ie, is the channel through which the PAS advertises vacancies on State Boards. It is also the means through which accomplished, experienced and qualified people, including people who might not previously have been identified as available for appointment, can then apply to be considered for particular vacancies.

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. Members of State Boards, and the relevant management team, are accountable for the proper management of the organisation.

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.

Appointments to The Irish Research Council

Location:	Dublin, with a number of meetings each year taking place in Higher Education Institutions. Meetings held remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Number of Vacancies:	1 Chairperson and 1 STEM Ordinary member
Remuneration:	No fees payable. Travel and subsistence is payable at appropriate civil service rates.
Time Requirements:	6 meetings per annum, typically half-a-day each. Minimum 100 hours preparation time required, excluding possible travel time.

Candidates' attention is also drawn to the provisions of the Code in relation to Audit and Risk Committee membership which can be found [here](#).

1. Background

The Irish Research Council (IRC) is a non-statutory body and operates as a sub-board of the Higher Education Authority (HEA). While established as a sub-board of the HEA, the Council is independent in its funding decisions and day-to-day activities, but operates within the agreed policy framework of the HEA and the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DHFERIS). All expenditure is subject to the standard operating procedures of the HEA.

The mission of the IRC is to enable and sustain a vibrant research community in Ireland. The Council supports excellent researchers in all disciplines from Arts to Zoology. As an agency of DFHERIS, the Council funds excellent research from early career through to advanced career stage. Diverse career opportunities are enabled through a suite of programmes, including those which partner with employers. Another key area of activity for the Council is the funding of research projects with a societal focus. The Council has established partnerships across government and civic society.

The Council represents Ireland in particular dimensions of Horizon Europe (H.Europe) and, by providing supports for H.Europe applicants, enhances opportunities for the Irish research community. The Council has a comprehensive programme for development over the coming years. This is aimed at further enhancing the infrastructure underpinning the professional development of the next generation of Ireland's top researchers, whilst also strengthening and expanding the Council's partnerships, nationally and internationally.

The Council's Strategic Plan 2020-2024 is available [here](#).

2. Functions of the Board

The Council's functions include:

- Funding excellent independent research within, and between, all disciplines covering the full range spanning the humanities, social sciences, business, law, sciences, engineering and technology. In doing so it enhances Ireland's international reputation as a centre for research and learning.

- Supporting human capital development, and in a particular the education and skills of excellent individual early stage researchers and the cultivation of independent researchers and thinkers, whilst offering a range of opportunities which support diverse career paths.
- Enriching the pool of knowledge and expertise available and accessible for addressing Ireland's current and future needs, whether societal, cultural or economic by supporting excellent research and researchers. In delivering on this role, the Council partners with national and international bodies, and in particular with government departments, agencies, civic society and enterprise.
- Providing policy advice on graduate education and research nationally and internationally, with particular attention be given to the arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS).
- Approving the Council's annual work programme, its award schemes and their terms and conditions.

Board members must be willing to, if required, conduct representational/expert roles on behalf of the IRC nationally or internationally.

The Council is supported by an Executive staff who provide the day-to-day operational capacity for the work of the Council.

Current composition of the Board:

Name	First Appointed	Reappointed	Expiry Date	Position type	Basis of appointment
Catherine Godson (Prof.)	13/11/2019		13/11/2022	Ordinary Member	PAS Process
Daniel Carey (Prof.)	01/09/2016	08/09/2019	31/08/2022	Ordinary Member	PAS process
Kiernan Conboy (Prof.)	01/09/2016	08/09/2019	31/08/2022	Ordinary Member	PAS process
Liam Barry (Prof.)	13/11/2019		13/11/2022	Ordinary Member	PAS Process
Orla Muldoon (Prof.)	15/11/2020		14/11/2023	Ordinary Member	PAS Process
Patricia M. Kearney (Prof)	13/11/2019		13/11/2022	Ordinary Member	PAS Process
Peter Brown				ex-officio	Director of IRC
Turlough Downes (Prof.)	15/11/2020		14/11/2023	Ordinary Member	PAS Process
Claire Connolly (Prof.)	8/10/2021		8/10/2024	Ordinary member	PAS Process
Colin Scott (Prof.)	8/10/2021		8/10/2024	Ordinary member	PAS Process

3. Person Specification

The Minister for DFHERIS invites applications to fill one Chairperson and one Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Ordinary Member position on the IRC.

Chairperson Position:

Candidate's attention is drawn to the general details of the role of Chairperson as set out on page 19 of the Code which can be found [here](#). The Principle states:

- The Chairperson is responsible for leadership of the Board and ensuring its effectiveness on all aspects of its role.
- The Chairperson should display high standards of integrity and probity and set expectations regarding culture, values, and behaviours for the State body and for the tone of discussions at Board level.

