



An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta
Department of Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science

Expressions of interest sought for Governing Body members (including Chairperson) of the new technological university in the West and North West

1. Positions Available

The Minister of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified candidates for consideration for nomination as **Chairperson** and/or ordinary members as **Ministerial appointees** to the first governing body of the new technological university (TU) being established in the West and North West region upon dissolution of the Galway-Mayo, Sligo and Letterkenny Institutes of Technology. The new TU is anticipated to be established in late Quarter 1 or early Quarter 2 of 2022 subject to relevant legislative processes being completed.

2. About the new Technological University in the West and North West region

On 21 May 2021, the partner institutions that are merging to form the new TU, comprised of the Galway-Mayo, Sligo and Letterkenny Institutes of Technology submitted an application to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science under section 29 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 seeking an order to dissolve the three IoTs and to establish in their place a technological university to serve the entire West and North West region.

Following advice from an international expert advisory panel and the Higher Education Authority (HEA), on 28 October 2021 the Minister approved the partner institutions' application.

Subject to the making of a Ministerial order appointing the date of establishment of the new TU and the name of the university in the English and Irish languages and the approval of that order by both Houses of the Oireachtas, it is anticipated that the new TU will become established towards the end of Quarter 1 or early Quarter 2 of 2022.

The applicant institutes are to be tasked with identifying a suitable candidate whom the Minister may designate as the first president of the new TU for subsequent appointment by the first governing body of the university.

Providing higher educational programmes across all levels of the National Framework of Qualifications from apprenticeships to doctoral level qualifications, the new TU will play a pivotal role in the strategic development of the West and North West and in so doing, would ensure a global outlook and a civic centric value system.

Priority actions for the new TU include:-

- Increasing access and diversification of the student population.
- Delivering digital capacity plans to enhance the student experience.
- Enhancing teaching and learning of technical and professional skills that reflect the needs of industry and ensure student success.
- Enhancing stakeholder engagement and increasing impact in the region.
- Increasing Research ... (RDI) capacity in areas that have a clear economic and social impact.
- Excellence in all areas of operation and governance.

The new TU aims to ensure growth in education provision and enhanced research opportunities, as well as dynamic community and industry engagement across the region. Through its support for industry and communities, the new TU would make its region more attractive for indigenous Small Medium Enterprises (SME) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) investment by linking to opportunities in knowledge creation and innovation. This in turn would contribute to the development of viable and vibrant communities that can offer an economically and socially desirable regional counterbalance to the development of Dublin. The new TU in the West and North West presents an opportunity to enhance, accelerate and amplify the ambition to contribute to the sustainable development of the region it serves reflected through teaching and learning excellence, research, development, innovation and engagement activities including in a cross-border collaborative context.

A unique characteristic of the region is its proximity to Northern Ireland. Cross-border economic activity plays a large role in driving growth within this region and it is estimated that approximately 15,000 people cross the border for work or study each day.

A significant history of cross-border collaboration exists among the partner institutions that are merging to form the new TU. The National Development Plan recognises Derry, Letterkenny and Strabane as the North West City Region. The North West Region of the island

of Ireland, centred on Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council, is the fourth largest urban agglomeration on the island of Ireland. It is the only functional economic region of such scale on the island which experiences a national jurisdictional border.

The new TU will continue engagement cross-border as it is strategically important in relation to both the development of the TU and the wider cross-border region.

3. Legislative/Governance Provision for Technological Universities

3.1 Application for TU Designation Legislation:

The application for TU designation was submitted under section 29 of the Technological Universities Act 2018. The Minister has designated the new institution under section 34 of the Act and Department officials are preparing an order establishing the TU under section 36 of the Act.

Relevant legislative provisions can be found at the link below:-

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/3/enacted/en/print#part2-chap9>

3.2 Governing Body Legislation

Governing bodies of higher education institutions, such as Technological Universities, have statutory roles and the institutions which they govern have high levels of autonomy which makes the role of the Governing Body even more important in terms of governance and accountability.

The following legislative provisions apply to the appointment of ordinary members to Governing Bodies of Technological Universities:

- Section 12 (1) of the Technological Universities Act 2018, states that “A governing body, where the technological university concerned was established by an order under section 36 on an application by not more than 3 applicant institutes, shall have not fewer than 14 and not more than 22 members, of which includes under paragraph (b) a chairperson (in this section and Schedule 1 referred to as the “chairperson”) who shall be an external member, appointed by the governing body, and 3 external members nominated by the Minister.

