




Dochas

The Irish Association of Non-Governmental
Development Organisations

GOVERNANCE AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

May 2006

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I. OUTLINE OF THE ORGANISATION

1. Short Presentation of Dóchas

Dóchas is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations (NGDO's). Dóchas provides a forum for consultation and co-operation between its members and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues.

Dóchas was formed in October 1993, following a merger between CONGOOD - which represented the common interests of Irish NGDO's since 1974, and the Irish National Assembly - which linked most Irish NGDOs into a European Union NGO network.

Vision:

The vision of Dóchas is to contribute, through the cooperative efforts of our Members, to sustainable human development in a world where people are able to enjoy their rights and are empowered to fulfil their needs.

As the national platform of Irish Development NGOs, Dóchas represents its members to the European Union and the Irish Government, on issues of importance to the policy environment in which they work. By promoting cooperation among its members, Dóchas contributes to improving the quality and impact of their work.

Purpose:

Dóchas aims to be a vibrant, outward-looking network, with an active and informed membership representative of the Irish development sector, providing services and promoting effective action to bring about sustainable development.

Core Values:

Dóchas is a network of independent and diverse organisations. It is this diversity of experience and perspective that represents the strengths of the network, which is built on the democratic principles of equality and transparency. Dóchas' priorities are set by its members.

Dóchas' member organisations are committed to working with each other and with others, seeking collective strength and mutual learning. By working together in a network, Dóchas member organisations want to contribute to the impact of their work, promote attitudes and public policies that serve to eradicate global poverty, and facilitate the interaction between the Development NGO sector and other interested parties.

Relationships:

Dóchas is defined by the relationships between its members. These are based on mutual interest and shared commitments to Human Rights, justice and the eradication of poverty, and are constantly intensified through the Dóchas governance structures as well as through its working groups and common activities.

Dóchas engages with a diverse range of external stakeholders, including Government, Irish and European civil society organisations, media, academics and the general public. Dóchas aims to continually build on these relationships in an effort to build strategic alliances in the fight against poverty and global injustice.

Dóchas' work is guided by its Strategic Plan 2005-2009, formally approved at the 2005 AGM. This plan is operationalised in annual Action Plans and budgets.

1.1 Dóchas Governance Structure

Dóchas is governed by its members, through the Annual General Meeting which elects a Board to manage the network on behalf of the members. The Board is assisted by the Secretariat, which is responsible for the management of the day-to-day business of the network.

Dóchas' governance structure is described in the Memorandum and Articles of Association (available from the Dóchas office).

These deal with the following issues:

Memorandum of Association:

- Name and primary objective of the Company
- Not-for-profit nature of the Company
- Legal liability of the Company's Directors and Members

Articles of Association:

- Criteria for membership
- Members' responsibilities
- Role, responsibilities and procedures of the Annual General Meeting
- Powers and duties of the Board
- Appointment and retirement of members of the Board
- Accounting requirements
- Indemnification of Board members
- Provisions for the winding up of the Company

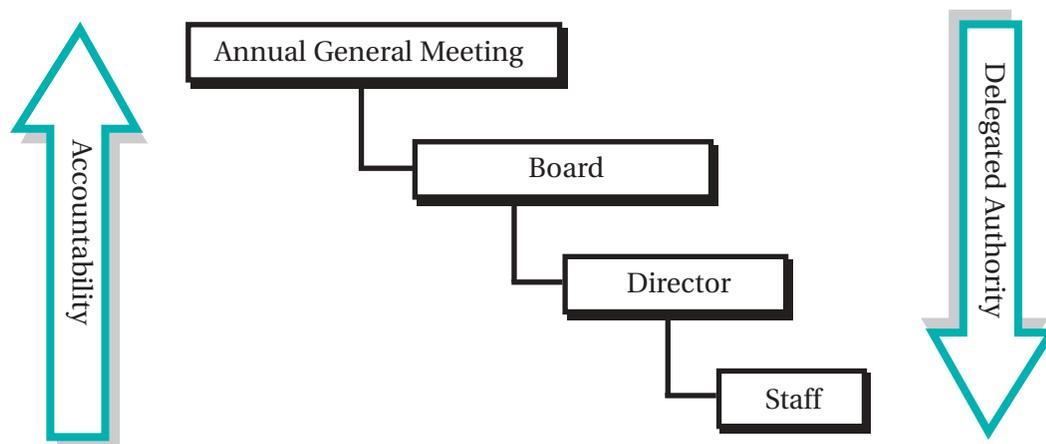
All other provisions governing Dóchas' work can be laid down in bye-laws, to be approved by the Board and/or the Annual General Meeting. These bye-laws are included in the present document.

