



Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta
an Duine agus Comhionannas
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Expression of Interest for New Members of IHREC Disability Advisory Committee Information Booklet

Closing Date: Thursday 19th June 2025 1pm

This expression of interest will be undertaken by Osborne Recruitment
on behalf of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

May 2025

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Introduction and Background

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission ('the Commission') is Ireland's National Human Rights Institution and National Equality Body. It was established in November 2014 under the *Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014* with a statutory mandate to:

- protect and promote human rights and equality,
- encourage the development of a culture of respect for human rights, equality, and intercultural understanding in the State,
- promote understanding and awareness of the importance of human rights and equality in the State,
- encourage good practice in intercultural relations, promote tolerance and acceptance of diversity in the State and respect for the freedom and dignity of each person, and
- work towards the elimination of human rights abuses, discrimination and prohibited conduct.

IHREC's strategy and policy is determined independently by the fifteen members of the Commission who are appointed by the Head of State, President Michael D. Higgins. The diverse membership of the Commission broadly reflects the nature of Irish society.

The Director of the Commission is responsible for the leadership and management of staff and the work of IHREC in accordance with the strategy and policies of the Commission. The staff of the Commission currently work in six teams: Policy & Research, Strategic Engagement, Legal, Monitoring & Compliance, Corporate Services and Office of the Director. Permanent staff of the Commission are civil servants in the service of the State.

IHREC's work ranges from operating at the policy level to review the effectiveness of human rights and equality law, policy and practice in the State and within public bodies, protecting and promoting human rights and equality within the courts system, and working with communities and civil society to monitor and report on people's real-life experiences of human rights and equality in practice. Whether addressing individual concerns, engaging with government or public bodies on policy and practice issues or raising awareness with public

audiences on human rights and equality, our mission is to build a just and inclusive society that protects and promotes human rights and equality in Ireland.

Our Values

The way we work in IHREC is guided by both public sector and organisational values that inform our individual and collective behaviour and decision making. Our values are:

Non-Discrimination and Equality - We commit to supporting people who face the greatest barriers to justice as part of human rights and equality protection for all.

Respect - We build respect and trust by valuing the contribution and initiative of everyone within our organisation and those we work with. Respecting the trust placed in us, we conduct our work to the highest professional standards.

Independence - We value our independence and act, where others cannot always do so, in furtherance of human rights, equality and intercultural understanding. We take action based on the highest quality evidence and robust decision-making.

Accountability - We are fully committed to the values of openness, transparency and accountability to the people and to the Oireachtas.

Participation - We recognise the personal autonomy and self-determination of all rights holders and duty bearers. We are committed to hearing and learning from others' perspectives.

Responsive - We are responsive to opportunities to advance our mission, and we ensure that our governance, resources, and ways of working support this approach.

Collaborative - We collaborate across and beyond the organisation so that we act promptly and effectively.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ('CRPD') was signed by Ireland on 30 March 2007 and ratified on 20 March 2018. Ireland submitted its first State report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in November 2021.

The Commission is the Independent Monitoring Mechanism under CRPD Article 33 and has appointed an Advisory Committee to assist and advise it on matters related to this function.¹

The Commission established its Disability Advisory Committee ('Advisory Committee') in December 2018 to:

- a) assist and advise the Commission on matters related to its function of keeping under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice in the State relating to the protection of people with disabilities.*
- b) advise the Commission on the fulfilment of its CRPD Article 33 independent monitoring role including the protection, promotion and monitoring of the UNCRPD with regard to the Commission's Strategy Statement, work plan and available resources.*

The Commission is now seeking to appoint circa 9 new members to the Advisory Committee. A reserve panel may be put in place should vacancies occur during the lifetime of this membership 2025 – 2028.

Members of the Advisory Committee will be appointed in the first instance for one term of up to three years. The Commission may, at its discretion, reappoint members for one further term of up to three years.

¹ Head 85 of the General Scheme of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Bill 2021.

Requirements for Membership

You must be living in Ireland to be a member of the Advisory Committee.

Each member of the Advisory Committee must be committed to the principles of CRPD stated in Article 3:

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- Non-discrimination;
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- Equality of opportunity;
- Accessibility;
- Equality between men and women; and
- Respect for the evolving capabilities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children to preserve their identities

The Advisory Committee includes members of the Commission and external members appointed by the Commission. These new appointments will bring the external membership of the Committee to thirteen. A minimum of 75% of external Advisory Committee members, that is 10 members of the Committee, will be disabled people. The Commission's definition of disability in this regard is aligned to CRPD Article 1, which states:

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

The Commission aims to ensure that the membership of the Advisory Committee will, as far as possible, represent the diversity of Irish society, including the diversity of disabled people and that there will be equality of representation of women and men.

In making appointments to the Advisory Committee, the Commission also seeks to ensure that it includes expertise in the development and practice of the following areas:

- a. Participation of persons with disabilities within society, such as in economic, social, cultural or political life.
- b. The Irish legal and policy landscape, and its relevance for disabled people.
- c. Communication and advocacy to promote participation of disabled people in society.
- d. Collection and use of data to support the monitoring of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Ireland.
- e. Knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations system pertaining to the Convention.
- f. Intersectionality across the grounds in the Equality Acts (gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community), and the experience of poverty.
- g. Representation of under-represented voices/perspectives in the disability rights landscape.