Relevant legislative provisions can be found at the link below:-

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/3/section/12/enacted/en/html#sec12>

3.3 First Governing Body Legislation

As provided for in Section 55 (2) of the Technological Universities Act 2018, the first Governing Body of a Technological University will comprise a Chairperson, two external members and one external member nominated in accordance with its or their own procedures by the education and training board or boards in whose education and training board area or areas the campuses of the technological university are situated, appointed by the Minister.

Under Section 55 (3) of the Act, the first Governing Body of a Technological University is responsible for the establishment of procedures for conducting elections and appointing members to the Governing Body under Section 12 (1)(h), as referred to above, and to conduct those elections and make such appointments.

3.4 Functions of a Governing Body for a Technological University:

Under Section 9 of the Technological Universities Act 2018, a technological university shall have a governing body to perform the functions of the technological university outlined under this Act, and as outlined below:

- a) provide teaching and facilitate learning,
- b) provide programmes of education and training that reflect the needs of individuals, business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located and facilitate learning by flexible means,
- c) provide for the broad education, intellectual and personal development of students, for the purpose of enabling them, as graduates, to excel in their chosen careers and to contribute responsibly to social, civic and economic life in innovative and adaptable ways,
- d) provide opportunities for staff and students,
- e) collaborate with institutions that provide higher education inside and outside the State, including on joint research projects and provision of programmes of education and training,
- f) support a body of research that includes research relevant at regional, national and international levels and pursue excellence in the conduct of that research,
- g) support entrepreneurship, enterprise development and innovation in business, enterprise and the professions through teaching and the conduct of research and through effective transfer to those and other sectors of knowledge arising from that research,
- h) collaborate with business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located,
- i) to promote the involvement of those stakeholders in the design and delivery of programmes of education and training,
- j) support the mobility of staff and students of the technological university into and out of the labour force through collaboration with business, enterprise, the professions and

related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located,

- k) serve the community and public interest,
- l) promote access to the technological university and the education it provides, by economically or socially disadvantaged persons, by persons who have a disability and by persons from sections of society in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located who are significantly under-represented in its student body,
- m) undertake assessment of students, and award degrees and other qualifications,
- n) make best use of its expertise and resources, whether or not on a commercial basis, for the purposes of its functions under this Act,
- o) provide directly, or in collaboration with other providers of programmes of education and training, facilities for all levels of higher education within the Framework, including technological and professional education, and for research,
- p) collaborate with persons or bodies inside and outside the State for the purpose of its functions under this Act, and
- q) promote the attainment of gender balance and equality of opportunity among the students and staff of the technological university.

3.5 Role of Chairperson

The Chairperson is responsible for leadership of the Governing Body 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 Institute and for the tone of discussions at Governing Body level.

Maintaining high standards of governance in all aspects is a vital role of the Chairperson of a Governing Body of a Technological University, given their pivotal role in society and in national economic and social development, as well as their reliance on public as well as private funding.

It is the Chairperson's responsibility to ensure that the Governing Body meets the objectives and complies with the requirements which are set out in the Code of Governance when developed.

The Code of Governance also sets out other specific responsibilities of the Chairperson of a Governing Body. In addition to having responsibility for leadership of the Board and ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its functions, the Chairperson is also responsible for –

- Effective management of the Governing Body's agenda,
- Promoting a culture of openness and debate by facilitating the effective contribution of key management and all Governing Body members,
- Ensuring that the Governing Body receive accurate, timely and clear information,
- Advising the Minister of skills and competency requirements on the Governing Body in advance of a time when Governing Body vacancies are due to arise,

- Ensuring that the Governing Body meets its Annual Reporting Requirements.

4. Persons Sought

Chairperson:

Expressions of interest are sought from suitably qualified candidates for consideration for appointment as Chairperson of the Governing Body of the new TU in the West and North West, subject to its establishment.

Candidates **should** have a career history at a sufficiently senior level in a complex organisation of scale and equivalent business experience of relevance to Governing Body membership in one or more of the following areas:

- Experience of effectively managing large organisations in a challenging and complex environment in either the public or private sector
- A proven record of achievement at an appropriately senior level that demonstrates the necessary vision, leadership and management skills, as well as personal resilience
- Prior experience of Board membership or of Chairing a Board
- Demonstrate that they possess the significant leadership capabilities and experience necessary to discharge the role of Chairperson
- Expertise in higher education systems both nationally and internationally
- Corporate Governance and Compliance
- Accountancy and Financial Management
- Audit and Risk Management
- Human Resource Management
- Organisational Development and Change Management
- Programme and Project Management
- Public Procurement and competitive processes
- Administrative, Information, Public and Tax law
- Regulation
- Communications and Marketing
- Fundraising, Philanthropy and Alumni engagement
- Community Engagement and Advocacy

In addition to demonstrable experience of relevance, for the position of Chairperson in one or more of the areas outlined above, experience of relevance in one or more of the following areas would also be **desirable**:

- Finance
- Governance and Compliance

- Infrastructure development
- Sustainability
- Public procurement
- Philanthropy
- Commercial Revenue generation
- IT and Cybersecurity
- Emergency planning

Governing Body Members:

Expressions of interest are sought from suitably qualified candidates for consideration for the membership of the Governing Body of the new TU in the West and North West, subject to its establishment.

