



Candidates for membership of the Audit and Risk Committee of the Royal Irish Academy

Current vacancies

There are two vacancies on the Royal Irish Academy's Audit and Risk Committee. Expressions of interest are sought from interested candidates who wish to be considered for these positions.

Background information on the Royal Irish Academy

The Royal Irish Academy (the Academy) is a predominantly publicly funded institution, established for the promotion of learning in the sciences and humanities across the island of Ireland.

It is a designated institution under the Higher Education Authority Act (1971).

The Academy was established by Royal Charter in 1786 and is governed by that Charter and a set of by-laws. As a body that receives the majority of its funding from the exchequer, however, it is also subject to the provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. In addition, the Academy operates within a strategic context that is set by a strategic plan. The latest strategic plan for the period 2019–23 is available here: <https://www.ria.ie/strategic-plan>. (The Academy's Charter and by-laws are available on the Academy's website: https://www.ria.ie/sites/default/files/charter_and_by-laws_rev_sgm_november_2020.pdf, and an organisation chart for the Academy is included below at Appendix A.)

The three main strands of the Academy's role, as outlined in its latest strategic plan, are to:

- recognise and foster excellence in research to advance the public good;
- be an independent voice on higher education and public policy; and
- represent the world of Irish scholarship internationally.

The Academy engages in a number of activities in order to fulfil its role. These include:

- recognising academic excellence through the election of members to the Academy;
- supporting research projects relevant to the Academy's role;

- awarding grants for specific purposes;
- publishing academic books and journals;
- engaging with stakeholders and the public through discourses, exhibitions and seminars;
- supporting a library of international importance; and
- helping to inform policy-making in Ireland and internationally.

The Academy is governed by a Council, which is elected annually, and which is chaired by the president of the Academy. The president serves for a term of three years. The accountable officer for the Academy is the Executive Director, who has operational responsibility for the organisation and leads the management team.

Although predominantly publicly funded, the Academy differs from other public sector bodies in that it is a members' organisation. Currently, there is a membership of more than 500. New members are elected each year on the basis of the quality of their academic and research expertise. Members contribute to a wide range of Academy activities. These include fulfilling the position of president and other officer roles; fulfilling governance responsibilities as members of Council; participating in academic and editorial boards; and contributing to the work of the various Academy committees that are focussed on academic and policy issues. Members perform these duties on a purely voluntary basis and are not financially recompensed for their time.

The Academy's home is Academy House in Dawson Street, Dublin, which accommodates the majority of staff, but there are also staff in three additional locations currently.

Details of the Audit and Risk Committee vacancies

Location: Dublin (members may attend remotely).

Number of vacancies: 2; one in the area of audit and accountancy, the other in the area of risk.

Remuneration: Nil; travel and subsistence payable at appropriate Civil Service rates.

Time commitment required: approximately 4 half-day meetings per annum.

Candidates' attention is also drawn to the provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies in relation to Audit and Risk Committee membership.

Requirements in regard to Accounting/Audit/Risk

In addition to having significant experience at an appropriately senior level in an organisation in either the private or public sector, and experience of governance and compliance, those with an interest in the positions to be filled should:

either have a professional qualification in accountancy/audit and membership of an appropriate professional organisation,

or demonstrate evidence of experience, at an appropriately senior level, of at least two of the following:

- accounting **and/or**
- auditing
- corporate governance, including detailed knowledge of the Code of Conduct for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)
- finance and risk management, preferably including experience on an audit committee
- human resources and industrial relations management
- procurement and compliance and/or change management
- the education sector or
- the not-for-profit cultural sector, ideally at a national or international level.

In addition to the skills mix outlined above, candidates should have, or must acquire as soon as possible after their appointment to the committee, an understanding of:

- the Royal Irish Academy's culture, objectives and challenges;
- its organisational context, including key relationships, such as the Academy's relationship with the Minister for Higher Education and with the Higher Education Authority; and
- relevant legislation or other rules governing the Royal Irish Academy.

Assessment panel

Expressions of interest from qualified candidates will be assessed by a panel of Audit and Risk Committee members, as determined by the chair of the committee.

Conflicts of interest

In order to qualify for appointment, a person must not have any conflicts of interest likely to interfere with his/her ability to assume the role of a member of the Audit and Risk Committee. 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.

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts (1997, 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.

Expressions of interest should be sent, by email, to Dr Tony Gaynor: t.gaynor@ria.ie. Applicants should send a one-page cover letter, outlining their interest in, and their suitability to carry out, the role.