



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Expressions of Interest in Membership of the Board of Pobal

Closing Date: 3pm on Friday 9th October 2020

Expressions of Interest in Membership of the Board of Pobal

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) is inviting expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced potential Board members for two vacancies that have arisen on the Board of Pobal and any such vacancies that may arise within the following one year period.

Interested parties should have significant professional experience in community development with a substantive knowledge and understanding of the community and voluntary sector. Some strategic and corporate knowledge of Pobal is also desirable.

Shortlisting of potential Board members will be on the basis of the written expressions of interest received. Appointments shall be made from this shortlist by the Government of Ireland, based on recommendations by the Minister for Rural and Community Development.

Submissions should be made by emailing a current curriculum vitae, along with a cover letter outlining the specific expertise they would bring to the role of Member, to pobalboard@drcd.gov.ie. Closing date is 3pm Friday 9th October, 2020.

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; and be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

Appointments to the Board of Pobal

Location:	Ormond Quay, Dublin (One meeting per annum held outside Dublin)
Number of Vacancies:	Two
Remuneration:	Nil. Travel and subsistence is payable at appropriate Civil Service rates.
Time Requirements:	9 – 10 half day meetings per annum. There are also a number of sub-committee meetings. Members may be required to sit on sub-committees, which generally meet on the same day as Ordinary meetings. The Sub-committees are: Human Resources, Audit Finance and Risk, Grant Appraisals, Appeals, Leadership Review, the Affordable Childcare Scheme and the Strategic Plan.

1. Background

Pobal (formerly Area Development Management Ltd.) was established by the Government in 1992. It was reconstituted as Pobal in 2005 under the oversight of the then Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Pobal was established to administer EU funding for the purposes of fostering local development, promoting social inclusion, reconciliation and equality and countering disadvantage through local and social economic development. It is a company limited by guarantee and without share capital; it is also a registered charity.

The policy context for Pobal's work is provided by the Programme for Government; Government Action Plans for Jobs and Rural Development, The Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland, Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 – 2024, Better Outcomes Bright Futures 2014 – 2020, First Five, Putting People First and EU Recovery Plan, Project Ireland 2040, Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities and the National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland.

The Company is subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General and its operations are covered by the Freedom of Information and Ethics in Public Offices Acts.

Pobal operates under the aegis of the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) which has an oversight and co-ordination role in respect of the company. Pobal employs approximately 517 people and currently manages the administration of schemes and programmes on behalf of a range of Government Departments and other public bodies. Pobal distributed over 743 million euros to beneficiaries in 2019. Working in partnership with a wide range of local groups, Pobal supports projects in thousands of communities, both urban and rural.

Further detail on all of the programmes which Pobal administer may be found [here](#).

Economic, demographic and administrative changes to the context of Pobal's service delivery provide a range of challenges in the coming years. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the social and economic well-being of the nation, resulting in loss of life, an unprecedented increase in unemployment, reduced and unequal access to education, as yet

unknown mental health consequences and numerous impacts on other essential services. While all members of Irish society have been adversely affected by COVID-19, evidence increasingly shows that marginalised and disadvantaged individuals and communities are disproportionately vulnerable to both the direct and indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The emphasis of much of Pobal's local work will change in future years from assisting government in combatting the current impact of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis to supporting longer term, sustainable development. As the company systems and information technology have provided it with strong data sets, Pobal is moving to higher quality and more effective data analysis to assist government in its planning. As government and EU policy on financial management, grant administration and service commissioning develop, Pobal needs to continuously adapt its approaches to ensure optimal services. As Ireland's population changes, Pobal needs to continuously improve its understanding of local needs and its methods to target them.

Pobal's current Annual Report can be viewed [here](#).

Functions of the Board

Members of the Board of Pobal (it is a 16 member board) are appointed by Government from nominations provided by the social partners and other stakeholders, in addition to expressions of interest received from the general public. It is the responsibility of the Minister for Rural and Community Development to bring the nominations to Government.

The Board has a responsibility to see that procedures are in place to ensure statutory responsibilities are met, an effective corporate compliance programme has been established and corporate documents and records are properly prepared, approved and maintained.

Directors will comply with the codified duties of directors and provisions are per the Companies Act 2014:

Matters reserved for the Board include the following: -

- Approval of the company's strategy, business plan and budget;
- Approval of annual accounts and report;
- Ensurance of maintenance of a sound system of internal controls – including financial, operational and compliance controls, and risk management processes – with appropriate reference to the company's Code of Corporate Governance and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies;
- Approval of any decision to commence new business and any decision to cease to operate any material part of the company's business;
- Approval of transactions (or related programmes of transactions) not in the ordinary course of business;
- Approval of all property leases of whatever value;
- Appointment of the members of sub-committees;
- Approval of the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") and the Executive Management Team ("EMT");
- Approval of delegation of authority to board sub-committees and EMT to exercise functions of the company;
- Approval of terms of reference of the board sub-committees and EMT; and
- Approval of application and funding recommendations.

The current composition of the Board can be viewed [here](#).

2. Person Specification

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](#).

Required Experience

The Minister for Rural and Community Development invites expressions of interest from members of the public with significant expertise, which should be evidenced in their application, as follows:

- Professional experience in community development in a rural or urban context;
- Experience at an appropriately senior level role which directs and contributes to organisational and strategic development;
- A substantive knowledge and understanding of the community and voluntary sector; and
- Experience which would demonstrate implementation of successful change management initiatives.

Desirable:

- Previous board membership;
- Corporate governance experience and/or qualifications;
- Risk management expertise;
- Experience in delivering on sustainable development initiatives;
- Experiencing in delivering on climate action and environmental improvement initiatives;
- Experience which would demonstrate relevant knowledge of the Local Authority sector/Local and Community Development Sector; and
- Strategic and corporate knowledge of Pobal

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.

3. Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Board will be for an initial period of **four** years. At each AGM one-quarter of the directors shall be required to retire.

The directors to retire in every year shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment and as between persons who become directors on the same day, those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree amongst themselves) be determined by lot.

Retiring directors shall be eligible for re-nomination and appointment. No Director shall be entitled to serve on the board of Directors for more than two consecutive terms, 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 2009 which is available on the website of the Department of Finance [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, or becomes a member of a local authority.

4. Submitting your Application

Before submitting your expression of interest, 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 – it is not part of the application process and you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the 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 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.

Your submission should be made via email to pobalboard@drcd.gov.ie together with your **Curriculum Vitae** and a **cover letter**. An acknowledgement of receipt of your submission will be issued.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your expression of interest. As the Assessment Panel will 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 Board 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 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 pobalboard@drcd.gov.ie

5. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel (the “Panel”) will be convened by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) to consider and assess the applications received. The Panel will be chaired by an independent person and typically consists of members from DRCD, Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Pobal.

The Panel:

- will consider the expressions of interest submitted to pobalboard@drcd.gov.ie against the specific appointment criteria for the role, as advertised in this Information Booklet. A pre-assessment process may apply depending on the number of applications received;
- may seek advice from a person with expertise particularly relevant to a competency sought as part of its consideration.
- will select suitable potential Board members for a shortlist of qualified applicants to be put to the Minister.

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.

7. Data Protection Act 2018

Once an application is submitted, the Department will act as data controller of such data as is submitted in connection with the application 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.

The Department’s Privacy Notice and other information are available [here](#).