

Appointment to the Board of the Western Development Commission

Closing Date: 15:00 on 26th April 2017

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

Telephone Number: 353 1 858 7441

Email: info@stateboards.ie

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. On 30 September 2014, the Government decided that the PAS should also be given responsibility for putting in place 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](#) 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 Board of the Western Development Commission

Location:	Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon
Number of Vacancies:	1 Chairperson 8 Ordinary Board Members
Remuneration:	Chair €8,978 Member €5,985 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. Travel and subsistence is paid at appropriate Civil Service Rates
Time Requirements:	10 half-day afternoon meetings with further time required for preparatory work. Some members may be required to set aside time to sit on the Audit sub-committee and the Fund Advisory Panel that meet the same morning as the Board.

Candidate's 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 Western Development Commission (WDC) was established in 1997 as a Government response to the severe population decline of the Western Region and put on a statutory basis in 1999 by the [Western Development Commission Act 1998](#).

The aim of the Western Development Commission (WDC) is to promote, foster and encourage economic and social development in the Western Region, which covers counties Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway and Clare.

The WDC continues its work in respect of its five strategic goals, which currently are:

- Contribute to balanced regional development by ensuring that the Western Region maximises its full potential for economic and social development;
- Promote the benefits of living, working and doing business in the Western Region;
- Support the sustainable economic and social development of the rural economy;
- Provide risk capital to SME's and social enterprises; and
- Operate the WDC as a competent and effective organisation.

The WDC engages with other statutory and non-statutory bodies in implementing regional objectives for the west.

The WDC operates the Western Investment Fund (WIF). The WIF is an integral element of the WDC's strategy for accelerating the economic and social development of the Western

Region. It provides risk capital, by way of loans and equity (but not grant aid which is prohibited under the Act), through its Business Investment Fund for knowledge-based high potential SMEs, and its Local Investment Fund which supports community-based and not-for-profit enterprises.

The WDC also operate the LookWest.ie website which is an online guide to business, jobs and life in the West of Ireland

2. Functions of the Board

The general functions of the WDC Board are:

- to promote, foster and encourage economic and social development in the Western Region.
- to provide assistance in such form as it considers appropriate for business and social enterprises and projects in the Western Region.
- to promote, foster and encourage the provision, maintenance and, if appropriate, the enlargement of, such infrastructural projects, both local and regional, as it considers necessary or expedient for the purposes of economic and social development in the Western Region,
- to consult with such Ministers of the Government as it considers appropriate, and to consult with a Minister of the Government whenever so requested by him or her, in relation to any of its functions in so far as they relate to the Western Region or the functions of the Commission,
- to consult and, where appropriate, co-operate with bodies and persons carrying on or promoting business or social enterprises or projects in the Western Region for the purpose of encouraging and fostering the creation of conditions conducive to private investment in, or the lending of money for the purposes of, business and social development in the Western Region.

An audit sub-committee reports to the Board. Some members of the board also sit on the Fund Advisory panel. This panel provides advice on applications for funding from the WIF before they are presented to the Board.

The Minister has determined that the Board shall consist of the following members: a chairperson and 8 ordinary members. The chairperson and the ordinary members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

The chairperson of the Commission shall hold office for a period of 3 years from the date of his or her appointment. An ordinary member of the Commission shall hold office for a period of 3 years from the date of his or her appointment.

Government policy provides for a minimum 40% of each gender.

