

Appointments to the Board of the Irish Manuscripts Commission

Closing Date: 3pm on the 21st of February 2017

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
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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. 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](#) (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 Board of the Irish Manuscripts Commission

Location:	Dublin
Number of Vacancies:	1 Chairperson and up to 16 Ordinary Members
Remuneration:	Nil. Travel and subsistence is payable at appropriate civil service rates
Time Requirements:	12 meetings per annum and such time as needs be devoted to editorial work; proofing; and promotional activities

1. Background

The Irish Manuscripts Commission was founded by warrant on 10 October 1928. The Commission was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee with no share capital on 24 January 2006.

The mission of the Commission is

- to publish, to the highest scholarly standard, editions, calendars and lists of primary materials,
- to promote public awareness of primary source materials and their importance for the history, heritage and culture of Ireland,
- to advise the Minister on policy towards preserving and making accessible documentary sources of Ireland's past,
- to bring these sources to the widest possible readership, nationally and internationally, through the Commission's publication programme, and its commitment to online access in general and to the Commission's out-of-print publications in particular.

2. Functions of the Commission's Board members

Unlike most State Boards, the Chair and members of the Commission constitute a panel of experts who play a direct and active role in the work of the Commission. The Board devises policy and the Chair and Board members implement it. Board members vet the many publishing proposals which the Commission receives each year, and identifies primary sources, in archives or private hands, which the Commission should consider publishing. When a publishing project is approved, a member will be appointed to act as internal editor and project mentor.

Members are chosen on the basis of a combination of the following essential skills

- expertise in particular periods or areas of Irish history,
- experience in editing texts and preparing them for publication, and
- ability to make an active and often time-consuming contribution to the work of the Commission (e.g. editing IMC editions, mentoring IMC publishing projects, as readers and copyeditors of forthcoming publications).

3. Vacancy details and legal provisions

Under the Articles of Association of the Irish Manuscripts Commission Limited, the Minister appoints the members of the Commission, who are the same persons as the directors of the company. The number of Directors shall not exceed twenty-one, three of whom are *ex officio* appointments: the directors of the National Library of Ireland, the National Archives of Ireland, and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland; the *ex officio* membership of the Commission is not part of this appointment process.

In general the members of the Commission are predominantly professional historians, though there will be at least one archivist and one genealogist among the membership.

The current composition of the Commission is:

Name	(Re)appointed	Expiry Date	Position type
James McGuire	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Chair
Sandra Collins	31/07/2015	30/07/2020	NLI (Ex officio)
John McDonough	25/02/2015	25/02/2020	NAI (Ex officio)
Maggie Smith	28/01/2014	28/02/2019	Director PRONI (Ex officio)
Chris Flynn	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
David Dickson	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
David Edwards	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Deirdre McMahon	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Donal Moore	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Dáibhí Ó Cróinín	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Greta Jones	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
James Kelly	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Jane Ohlmeyer	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
John McCafferty	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Mary O'Dowd	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Michael Kennedy	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Máire Mac Conghail	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Nicholas Canny	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member

Name	(Re)appointed	Expiry Date	Position type
Ruan O'Donnell	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member
Thomas O'Connor	28/01/2014	Until new board appointed	Board Member

4. Person Specification

The Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs is seeking to appoint a Chair and sixteen suitably qualified candidates to sit as members on the Board of the Irish Manuscripts Commission. In order to ensure a mix of complementary skills and experience the Minister may choose to appoint from any or all of the following profiles. The Minister welcomes applications representative of the diversity of the Irish population, particularly reflecting gender, geography and cultural interests.

Chair of the Commission

The Commission's Chair not only issues summons for, and chairs Commission meetings, but is, in effect, the Commission's chief executive; it is usual that the Chair devotes at least two days a week to his/her duties and candidates should consider whether they would be available and willing to make such a commitment.

Certain specific skills are required for appointment as Chair: those described below for historian members of the Commission, and

- experience in managing an academic unit or project,
- experience in editing and copy-editing (e.g. as editor of a peer-reviewed journal).

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.

Ordinary members

a. Historians

Candidates must be recognised professional historians affiliated to one of the schools or departments of history of a relevant university or third level institution, or to a recognised scholarly institution. They should also

- be experts in a particular field or time span (e.g. medieval; early modern; modern and contemporary history; economic and social history; business history; gender history; administrative history etc.),

- have an ability to participate in decision making on Commission activities outside her/his own area of special expertise in history,
- hold a higher research degree (PhD or equivalent),
- have a proven track record in scholarly publication (including online and print).

b. Genealogists

Candidates must be

- members of the profession with a proven track record of publication on genealogy
and
- university graduates in history or a cognate subject
and
- members of a recognised accredited body of professional genealogists such as Accredited Genealogists Ireland (AGI) (formerly the Association of Professional Genealogists in Ireland).

c. Archivists

Candidates must

- Hold, or have held, a senior post (usually Director) in a recognised university, city or county or institutional archive,
- have a proven track record of publications on archival matters,
- be university graduates in history or a cognate subject **and** hold a professional qualification in a relevant area (e.g. MA in Archives and Record Management; Higher Diploma in Archival Studies).

Personal attributes for all applicants for appointment to the Commission

Any appointee (whether historian, genealogist or archivist) **must**

- have a proven track record of scholarly collaboration,
- demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively in a team with other members of the Commission,
- be prepared to give freely of their time and experience to the work of the Commission.

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

5. Term of Appointments

New appointments to the Commission will be for an initial period of 5 years with an option to extend the term of engagement for a second term of 5 years; to ensure institutional memory and administrative continuity some outgoing members may be reappointed for terms of 2 to 5 years. All new appointments and reappointments are subject to the following

- the membership of any member of the Commission may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister,

- a member of the Commission may resign his or her membership of the Commission 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 Commission shall 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 Commission members are described in the ([Revised code of practice for the governance of state bodies](#)),
- A Commission member shall cease to be a member of the Commission if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann or is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or as a representative in the European Parliament.

6. 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.

7. 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.

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, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

9. 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](#)

¹ The 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, in your cover letter, 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.