Candidates **should** have a career history at a sufficiently senior level in a complex organisation of scale and equivalent business experience of relevance to Governing Body membership, in one or more of the following areas:

- Experience of effectively managing large organisations in a challenging and complex environment in either the public or private sector
- Corporate Governance and Compliance
- Expertise in higher education systems both nationally and internationally
- Accountancy and Financial Management
- Audit and Risk Management
- Human Resource Management
- Organisational Development and Change Management
- Programme and Project Management
- Public Procurement and competitive processes
- Administrative, Information, Public and Tax law
- Regulation
- Communications and Marketing
- Fundraising, Philanthropy and Alumni engagement
- Community Engagement and Advocacy

In addition to demonstrable experience of relevance to Governing Body membership in one or more of the areas outlined above, experience of relevance in one or more of the following areas would also be **desirable**:

- Finance
- Infrastructure development
- Sustainability
- Philanthropy
- Commercial Revenue generation

- IT and Cybersecurity
- Emergency planning

5. Remuneration

The positions of Chairperson and Governing Body member as advertised is unremunerated. Members of the Governing Body may claim travel and subsistence expenses in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings of the Body and to transact its business. All expenses are paid in accordance with approved public sector rates or in line with relevant policy for external members of the Governing Body.

6. Requirements of Appointment

Members are required to devote as much time to duties of the Governing Body as is necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties.

7. How to Apply

To be considered for nomination for the roles outlined in this booklet, i.e. Chairperson and/or Ordinary Member of the first governing body of the technological university in the West and North West, anticipated to be established in late Quarter 1 or early Quarter 2 of 2022, please submit by email the attached application form, a cover letter and a curriculum vitae, no later than 3.00pm on **10 December 2021**, to boardvacancies@dfheris.gov.ie.

Please note the following important points:

- Please take care when submitting your expression of interest as the Assessment Panel will make its recommendation(s) to the Minister based on consideration of the documentation which you submit. It is therefore most important that you ensure your cover letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Chair and/or an Ordinary Member as specified in this booklet. This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis and suitability of your candidature.
- You must also 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 TU Governing Body as described in this booklet. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of the Chairperson and/or Ordinary Member.

- The selection process may include a short-listing process dependent on the numbers of applications received.
- In making nominations, and in line with best practice as set out in the Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards, it should be noted that it is open to the Minister to consider suitable nominees other than those identified through this process provided his preferred nominee meets the specified criteria.
- The Minister shall have regard to the desirability for gender balance on the Governing Body as the Minister considers appropriate and determines from time to time when making appointments.

8. 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, may be extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

9. Data Protection

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science is committed to protecting your personal data and takes the security of your information very seriously, adhering to the principles of transparency, accountability and security of the General Data Protection Regulation.

The main purpose for which the Department requires the personal data provided by you is to consider your Expression of Interest in the context of the qualifying criteria set out in this Booklet and your suitability for the position(s) advertised.

The personal data provided as part of this recruitment campaign will be exchanged with other persons involved in the appointment process only as required, including with officials in the Department, the relevant Higher Education Institution, any other relevant person who will assist in the appointment process and the Minister.

If your application is assessed and you are considered to be suitable for consideration for appointment your curriculum vitae and cover letter (and any supplementary information requested as part of the application process), will be retained for up to one year following the appointments. In the event that you are not successful on this occasion, your data may be

retained for a period of up to one year and used in considering your suitability for other similar vacancies/roles that may arise within that period.

Additional information on the General Data Protection Regulation is available at the following [link](#).

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

November 2021

APPLICATION FORM

Part One: Contact details

Full Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Part Two: Available Positions

Please indicate in the table below the position on the Governing Body you are interested in being considered for.

I WISH TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE POSITION(S) INDICATED BELOW (TICK ALL THAT APPLY)	
Chairperson	
Ordinary Member	

Part Three: Conflict of Interest:

Do you 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 Governing Body?

Yes / No

Part Four: Meeting attendance:

Do you confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of Chair to a Governing Body?

Yes / No

Part Five: Retention of Data

Do you consent to your data being retained by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science for a period of up to one year from date of application to be used in considering your suitability for other similar vacancies/roles that may arise within that period?

Yes / No

Signature of applicant:

Date:
