

Applications for the Board of Bridge Ireland

Background

As part of the amalgamation of the CBAI and the NIBU, a new body, a Company Limited by Guarantee (to be known as Bridge Ireland), will be established to promote, foster, develop, organise and regulate the game of bridge throughout Ireland. Applications are sought for the Board of Directors of this new company.

It is envisaged that there will be up to nine Directors, including a Chair who will be responsible for leadership of the Board and ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its role. Given the specific responsibilities of the Chair, different criteria will apply to that appointment. Applicants are welcome to apply for either, or both, roles, and should indicate clearly on their application for which role(s) they wish to be considered.

Other than expenses for travel to meetings, no remuneration will be paid to Board members. Members will be appointed for three-year terms, with rotation, subject to a maximum of nine years' service for ordinary members of the Board, and six years' service as Chair. It is envisaged that there will be at least four Board Meetings per year (with additional meetings likely to be necessary in the first year of operation), and preparation time will also be needed for reading Board materials. Meetings will be a mix of face-to-face and online.

It is intended that the Board will be balanced in so far as possible in terms of gender and geography, and also that it will comprise a mix of the skills and experience needed for Bridge Ireland to be successful. Previous experience in the administration of bridge is not essential, and applicants need not be a member of either the CBAI or the NIBU.

Role of a Board Member: General Considerations

The Board is appointed to act on behalf of the membership of Bridge Ireland and to serve the long-term interests of the company. Its primary responsibilities are governance, financial control, and strategy. Members of the Board, along with the executive team, are accountable for the proper management of the company.

Board members should act on a fully-informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the company. In order to be an effective contributor on the Board, it is recommended that all 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, and have a strong commitment to adding value to Bridge Ireland;
- have a strong sense of ethics and integrity, and an understanding of good governance practices.

Requirements for Directors

It is hoped to recruit Board members with skills and experience in areas such as

- Finance
- Governance and risk
- Human resources
- Strategic planning
- Operations and IT
- Legal
- Marketing

or other areas that will be important for Bridge Ireland.

Candidates should have a proven track record of achievement in a senior role within an organisation, committee, or other relevant body. At least some Directors will also have significant experience in the administration of bridge.

Candidates should demonstrate

- the ability to work effectively with others as part of a team, and to identify common ground where different perspectives exist within the team;
- high standards of integrity and probity;
- an understanding of the role of Board members, and the ability to use that role to good effect.

Excellent administrative, communications, influencing, and leadership skills are also desirable.

Requirements for the Role of Chair

The Chair will be responsible for leadership and effectiveness of the Board. In addition to the competencies required of the ordinary Directors, candidates for the role of Chair should demonstrate experience and understanding of:

- Business or professional leadership at a senior level, ideally including Board experience;
- Issues of financial responsibility that may affect a body such as Bridge Ireland;
- Corporate governance issues and best practices, and the obligations of Directors;
- The concepts of inclusiveness and diversity, and the principles of safeguarding within an organisation such as Bridge Ireland;
- Ability to lead the Board and to keep colleagues focused on long-term strategy.

It is also desirable that Chair candidates demonstrate sufficient credibility within the bridge world to represent Bridge Ireland effectively with members, stakeholders, and the media.

Eligibility

Applications are welcomed from individuals who believe they have the relevant skills and experience to contribute to the Board, barring any disqualifications that may apply under legislative provision. Certain of these provisions are outlined in the Companies Act, 2014 and the Company Law Enforcement Act, 2001. Note in particular that an undischarged bankrupt cannot be a Director of a company.

How to Apply

Please send a Curriculum Vitae, and a cover letter of at least a page stating whether you are expressing interest in the Director role, the Chair role, or both, and summarising why you feel you are a suitable candidate, by email to Dermot O'Brien (Chief Executive of the CBAI) at dermot@cbai.ie, with the subject line "Bridge Ireland Board Appointments". The CV should include details of any significant roles in the administration of bridge, and of business, professional, or voluntary roles that demonstrate relevant experience. Neither bridge playing successes nor early career details are required.

All aspects of the application process will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. The closing date for applications is Friday 16 October at 5 p.m.

The Selection Process

An Assessment Panel containing representatives of both the CBAI and the NIBU and led by an independent co-ordinator has been established to evaluate applications. As the Assessment Panel may make its recommendations based solely on consideration of the documentation you submit, it is most important that you ensure that your submission clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meet the requirements of Bridge Ireland, and that you answer comprehensively any supplementary questions put to you by the Panel on foot of your submission. It is possible, depending on the number and quality of applications, that some or all candidates may be invited to interview with the Assessment Panel, but you should not assume this.

Further Information

If anyone would like further information on any aspects of these appointments, they should request it by email to dermot@cbai.ie. Canvassing will disqualify.