Working methods

The Commission will provide resources and amend procedures to make reasonable accommodations identified by disabled Committee members to maximise their participation.

The Advisory Committee may meet virtually, and any member may participate virtually in a meeting conducted wholly or partially using assistive technology. Meeting documentation will be issued in advance of the meetings. There is a requirement to have reviewed the documentation provided in advance, and to attend the meeting for its full duration. Reasonable accommodations are provided to ensure members can access all meeting material and can engage fully in the meetings.

Time Commitment and Remuneration

The Disability Advisory Committee has met on average 6 times each year since being established.

Committee members will be remunerated for reasonable expenses, as agreed by the Commission.

Members of the Advisory Committee who are not in receipt of a public salary can receive a maximum annual stipend of €1200 for attendance at 6 meetings, from the Commission in recognition of the value of their participation.

How to make an expression of interest

To express your interest in being a Committee member,

- please send an up-to-date short **Curriculum Vitae or Statement of Education and Experience** (no more than 2 A4 pages when using font size 12, font no smaller than 10) and
- a supporting **cover letter** (no more than 500 words, font no smaller than 10).

Your cover letter should outline why you are interested in joining the Committee and demonstrate how you meet the **Requirements for Membership** set out above. You can do this by giving examples from any aspect of your life that you consider most relevant to the requirements. It is recommended that you include recent examples, if possible, ideally within the last 2 to 3 years.

- **Declaration Form**

As noted in the **Requirements for Membership**, a minimum of 75% of external members, that is 10 members, of the Advisory Committee will be disabled people. If you choose to identify yourself as a disabled person in this appointment process,

please sign and date the Declaration Form and submit this with your Curriculum Vitae/statement of education and experience and supporting cover letter. This information will only be used for the purpose of this selection process.

In line with data protection requirements, the personal information of all unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed following the completion of the selection process.

Expressions of interest can be made by submitting your Curriculum Vitae/Statement of Education and Experience, cover letter and Declaration Form (where relevant) to ihrec@osborne.ie. Alternatively, you can submit the equivalent information in another text, audio or video format. You may submit your application in English, Irish or Irish Sign Language.

Reasonable accommodations are available to ensure accessibility of this process. If you require any reasonable accommodations and/or if you require this document in another accessible format, please contact ihrec@osborne.ie.

Osborne Recruitment will be managing all aspects of this selection process on behalf of the Commission. No enquiries or canvassing should be made directly to Commission members, Commission staff or current members of the Commission's Disability Advisory Committee.

Selection Process

A panel appointed by the Commission will assess your expression of interest against the **Requirements for Membership**, as demonstrated by the information in your Curriculum Vitae/Statement of Education and Experience (no more than 2 A4 pages if using size 12 font, font no smaller than 10) and supporting cover letter (no more than 500 words, font no smaller than 10). The panel will agree a shortlist of applicants for an informal meeting.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an informal meeting. Meetings will be held at the Commission's office in Dublin or online, and we will discuss any reasonable accommodations, where required, with you beforehand. Please note that the Commission does not pay for travel expenses for people attending the informal meeting (unless they relate

to reasonable accommodations). Where an applicant is unable to attend an informal meeting on a set date, an alternative date will only be offered at the discretion of the panel.

Applicants invited to an informal meeting will be informed of who will be on the panel in advance of the meeting.

At the meeting, the panel will discuss your experience and expertise with you and ask questions to find out whether you meet the requirements for membership of the Disability Advisory Committee.

The panel will then recommend a list of Disability Advisory Committee members to the Commission for its consideration. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the process in due course.

Key Dates

Application Closing Date: Please note latest receipt for applications is **Thursday 19th June 2025 at 1:00pm**. Any CVs, cover letter and declarations received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

An acknowledgement by email or in another format if preferred will be issued for all expressions of interest received. If you do not receive acknowledgement of your application within two working days of submission, please contact Osborne Recruitment at ihrec@osborne.ie or 01 - 6384400 to ensure your application has been received.

Informal Meeting Dates: Informal meetings are anticipated to be held **Thursday 17th and Friday 18th July**. Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by IHREC and should make sure that the contact details specified on their application form are correct.

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strictest confidence.

Equal Opportunities

At IHREC our purpose is to promote and protect human rights and equality in Ireland and build a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding in the State. As a public body we have a responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of our employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by our policies and plans. We therefore particularly encourage applications from candidates who are likely to be currently underrepresented in our workforce. This includes people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, Travellers, disabled people, LGBTQIA+ people and those with lived experience of the criminal justice system. Reasonable accommodations will be provided, if required, during this process. To discuss and request reasonable accommodations in confidence please contact accessihrec@osborne.ie

Feedback

The Commission intends to make this process as accessible and inclusive as possible. We welcome feedback on the process so that we can continually improve. If you would like to provide feedback on the process you can do so in writing to ihrec@osborne.ie



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The Irish Human Rights and Equality
Commission.


16 – 22 Sráid na Faiche,
Baile Átha Cliath, D07 CR20
16 – 22 Green Street,
Dublin, D07 CR20

Guthán / Phone +353 (0) 1 858 3000

Riomhpost / Email info@ihrec.ie

Idirlíon / Web www.ihrec.ie

X @_ihrec

 [/irishhumanrightsequality](https://www.instagram.com/irishhumanrightsequality)