The Board is legally responsible and accountable for governing and managing the organisation. Members of the Board are appointed in a voluntary capacity and serve as Directors of the Company.

The Board elects a:

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Staff Liaison Officer

The Board delegates responsibility to the Director of Dóchas for the day-to-day management of the organisation.



1.2 Functions and Membership of the Board

The main responsibilities of the Board are:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine Dóchas' mission and scope • Formulate broad policies and objectives for the organisation • Provide the framework for the organisation's actions and operations |
| Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign priorities within Dóchas' mission and objectives • Ensure effective organisational planning and the acquisition of sufficient resources for the proper functioning of Dóchas |
| Ownership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent Dóchas to all important stakeholders • Govern the organisation • Ensure the organisation's sustainability |
| Oversight | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard Dóchas' core values and principles • Determine and monitor the organisation's activities • Account to the public for the work of Dóchas, including through fiscal accountability • Evaluate the performance of the Director and other staff • Serve as an appeal body in situations of conflict |
| Impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the organisation's impact, relevance and efficiency, by monitoring Dóchas' activities, as well as those of its members |
| Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide continuity for the organisation • Develop the long-term vision to lead the organisation in strategic directions • Select a Director to whom responsibility for the management of the organisation is delegated • Guide and support the Director in his/her role |

Membership of the Board

Board members are elected by the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The term of office of a Board member is three years. One-third of the members of the Board must retire at each AGM. A retiring Board member is eligible for re-election for a second three-year term but must step down following the completion of that second term of office. After a lapse of one year following such retirement a member is eligible for re-election.

In the event that one-third of members are not eligible for retirement, the longest serving members shall offer themselves up for retirement before the expiration of their term of office. If, however, they are subsequently re-elected at the AGM, they will only serve the remainder of the term of office prior to their retirement.

Members of the Board are elected by organisation. An organisation may, in consultation with the Director and with the Board, change its representative before the expiration of its three-year term. The replacement representative will serve the unexpired portion of the organisation's term of office.

The Board may from time to time decide to invite other organisations and individuals to attend its meetings in an observer capacity. Chairpersons of Dóchas Working Groups can be invited to attend meetings of the Board in an observer capacity.

1.3 Board Member Job Descriptions

A Board member:

- Regularly attends Board meetings and important related meetings;
- Makes serious commitment to participate actively in committee work;
- Volunteers for and willingly accepts assignments and completes them thoroughly and on time;
- Stays informed about Board matters, prepares him/herself well for meetings, and reviews and comments on minutes and reports;
- Gets to know other Board members and builds a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus;
- Is an active participant in the board's annual evaluation and planning efforts;
- Participates in efforts to maintain good relations with donors and in fund-raising for the organisation.

1.4 Officers Job Descriptions

1. Chairperson

- Is a member of the Board;
- Is Chairperson of the Board and of the whole body;
- Is a partner with the Director in achieving the organisation's mission;
- Provides leadership to the Board;
- Chairs meetings of the Board;
- Reviews with the Director any issues of concern to the Board;
- Encourages the Board's role in strategic planning;
- Discusses issues confronting the organisation and the sector with the Director;

- Helps guide and mediate Board actions with regard to organisational priorities and governance concerns;
- Monitors financial planning and financial reports;
- Plays a leading role in relations with donors and in fundraising activities;
- Informally evaluates the participation and effectiveness of Board members;
- Evaluates annually the performance of the organisation in achieving its mission;
- Performs other responsibilities assigned by the Board.

2. Vice Chairperson

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in Board Member Job Description (see 1.3 above), this position:

- Is a member of the Board;
- Performs Chairperson responsibilities when the Chair cannot be available (see Chair Job Description);
- Reports to the Chairperson;
- Works closely with the Chairperson, Director and Secretariat;
- Performs other responsibilities as assigned by the Board.