The Chairperson will:

- Engage effectively with a range of stakeholders, including Minister(s), senior departmental and agency officials, senior representatives of international bodies and funding agencies, and researchers of varying disciplines and career stages.
- Be a strategic thinker and possess the ability to both influence the development of policy and operate within the current policy framework.

Essential Criteria:

Candidates must demonstrate evidence of experience at an appropriately senior level in the following:

- A high profile and strong reputation in international research demonstrated by extensive experience at a senior level in undertaking and/or directing research and previous engagement with research policy or strategy development in an institutional, national or international context.
- Experience in a leadership role in your career to date, preferably in an institutional context.

STEM Ordinary Member Position:

Applications are invited from applicants from the STEM Community who possess a demonstrable interest in the work of the IRC.

Essential Criteria:

Candidates must demonstrate evidence of experience at an appropriately senior level in a large complex organisation of the following:

- A track record in winning competitive research funding nationally and/or internationally reflecting the stage of their career, or the attainment of awards reflecting their achievements.
- Experience supervising PhD students and ideally also in mentoring post doc fellows.
- Experience co-ordinating funded research projects.

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience of engagement with enterprise, government and/or social and

- cultural organisations.
- Previous experience as a member of a Board.

The Minister encourages applications from diverse, qualified candidates to ensure the Board is a true reflection of Irish society and shall have regard to the desirability for gender balance, diversity and inclusion on the Board as the Minister considers appropriate and determines from time to time when making appointments, in line with the updated Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016.

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 Board. 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.

Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Board will be for a 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 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 Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 which is available here [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#).
- 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.

4. Submitting your Application

Before submitting your application, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found [here](#). This questionnaire is designed to help you in considering whether to submit an application - you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the application process.

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of a State Board, 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.

Your submission should be made via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with your **Curriculum Vitae** and a **cover letter** (see Appendix 1 of this booklet for help with the online process).

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 Authority position(s) 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.*

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 this State Board. **Please only include information that is directly relevant to the particular role for which you are applying.**

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email info@stateboards.ie.

5. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel (the "Panel") will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the applications received by PAS. 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 (this may include PAS requiring statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants as to the bona fides of the qualifications and experience contained in their applications).
- 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.

Please note that the Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by candidates as part of our selection process.

6. Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 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.

7. Data Protection

The Data Protection Act 2018 provides that the processing of personal data shall be lawful where such processing is necessary for the performance of a statutory function of a controller.

PAS is mandated by statute under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004 to act as the centralised assessment and selection body for the civil service and to carry out all the procedures necessary to undertake the recruitment, assessment and selection of suitable candidates for appointment. By submitting your personal data (including your name, address, contact details and details of your education and work history contained in your curriculum vitae and cover letter) via publicjobs.ie, you acknowledge that such data may be used by the Public Appointments Service and disclosed to and used by client departments, in connection with its statutory roles to assist and advise relevant Ministers in relation to appointments to the boards of State bodies. The information contained in your publicjobs profile is yours to manage, amend, update or delete as appropriate. For more detailed information on our Data Protection Policy, please see our [Code of Practice for the Protection of Personal Data in the Public Appointments Service](#).

If your application is assessed and you are considered to be suitable for appointment your c.v. and cover letter (and any additional supplementary information requested as part of the application process), will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the relevant Department. Once it obtains your personal data, the Department will act as data controller of such data and will retain it for up to one year following the appointment/s. Unless you request the 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.

If your application is assessed and you are considered to be suitable for appointment your c.v. and cover letter (and any additional supplementary information requested as part of the application process), will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the DFHERIS. Once it obtains your personal data, the Department will act as data controller of such data and will retain it for up to one year following the appointment/s. For more detailed information on the DFHERIS's Data Protection Privacy Notice, please see the following link [here](#). Unless you request the 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.

APPENDIX 1

Submitting your application:

In order to submit your application, you should take the following steps:

1. Go to www.stateboards.ie.
2. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
3. This brings you to a page with all our advertised vacancies. Select whichever position you would like to apply for (you are welcome to apply for more than one position if you wish).
4. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
5. This will bring you to a page on www.publicjobs.ie and, if you already have a publicjobs.ie account, will prompt you for your username and password. If you do not have an account you will be asked to create one.
6. Once you input your details you will be brought to a page where there is a prompt in the middle of the page which says "apply here". Click on the link to the online application form beside it.
7. A form will appear on your screen, some of the text boxes will be populated with information from your publicjobs.ie profile (Name, address etc.). You will need to complete the rest of the fields and enter your name and the date at the bottom of the form. Click on "continue".
8. You will then be brought to a screen where you should upload your CV and Cover Letter. These are required documents and your application cannot be processed without them. Once you have selected these and uploaded them, please click on the "submit" button at the bottom of the page.
9. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.

You must confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part on the Board. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Board member.