



PEACEPLUS

Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



European Union



UK Government



Candidate Booklet

Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

3 Year Term of Appointment (With the Possibility of Extension)



Special EU Programmes Body
Comhlacht na gClár Speisialta AE
Special EU Schemes Boadie



Contents

FOREWORD	3
INTRODUCTION	4
GOOD PRACTICE PRINCIPLES.....	5
SUMMARY OF JOB.....	6
PERSON SPECIFICATION	7
THE SELECTION PROCESS	10
EQUALITY STATEMENT	14



FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in a role with the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

As an organisation, we pride ourselves on recruiting the best people and providing them with the tools and support they need to make a positive contribution to our work, while realising their full potential.

The Special EU Programmes Body is one of six cross-border bodies established under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. The SEUPB has the statutory remit for managing EU funding programmes within Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland.

For over twenty-five years, SEUPB has played a pivotal role in shaping a more peaceful and prosperous future for our region. Our mission remains as vital today as it was at the start: to foster collaboration, reconciliation, and growth. SEUPB's flagship funding programme, PEACEPLUS, builds on that legacy with a total investment of approximately €1.14 billion, backed by the EU, UK and Irish governments, and the Northern Ireland Executive. This funding supports a wide range of sectors, including health and social care, environmental sustainability, rural regeneration, smart towns and villages, and youth services, while continuing our fundamental work of embedding peace and reconciliation across the region.

The work we do is challenging but also incredibly rewarding, our offices in Belfast, Omagh and Monaghan are a hub of energy and enthusiasm. Our staff value the knowledge that they are making a positive and lasting contribution to society and the world that they live in.

We welcome those who share our vision for a better, more peaceful and more prosperous society and our belief that our combined effort can make that vision a reality.

This booklet will provide you with further information about the key responsibilities of the role you are applying for and sets out the skills and competencies required. We look forward to receiving your application.

Gina McIntyre
Chief Executive
Special EU Programmes Body



INTRODUCTION

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is one of six North South Bodies established in 1999 as a consequence of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement – an agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The SEUPB has the statutory remit for managing EU funding programmes within Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland, helping to foster peace and prosperity across the region.

For more than 25 years, the SEUPB has managed a number of European Union investment programmes, including the PEACE and INTERREG programmes.

A total of €3.39 billion has been invested through previous programmes, funding over 23,000 projects, and touching the lives of more than two million citizens.

The PEACEPLUS Programme will continue to provide this vital support to Northern Ireland and the border counties with an investment of €1.14 billion focusing on embedding peace and promoting prosperity across the region.

SEUPB Mission Statement:

“Underpinning Peace and Prosperity for People and Places.”

SEUPB Vision Statement:

“Inspiring people. Improving places. Investing in partnerships. Creating sustainable progress through peace and prosperity.”

Our Guiding Principles:

In carrying out our work we will adhere to the following guiding principles:

- Equality and Respect – We treat everyone fairly and with dignity, fostering an inclusive environment.
- Continuous Improvement – We embrace learning and innovation to enhance our impact.
- Excellence – We strive for the highest standards in everything that we do.
- Accountability – We are transparent and responsible in our actions and decisions.
- Integrity – We act ethically in the best interests of our stakeholders.



Good Practice Principles for Audit and Risk Assurance Committees

Principle 1: Membership, Independence, Objectivity and Understanding

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee should be independent and objective; in addition, each member should have a good understanding of the objectives and priorities of the organisation and of their role as an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee member.

Principle 2: Skills

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee should corporately own appropriate skills mix to allow it to carry out its overall function.

Principle 3: The Role of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee should support the Accounting Officer by reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances on governance, risk management, the control environment and the integrity of financial statements and the annual report.

Principle 4: Scope of Work

The scope of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's work should be defined in its terms of reference and should encompass all the assurance needs of the Accounting Officer. Within this, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee should have particular engagement with the work of Internal Audit, risk management, the External Auditor, and financial management and reporting issues.

Principle 5: Communication and Reporting

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee should ensure that it has effective communication with all key stakeholders, for example, the Accounting Officer, the Head of Internal Audit, the External Auditor and other relevant assurance providers e.g. Risk Manager.



SUMMARY OF JOB:

To provide an independent and objective perspective on control, risk and governance arrangements to support the Chief Executive in discharging her role as Accounting Officer.

ROLE DESCRIPTION:

The Committee's work is one of the means by which SEUPB can demonstrate to the public that its affairs are being conducted in an environment of openness, honesty and integrity. Primary responsibility for governance rests with the Chief Executive, who will look to the Committee for much of her assurance in this regard.

