

Appointment to the Board of The Irish Research Council

Closing Date: Midnight on 22 May 2015

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
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State Boards.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 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 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.

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| 1. Entity: | IRC – The Irish Research Council |
| 2. Board Meeting Location: | Meetings will be in Dublin. |
| 3. Number of Vacancies: | 6 |
| 4. Remuneration: | Nil. |
| 5. Time Requirements: | approx. 6 meetings per annum |

1. Background

The Irish Research Council 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 Education and Skills. All expenditure is subject to the standard operating procedures of the HEA.

The mission of the Irish Research Council is to enable and sustain a vibrant research community in Ireland and supports excellent researchers in all disciplines from Arts to Zoology. The Council primarily funds early stage career researchers: namely, postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers. Diverse career opportunities are enabled through a suite of programmes which partner with employers. A key area of activity for the Council is the funding of research projects with a societal focus and has established partnerships across government and civic society.

The Council represents Ireland in particular dimensions of Horizon 2020 and, by providing supports for H2020 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, and supporting excellent research at all career stages, whilst also strengthening and expanding the Council's partnerships, nationally and internationally.

2. Functions of the Council

The Council's functions include –

- I. 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.
- II. Supporting human capital development, and in 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.
- III. 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.
- IV. Providing policy advice on graduate education and research nationally and internationally, with particular attention be given to the arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS).

- V. Approving the Council's annual work programme, its award schemes and their terms and conditions.

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

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

Annual Report: http://research.ie/sites/default/files/annual_report_2013_final.pdf

3. Vacancy Details

The Minister for Education and Skills will be making appointments to 6 vacancies to be filled on the Council:

- Chairperson
- 2 members from the AHSS (Arts Humanities and Social Sciences) Academic Community
- 1 member from the STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) Academic Community
- A member with International experience
- A member of the business community

4. Person Specification

Expressions of interest are invited from members of the public who consider they possess the skills and experience necessary to fulfil one or more of the following roles:

a. Chair

The candidate must have:

- A high profile and strong reputation in international research in either domain (AHSS or STEM) 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 of working to achieve consensus and implementing best practice in corporate governance as demonstrated by membership of a board or other body for example.
- Experience of supervising PhD students and/or mentoring postdoc fellows.

The following are desirable:

- Demonstrable experience of engagement with enterprise, government and/or social and cultural organisations.
- Experience of Chairing a Board or other body.

b. STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) and the AHSS (Arts Humanities and Social Sciences) Academic Community Member

The STEM and AHSS candidates must have -

- Been published in high quality peer reviewed journals nationally and internationally as appropriate to their field
- 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 of supervising PhD students and ideally also in mentoring postdoc fellows.

The following are desirable:

- Experience of engagement with enterprise, government and/or social and cultural organisations.
- Previous experience as a member of a Board.

c. Member with International experience

The candidate will bring experience of the research environment in another country and as such must have the same experience as the STEM and AHSS candidate but have acquired that experience in an academic institution in another jurisdiction. They must have:

- Been published in high quality peer reviewed journals nationally and internationally as appropriate to their field.
- 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 of supervising PhD students and ideally also in mentoring postdoc fellows.

The following are desirable:

- Experience of engagement with enterprise, government and/or social and cultural organisations.
- Previous experience as a member of a Board.

d. Member of the business community

The candidate must:

- Hold a senior position in a business which is engaged in employing PhDs and/or postdoc researchers to develop research and innovation capacity or hold a senior position in a business which conducts research and which engages with higher education institutions.
- Experience in innovation and a strong record of research, and the development of postgraduate students and human capital.
- Experience of Board Membership and Corporate Governance.

5. Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Council will be for an initial 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 Council 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 Council 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 Council 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.
- A Council 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

6. Submitting your expression of interest

If you are interested in this position, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found on www.stateboards.ie. Please note that the 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 Section 4 - Person Specification in this booklet.

If you decide that you wish to be considered for appointment, we welcome you submitting your expression of interest via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with your detailed 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 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.

7. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel (the “Panel”) will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the expressions of interest received by the PAS via www.stateboards.ie. 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
 - Referee checks;
 - 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.

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

8. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

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

The Public Appointments Service thanks you for your interest in State Board appointments