



Job Description

Job Title: Board Member (Independent)
Responsible to: Chair

NIFHA are currently seeking to recruit one independent Board Member outwith the housing sector in order to meet the requirement of our Articles of Association to have up to three Board Members from outside the housing sector.

Overall Purpose of the Role

The primary role of the Board is to manage the business of the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA), maintain its financial viability and compliance with the law. The Board will work to ensure that the Federation meets its Aims and Objectives and its Mission Statement.

As a Board Member you will be working in a team deciding the strategic direction of the Federation. This will include setting and monitoring the annual business plan. You will ensure, via your ambassadorial role, that the views and the issues of our member organisations are considered in the decision-making process. You will also ensure that the Board is fully accountable to the members for the decisions it has taken and actively engages with them to demonstrate this accountability.

The key responsibilities of a Board Member are to ensure sound corporate governance and uphold the good reputation of the association.

In addition, you will be expected to:

- attend Board meetings and any strategy meetings, including the annual away day, fully prepared and be able to participate in discussions;
- have a collegiate approach to working with the Board and share responsibility for decisions taken;
- treat Board information and discussions as confidential until advised to the contrary.

Person specification

Skills and competencies

The Federation wishes to appoint a diverse range of appropriately qualified Board Members and will particularly welcome applications from those individuals who hold professional qualifications in public administration, accountancy, PR/Media, law, construction or corporate finance and can demonstrate excellent business experience, strategic thinking, knowledge of government and communications.

In selecting new Board Members NIFHA wishes to have a Board that comprises individuals who, between them, have the right level and mix of skills and experience necessary to fulfil their role on the Board.

We are also keen to recruit Board Members who can demonstrate they share the Federation’s values. You will be a good communicator, experienced in working within a team and at ease with the ambassadorial role that being a Board Member of the Federation entails. The expectation to contribute positively at Board meetings will be met by demonstrating strong analytical and influencing skills, and your confidence in asking questions and being satisfied with the answers given.

As part of demonstrating a collegiate approach at Board level you will support the Chair and Executive as necessary. You will demonstrate a high degree of professionalism, impartiality, integrity and objectivity.

In addition to the specific attributes we are looking for, there are a range of competencies and expectations that our Board Members must demonstrate. It is not exhaustive but we expect all Board Members to be able to demonstrate ability in these areas.

Specialist Competencies

Competence	Description
Strategic Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the ability to scan the environment and communicate messages and priorities that are consistent with the mission and strategy of the organisation. • Has the ability to ensure a clear vision and strategy is set.
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies papers in advance and prepares fully for meetings. • Keeps to appropriate level of detail • Asks questions appropriately. • Brings an original perspective to discussions • Thinks through implications of a proposal or action. • Satisfies themselves on the integrity of financial information and that financial controls and a robust system of risk management is in place • Spots omissions.
Communication & interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the credibility and interpersonal skills to represent the Federation and its members and engage effectively with stakeholders.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carries out the 'ambassadorial role' for the Federation with internal and external stakeholders, being positive and expressing views that are agreed by the Board.• Demonstrates practical application of equalities and diversity issues.• Listens to others' viewpoint.• Can express opinions.
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Competence	Description
Team player	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the ability to work with the Chair and Chief Executive as well as the rest of the Board to drive the business forward in a positive way. • Demonstrates appropriate behaviour at meetings. • Builds and maintains good relationships and networks within the sector and with Federation staff. • Challenges freely and constructively at Board meetings. • Sticks to Board decisions and respects confidentiality.
Governance & Corporate Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts in the best interests of the organisation. • Complies with the Federation's policies around declarations and conflicts of interest and confidentiality. • Sets a personal example to others by demonstrating the highest standards of ethics, integrity and probity.

Conditions of Board Membership

Period of appointment

Board positions are for a period of three years but board members can serve for up to nine years.

Time commitments

Board meetings will be held 5-6 times per year. These are typically held on a weekday morning, and typically last two hours. Additionally, all Board Members will be expected to attend some ad hoc meetings and events throughout the year. Board Members will be expected to sit on NIFHA committees.

Induction

An induction and familiarisation programme for Board Members will be provided and will be tailored to your specific needs. Training will be discussed and provided as necessary.

Appraisal

All Board Members will be subject to regular appraisal by the Chair.

Remuneration

Board Members are not remunerated. Board Members will be paid reasonable out of pocket expenses including, travel, mileage and overnight accommodation in line with NIFHA's expenses policy.

Potential conflicts of interest

You will need to give details of any business or other interests or any connections which, if you are appointed, could be misconstrued or cause embarrassment to NIFHA.

Equality and diversity

NIFHA has a positive approach to diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community.

Code of Governance

The NIFHA Board will operate under a new Code of Governance which is currently being developed. All Board Members will be expected to abide by and uphold these standards.

January 2021