The Audit & Risk Assurance Committee membership comprises the Chairperson, independent members and Sponsor Departments (DOF and DPENDR). Attendees at the Committee meetings include representatives from Internal Audit, Audit Authority, External Audit (NIAO) and SEUPB senior management.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

The key responsibilities of the Independent Member of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee will be to:

- Work with Chair and members to ensure the effective functioning of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
- To advise the Accounting Officer on:
 - The strategic processes for risk, control and the Statement of Internal Control/Governance Statement;
 - The accounting policies and the Annual Financial Statements including the process for review of the accounts prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and management's letter of representation to External Audit (NIAO);
 - Adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity, including External Audit's management letter;
 - The planned activity and results of both Internal and External Audit;
 - Establishment and maintenance of effective working relationships with key stakeholders in Northern Ireland and Ireland;
 - Assurances relating to the management of the European Programmes for which SEUPB has the role of Managing Authority;
 - Assurances in respect of anti-fraud measures, cyber security positioning, whistle-blowing policies and investigations.

The above is given as a broad range of duties and is not intended to be a complete description of all tasks.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Independent Member of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

DURATION: 3 Year Term of Appointment (with the possibility of extension)

REMUNERATION: £476 per day up to 7 days per year plus travel and subsistence costs. Estimated time commitment is 5-7 days.

REPORTS TO: Chief Executive Officer

LOCATION:

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meetings will take place at the Clarence West Building, Clarence West Street, Belfast BT2 7GP.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA and QUALIFICATIONS:

Relevant Third Level Qualification

EXPERIENCE:

- 3 years' experience at Senior Management, Board / Senior Committee level
- Experience of implementing best practice in governance arrangements, risk management and internal control
- An understanding of financial reporting and financial control

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

- Thinking Strategically
- Analytical Thinking
- Making an impact with others
- Committing to the independent role
- Learning and self-development



Thinking Strategically

The effective independent member will for example:

- Understand the Public Sector environment and current economic conditions prevalent in Northern Ireland and Ireland.
- Understand the origin and reasoning behind key organisational and governmental policies, practices and procedures.
- Develop a strong working knowledge of Cross Border policy and strategy.
- Anticipate future consequences and trends accurately in respect of SEUPB re future funding policies and strategy.
- Have broad knowledge and perspective of EU related matters.
- Use common sense, past experience and judgement to identify key underlying issues.

Analytical Thinking

The effective independent member will for example:

- Make sound recommendations in a timely manner that adhere to SEUPB strategy and policy.
- Make sound recommendations based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience and judgement.
- Use rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems with effective solutions.
- Probe all relevant sources for answers.
- Be sought out by others for advice.

Making an Impact with Others

The effective independent member will for example:

- Develop effective working relationships with other members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, senior staff within SEUPB and other external stakeholders.
- Quickly find common ground to solve problems.
- Demonstrate self-confidence in dealing with a wide range of situations and people at all levels.
- Build on the ideas of others.
- Share information and expertise willingly.
- Speak with authority and persuasiveness.
- Proactively address contentious issues and act as arbitrator.
- Seek guidance from others where appropriate.
- Make useful outside contacts.



Committing to the Independent Role

The effective independent member will for example:

- Understand his/her role as an independent member on the SEUPB Audit & Risk Assurance Committee.
- Be committed to implementing SEUPB strategy and policy.
- Adhere to SEUPB values at all times.
- Act in line with those values;
- Support equal and fair treatment and opportunity for all.

Learning and Self-Development

The effective independent member will for example:

- Be open to change.
- Enjoy the challenge of unfamiliar tasks.
- Quickly grasp the essence and the underlying structure of issues in the SEUPB environment.
- Be personally committed to and actively work to continuously improve self.
- Learn new skills and knowledge.

In addition, it is essential that candidates adhere to the seven principles of conduct underpinning public life as defined by the Office of Public Appointments:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

These will be used for shortlisting purposes in the event of a large number of applicants.

EXPERIENCE

- Previous Audit and Risk Assurance Committee experience.
- Understanding of the challenges facing Cross Border Bodies.
- Experience/understanding of EU funding Programmes.
- Experience/understanding of IT provision.
- Experience of forensic accounting.



THE SELECTION PROCESS

Eligibility Sift

Please note shortlisting of candidates will be based on the information contained in their application.

COMPETENCY APPLICATION FORM GUIDANCE

Personal Details

Enter your title, name, preferred name to be addressed by and address on the front page of the application form.

We may contact you by email or by telephone, therefore include an up-to-date telephone number and email address that we can contact you on. We issue notifications by email, so check your email regularly if you have applied for a job with us.

Education and Qualifications

Use this section to show us that you have the necessary qualifications and any professional memberships to do the job. Ensure you read the Person Specification when completing this section.

List all the academic institutions you've attended in this section. Include the name of the institution, the courses you took and any qualifications you received.

