



Appointment to the Board of The Housing Finance Agency

Closing Date: 15:00 on Thursday 30th November 2023

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

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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. PAS also has responsibility for providing 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.

Appointment to the Board of The Housing Finance Agency

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Location: | 46 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2 |
| Number of Vacancies: | 1 non-Executive Director |
| Remuneration: | €7,695 per annum. (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 are payable at the appropriate civil service rate. |
| Time Requirements: | <p>7 to 8 half day Board Meetings per annum. One of these is usually held somewhere outside Dublin and might be a full day. There are three sub committees, Credit, Organisational and Performance Development and Audit and Risk.</p> <p>There is currently a vacancy on the Board and Credit Committee. Depending on appointments to sub committees, members are expected to review papers which would usually require a half day per meeting preparation and a half day attendance at each meeting, apart from the meeting held outside Dublin.</p> <p>Members serving on the Credit Committee may be required to attend 12 half days for these meetings. These meetings are normally scheduled on the days that Board meetings are also held.</p> |

1. Background

Housing Finance Agency plc is a company under the aegis of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage of Ireland. It was established by the Housing Finance Agency Act, 1981 and incorporated in 1982. Its shares are owned by the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform of Ireland.

The HFA's Board is appointed by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. It has 12 Directors and is representative of such as local authority members and officials, the voluntary housing sector and senior public servants.

Established in 1982, the Housing Finance Agency is a State-owned company that facilitates the delivery of social and affordable housing. It offers market-leading rates to support its customers – local authorities, approved housing bodies and higher education institutions – to increase the supply of housing in Ireland. The HFA's loan book grew to €6.7 billion at the end of 2022, with profits for the year of €73 million. It provided loan financing of €1.2 billion to customers and supported the provision of 3,353 homes, including cost rental accommodation.

In housing the HFA's function is to advance loan finance to local authorities, the voluntary housing sector (AHBs) and Higher Education Institutions to be used by them for any purpose authorised by the Housing Acts and to borrow or raise funds for these purposes.

In infrastructure, the HFA is empowered to lend funds to local authorities for waste and environmental capital projects under the terms of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002.

2. Functions of the Board

The Housing Finance Agency's Board of Directors takes the major strategic organisational decisions and retains full and effective organisational control while allowing operating management sufficient flexibility to run the business efficiently and effectively within a centralised reporting framework.

The Board has reserved to itself for decision:

- a formal schedule of matters pertaining to the HFA and its future direction such as major acquisitions and disposals,
- appointment and removal of the Company Secretary,
- expenditure budgets and risk management policies.

Each non-executive Director brings independent judgement to bear on all matters dealt with by the Board including those relating to strategy, performance, resources and standards of conduct.

Current Composition of the Board

| Name | First Appointed | Reappointed | Expiry Date | Position type | Basis of appointment |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Aideen Hayden | 07/03/2017 | 01/01/2022 | 31/12/2024 | Director | PAS Process |
| Barry O'Leary | 26/08/2013 | 01/05/2020 | 30/04/2025 | Director | Chief Executive |
| David Owens | 17/05/2022 | | 16/05/2027 | Director | Department of Finance |
| Frank Allen | 17/05/2022 | | 16/05/2027 | Chair | PAS Process |
| Jennifer Ward | 07/03/2017 | 01/01/2022 | 31/12/2024 | Director | PAS Process |
| Lianne Patterson | 07/03/2017 | 01/01/2022 | 31/12/2024 | Director | PAS Process |

| Name | First Appointed | Reappointed | Expiry Date | Position type | Basis of appointment |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Michael Lee | 17/05/2022 | | 16/05/2027 | Director | PAS Process |
| Rory O'Leary | 04/03/2021 | | 03/03/2026 | Director | DHLGH |
| Thomas McDermott | 17/05/2022 | | 16/05/2027 | Director | PAS Process |
| Tom Enright | 17/05/2022 | | 16/05/2027 | Director | CCMA |
| William Johnston | 07/03/2017 | 01/01/2022 | 31/12/2024 | Director | PAS Process |

3. Person Specification

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in consultation with the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery & Reform invite applications from suitably qualified candidates to fill the position of non-executive Director on the Board of the Housing Finance Agency.

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](#).

Essential

Applicants must demonstrate in their application evidence of relevant experience and skills detailed below;

Financial Expertise- Accountancy/Audit/Corporate Finance

Candidates must demonstrate appropriate senior executive level experience in an accounting, audit or finance capacity which should include one, or more of the following:

- Previous audit involvement
- The provision of strategic financial planning guidance
- Corporate lending frameworks and practice
- The appraisal and management of financial risk
- The application of economic analysis, preferably in a financial environment

Corporate Governance/Compliance

Candidates must have professional experience at an appropriately senior level which demonstrates at least one of the following:

- Experience at senior executive level of good corporate governance and compliance practices
- Experience of strategic management and managing organisational change
- Experience of working effectively as part of a Committee
- A recognised qualification in corporate governance and/or management

Desirable

- Lending experience preferably in the Irish property market
- Credit risk and credit committee experience
- Knowledge of the housing sector
- Previous Board Experience

The Minister encourages applications from diverse, qualified candidates to ensure the Board is a true reflection of Irish society and shall have regard to the desirability for gender balance, diversity and inclusion on the Board as the Minister considers appropriate and determines from time to time when making appointments, in line with the updated Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016.

In order to qualify for appointment a person must not have any legal impediment or conflicts of interest likely to interfere with his/her ability to assume the role of a member of the Board. 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.

4. Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Board will be for an initial period of 5 years with an option to extend the term of engagement for a second term of up to 8 years, subject to:

- The membership of any Director 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, NDP Delivery 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 2016 which is available here [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 or elected to the European Parliament.

5. Submitting your Application

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.

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 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 Authority 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. **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 stateboards@publicjobs.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
 - Meeting/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 the most suitably qualified candidates (based on the information provided by the candidate) to be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

Please note that the Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by candidates as part of our selection process.

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

The Data Protection Act 2018 provides that the processing of personal data shall be lawful where such processing is necessary for the performance of a statutory function of a controller. PAS is mandated by statute under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004 to act as the centralised assessment and selection body for the civil service and to carry out all the procedures necessary to undertake the recruitment, assessment and selection of suitable candidates for appointment. By submitting your personal data (including your name, address, contact details and details of your education and work history contained in your curriculum vitae and cover letter) via publicjobs.ie, you acknowledge that such data may be used by the Public Appointments Service and disclosed to and used by client departments, in connection with its statutory roles to assist and advise relevant Ministers in relation to appointments to the boards of State bodies. The information contained in your publicjobs profile is yours to manage, amend, update or delete as appropriate. For more detailed information on our Data Protection Policy, please see our [Code of Practice for the Protection of Personal Data in the Public Appointments Service](#).

If your application is assessed and you are considered to be suitable for appointment your c.v. and cover letter (and any additional supplementary information requested as part of the application process), will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the relevant Department. Once it obtains your personal data, the Department will act as data controller of such data 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.

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.
8. If there is a supplementary question, ensure that your response complies with the word limit and that it does not contain any special characters (i.e. %, & etc.) or you may receive an error message and will be unable to submit your application.
9. Click on "continue".
10. 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.
11. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.