



NOMINATIONS SERVICE

FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GOVERNANCE AND BOARD NOMINATIONS

Answers to some common questions about nominations and governance appointments are set out below. If you have a question that is not listed here, please contact us.

How much time is involved?

This depends on the board in question. It is common for boards to meet for a half or a whole day once a month. Preparation time might add another one to two days work per month.

How long will I serve on a board?

Most appointment terms are for three to five years.

Will I be paid?

Some positions on boards pay meeting fees, and most positions will reimburse travel and expenses. It is important to consider the financial cost of an appointment before you agree to it.

What about conflicts of interest?

A conflict of interest occurs when:

- you are connected to another organisation that might be in competition with the board you are serving on. For example, if you work for a particular bank, you would not be able to serve on the board of directors of a competing bank.
- you, or an organisation with which you are involved, stands to benefit financially from information you acquire while serving on a board. For example, if you are the secretary of a community organisation that regularly submits funding applications to a Lottery Grants Board, then being a member of that Lottery Grants Board and being involved in setting funding priorities may result in a conflict of interest.
- you are a member of a subsidiary board answerable to, or funded by, the new board you are joining. For example, if you sat on the board of Te Waka Toi, you could not also serve on the Creative New Zealand Arts Council Board. Te Waka Toi is a subsidiary of Creative New Zealand and is funded by the Council, so this would constitute a conflict of interest.

Note:

If the conflict of interest occurs only occasionally, it is possible for it to be managed as long as you have declared it. For example, you could absent yourself from discussions regarding any other organisations you are involved with. Always clarify any questions regarding possible conflicts of interest with the appointing agency before taking up a role.

What is a lay member?

A lay member is someone who is chosen to sit on a board, although they are not directly linked with the profession or sector in question, because they can provide a community view and add an outsider's perspective. For example, the Nurses' Council board has some members who are nurses and some lay members who are appointed specifically because they are not nurses.

What are my chances of being appointed?

It depends on how well your skills and experience match that of the position. A single vacancy can attract as many as 100 nominations. Several government agencies may provide nominations, as well as non-governmental organisations. Some positions are also advertised in newspapers inviting people to apply directly to be appointed.

It is important to be realistic, patient, and determined when seeking an appointment to a board.

How can I increase my chances?

Talk to people who have held governance roles and become familiar with the responsibilities and expectations required.

Become involved in governance roles in local community organisations or professional associations, and work your way up to regional and national level roles. For example, you might consider standing for a school board of trustees, the board of a local community organisation or a local branch of your professional association.

Keep an eye out for upcoming appointments that interest you.

Remember that the Ministry's Nominations Service can only work with the information you provide. It is essential that you complete all parts of our CV Requirements form. If your application form is missing information on relevant skills and experiences, the Ministry will not be able to nominate you.

Is governance experience essential?

Not always. You might be appointed to a board or a lower level committee without governance experience if you have any of the following:

- extensive voluntary or community experience
- specific expertise or highly specialised skills.

Try our self-evaluation checklist if you are unsure about your level of experience.

How can I improve my skills and knowledge?

There are many ways you can go about improving your governance skills and effectiveness as a board member. Some suggestions are:

- become a board member or director of local organisations, such as school boards of trustees or community groups
- complete directors' training courses, such as those offered by the Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit (CCMAU) and the Institute of Directors
- take on a governance role in your professional body at a national or regional level.

What happens to my application form?

The information on your form is stored in our database.

When the Ministry nominates you for a role, we send a copy of your details to the appointing agency. Officials from appointing agencies, and possibly MPs and Cabinet Ministers who are involved in the appointment process, may see your information.

When should I update my details?

Contact us as soon as the information on your CV changes, but particularly if your contact details change, otherwise we cannot contact you if a suitable position becomes available.

Should I define my special interests?

Yes. We are always happy to hear from people on our database who express an interest in a particular role. This information helps us identify suitable vacancies for you.

I am a public servant. Can I be appointed to a government board?

Public servants are not usually appointed to government boards and committees, unless they have specialist skills that cannot be found in a candidate outside the public service. However, you can be appointed to boards outside the public sector, so we may still wish to accept your application.

Where can I find further information about governance and nominations?

Other government agencies which run nominations services have information which may be useful. The following websites provide information about governance.

Governance education and information:

- CommunityNet Aotearoa's governance and management guideline links: <http://www.community.net.nz/>
- The 'Boards and Appointments' pages of the Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit website: <http://www.ccmau.govt.nz/>
- The 'Board Appointments' pages of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website, <http://mch.govt.nz>

- The 'Consumer Representation' pages on the Consumer Affairs Ministry website: <http://www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/>

Governance course providers:

[Institute of Directors](#)
[The Boardroom Practice Ltd](#)
[BoardWorks International Ltd](#)

Board membership courses:

[Creative New Zealand - PDF 863kb](#)
[Sport and Recreation New Zealand \(SPARC\)](#)

Which other government agencies operate nominations services?

We are one of several government agencies who nominate people for positions on government boards. Others are:

[Ministry of Māori Development \(Te Puni Kokiri\)](#)
[Ministry of Women's Affairs](#)
[Office of Ethnic Affairs](#) at the Department of Internal Affairs
[Office for Disability Issues](#) at the Ministry of Social Development
[Ministry of Consumer Affairs](#) at the Ministry of Economic Development

How to CONTACT the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs Nomination Service

For further information, contact:

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