If you are applying for a job on the basis of a qualification which is not specifically detailed in the person specification, but which you consider to be a relevant equivalent qualification, you must highlight the areas or modules which you think are relevant. This will enable the panel to decide if it is an equivalent qualification. If you don't provide details on the equivalency of your qualification, the panel may not consider your application any further.

Some jobs will require you to have professional qualifications, or to be a member of a professional body. This will be detailed in the employee specification.

If you are currently studying for or waiting for exam results, we cannot consider these unless otherwise stated in the person specification.

Employment History

Complete the current employment box if you are currently working. This does not only apply to paid work, so include any voluntary work or work experience placements that you have done or are doing at the moment.

Include the companies that are most relevant to the position you are currently applying for. If you have gaps in your employment, explain them. Show how you



increased your skills, perhaps through volunteering, and any courses you've completed.

We require the exact dates of your employment history as these are used for short-listing purposes.

Criteria Questions

This is the most important section of the application form, and it is an opportunity for you to tell us about yourself, what you can do and the skills and experience you have which make you a good candidate for the job.

You need to show us that you meet the eligibility and essential criteria for the job. You should refer to the person specification, as this will detail what essential criteria you will need evidence of on your application form. Different jobs require different skills, knowledge, competencies, and qualifications.

The selection panel will not read across the various sections of the application form. If you submit this information in another box or in a different section of the application form, it may not be considered by the selection panel.

If you do not tell us, we will not know!

We will not make any assumptions about you or your abilities, even if you already work with us. Do not leave out any relevant skills, knowledge or experience you have gained, for example voluntary or unpaid work – it is still relevant.

You are asked to give 'personal and specific examples' which demonstrate your experience, so include examples of situations that you have experienced that demonstrate what is being asked for. What we mean by personal and specific examples is evidence of your personal involvement in this experience, how you dealt with it and relevant examples to show the breadth of your experience.

The interview panel can only make a decision to invite you to the next stage of the selection process based on the information you provide in your application form, and how this matches the criteria in the person specification. If there is a required length of experience, make sure you include the start and end dates of your experience, so the panel know you meet the timeframe.

Good Example Answers

To demonstrate your personal involvement, you should use 'I', not 'we', when completing your application form. Using 'I' portrays your personal involvement more and lets the panel know exactly what your personal involvement was and what you were personally responsible for doing. 'We' gives the impression that you did not personally undertake the duties or that you were somehow involved but didn't really have ownership or responsibility for the experience – it does not tell the panel about



your personal experience, only that of a team or the organisation. It is evidence of your individual personal experience that the panel is looking for.

You want to customise your responses on each job application form you fill out. Read the job description and be sure to answer each question thoroughly. It is tempting to copy and paste responses in multiple job applications, but this will not create a strong application. Use relevant terminology and phrases that are unique to the industry and will catch the eye of the reader. Tailor your work experience, references, and answers to each job.

Always check the word count for each question and make sure your answer is as close to the word count as possible. Writing too little suggests that you may have underestimated the importance of the question or do not have the level of experience required for the role. Not being able to complete the question within the word count may suggest that you are not expressing your point clearly, or that you need to focus on a specific area. You should also provide specific detail of your experience, that is, how you went about gaining the experience, what you did, what this involved and provide examples which demonstrate the breadth of your experience.

Use the STAR method.

The STAR method is a way to keep your answers concise, clear, and full of relevant details. STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action, Result. It is useful for job applications when answering role-based questions about previous experiences. Using the STAR method can help you explain what you learned from previous situations and how you will apply the skills you gained to a new position. It's important to thoroughly proofread your application to find any grammatical errors, misspelt words, or confusing language. Use key phrases that will catch the reader's eye and show that you understand the job specifications.

It is helpful to have someone else read your application, as another perspective can find mistakes you might miss.

Shortlisting

The first stage in the selection process will be to conduct a sift of completed application forms against the essential qualification criteria. Applicants who have not fully demonstrated on their application form how they meet this criterion will not be progressed to the next stage of the process.

Application forms are formatted so that applicants are required to demonstrate how they meet each essential competency. The onus will be on applicants who are completing application forms to demonstrate how they meet each competency.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher



standard to those stated above. If putting forward an equivalent qualification, please provide the type of qualification and date awarded. The date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body. If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.

Should the SEUPB receive a high level of applications, the desirable criteria may be applied to shortlist candidates for interview.

At the Interview

Those candidates called for interview will be questioned on the areas covered in the application form, personnel specification, and job description. Candidates will be asked questions to enable them to illustrate their competence in each of the areas. They may enlarge upon the information provided on the application form or use different information to illustrate the answer. Candidates will be assessed against the essential criteria and key competencies identified as being a requirement for the role.



EQUALITY STATEMENT

SEUPB is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from suitably qualified candidates irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not they have dependants.

The Body would particularly welcome applications from the Protestant community who are currently under-represented in the workforce. The Body would also welcome female applicants as they are currently under-represented on the Committee.