The current Board is comprised as follows:

Name	First Appointed	Reappointed	Expiry Date	Position type
Ann Higgins (Dr.)	21/02/2014		20/02/2017	Board Member
Deirdre Garvey (Dr.)	21/02/2014		20/02/2017	Board Member
Eugene Lavin	23/06/2014		22/06/2017	Board Member
Gerald Mullaney	23/06/2014		22/06/2017	Board Member
Katie Sweeney (Dr.)	15/02/2005	21/02/2014	20/02/2017	Board Member
Michael Frain	21/02/2014		20/02/2017	Board Member
Paddy McGuinness	10/12/2012	21/10/2014	20/02/2017	Chair

3. Person Specification

The term of office for the current members of the Board of the Western Development Commission is due to expire on 20th February 2017. Under Section 9 of the Western Development Commission Act 1998, a new Board consisting of a Chairperson and 8 ordinary members has to be appointed from 21st February 2017. The chairperson and the ordinary members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

The Minister of State for Regional Economic Development in the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs is seeking to appoint 9 suitably qualified candidates to sit on the board of the Western Development Commission. In order to ensure a mix of complementary skills and experience the Minister may choose to appoint from any or all of the profiles listed. The Minister welcomes applications representative of the diversity of the Irish population, particularly reflecting gender, geography and culture.

Chairperson Role

The Minister also intends to appoint, from among the ordinary members, a Chairperson of the Board. Applicants are invited to express an interest in this specific role and detail in their covering letter the skills, knowledge and experience they would bring to the role of Chairperson.

Candidates' attention is drawn to the general details of the role of Chairperson as set out on page 18 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.

In addition to meeting the requirements for selection as an ordinary member of the Board under one or more of the profiles below, candidates for the position of Chair should have

- Previous experience of Board membership
- An understanding of the main issues facing the Western Development Commission and the context under which it operates demonstrated by senior-level professional experience in economic, cultural and social development in sectors such as agriculture, tourism, industry, creative industries, marine, renewable energy and technology.
- A focus on regional promotion and engagement with the western diaspora is also desirable.

Ordinary Member Roles

The Board members should collectively have a mix of expertise, experience and skills which will enable them to implement the objectives of the WDC effectively and ensure good corporate governance of the body.

Candidate's attention is drawn to the provisions of the Code in relation to the role of a Board member, where the principle states:-

- Each State body should be headed by an effective Board which is collectively responsible for the long-term sustainability of the body.
- Non-executive Board members should bring an independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance resources, key appointments and standard of conduct.

Details on the role of Board Members can be found in Section 3 of the Code which can be found [here](#).

Candidates should therefore demonstrate experience under at least one of the following headings:

1. Corporate Governance and Compliance

Candidates must demonstrate relevant experience, at an appropriately senior level, that clearly demonstrates knowledge of, and experience in dealing with corporate governance issues.

2. Financial Expertise (Accountancy, Audit, Corporate Finance)

Candidates must demonstrate proven experience at a sufficiently senior level in finance and risk management. Experience on an audit committee would also be desirable, though not essential.

3. HR (Pensions, IR, Organisational Development)

Candidates must demonstrate suitable experience, at an appropriately senior level, in HR/Pensions/IR/Organisational development.

4. Legal Experience

Candidates must demonstrate recognised experience at senior management level that clearly demonstrates knowledge and experience of legal and regulatory affairs relevant to the work of the WDC.

5. Communications, Marketing and Media/PR

Candidates must demonstrate relevant experience in Communications, Marketing and PR at a sufficiently senior level to utilise that experience in the development of the WDC.

6. Community Engagement

Candidates must be active in the community or voluntary sector with experience in community engagement at local level and/or voluntary experience in the relevant community.

Desirable Criteria for all roles:

Sectoral Knowledge/Experience

Candidates should have experience in policy issues concerning the social and economic situation in the Western Region in sectors such as agriculture, tourism, industry, creative industries, marine, renewable energy and technology. Experience in Enterprise Development would also be desirable.

4. Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Board will be for an initial period of 3 years, subject to:

- The membership of any member of the Board may be terminated by the Minister 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 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 Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 which is available on the website of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform [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.

5. 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 expression of interest - 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. Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may arise if appointed to this board.

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 application. 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 Board 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.

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

6. 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
 - Meeting¹/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 suitable candidates to be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

7. 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.

8. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

Should your name be forwarded to a Minister for consideration, please note that your cover letter and curriculum vitae will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the relevant department and may be retained for up to one year.

For further information on Data Protection please follow the [link](#)

¹The Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

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.