3. Treasurer

- Is a member of the Board;
- Is responsible for overseeing the effective financial management of the organisation;
- Works with the Director and the Office Manager to provide annual budget in the first instance to the Board and subsequently the AGM for approval;
- Ensures development, and Board review, of financial policies and procedures;
- Works with the Director, Office Manager and Auditor on the production of the Annual Audited Accounts, for discussion and approval in the first instance by the Board and subsequently by the AGM;
- Is responsible to the Board for the discharge of its obligations under Articles 66 to 69 of Dóchas' Articles of Association.

4. Staff Liaison Officer

- Formally evaluates the performance of the Director, through twice-annual performance review meetings;
- Serves as point of reference for any issues that cannot be worked out mutually by staff, in line with the procedures laid down in the Dóchas Employment Policy (see Section II, 2.1., page 14).

5. Company Secretary

The Office Manager acts as the Company Secretary and as such:

- Is not a member of the Board;
- Maintains records of Board meetings and ensures effective management of Dóchas' records;
- Ensures minutes are distributed to members shortly after each meeting;
- Is sufficiently familiar with legal documents (memorandum & articles, by-laws, Revenue Commissioners letters, etc.) to note applicability during meetings;
- Maintains records of all AGM's;
- Makes annual returns and files appropriate documentation with the Companies Registration Office on an annual basis.

1.5 Role of the Dóchas Director

The Job Description of the Dóchas Director is included in annex.

Overall, the Director has the following roles:

- **Manager** – The Director is responsible for the overall strategic and operational management of Dóchas. The Director formulates policies and planning recommendations to the Board, decides or guides courses of action and ensures the implementation of the action plans of the organisation. He/she manages the (human, financial and physical) resources of the organisation.
- **Leader** – The Director advises the Board and strategises for the organisation. He/she liaises with members, and motivates members and staff to ensure their active participation in the work of Dóchas.
- **Spokesperson** – The Director acts as chief spokesperson for Dóchas, and is responsible for building the profile and reputation of the organisation.
- **Information Bearer** – The Director ensures members, staff and Board have sufficient and up-to-date information, and interfaces between the Board, members, employees and Dóchas' stakeholders.
- **Developer** - Assists in the selection and evaluation of Board members, supports the Board during orientation and self-evaluation and assessment of the Director.

The Director attends Board meetings but is not a member of the Board.

2. Membership

Membership of Dóchas is open to non-profitmaking Development NGOs independently established and located in the Republic of Ireland or in Northern Ireland and who regard international development cooperation – including development education – as an important aspect of their aims and work. Rules for membership are laid down in the Articles of Association and in our Criteria for Membership of Dóchas (see Section I, 2.3., page 8 of this document).

2.1 Rights and Responsibilities of Members

Dóchas members are expected to:

1. Comply with the Rules for Membership as laid down in Dóchas' Articles of Association and with the Criteria for Membership of Dóchas.
2. Ensure that the organisation's aims, objectives and practice reflect the spirit and intention of Dóchas.
3. Participate, where possible and applicable, in Dóchas' organised events.
4. Participate, where possible and applicable, in Dóchas Working Groups.
5. Contribute appropriate information for inclusion in the Dóchas Newsletter and in Wednesday's News.
6. Submit Annual Audited Accounts to Dóchas, clearly showing voluntary income figure, for the purpose of calculating annual membership fees.

2.2 Membership Fees

In line with Dóchas' Articles of Association, "A Member shall pay the annual subscription in force for Members at the time it becomes a Member of the Company and shall pay the annual subscription for Members as determined from time to time by the General Assembly."

The membership fees form the basis of Dóchas' autonomy and provide the key resources necessary for the implementation of the organisation's strategy.

Membership fees are calculated according to the following formula, approved at the 2005 AGM:

	Voluntary Income €		FEE
	(min)	(max)	
1	0	100,000	250
2	100,000	1,000,000	0.25% of voluntary income
3	1,000,000	1,250,000	2,500
4	1,250,000	1,500,000	3,000
5	1,500,000	2,000,000	3,500
6	2,000,000	3,000,000	4,000
7	3,000,000	5,000,000	4,500
8	5,000,000	7,500,000	5,000
9	7,500,000	10,000,000	7,500
10	10,000,000	25,000,000	15,000
11	25,000,000	50,000,000	25,000

2.3 Criteria for Membership of Dóchas

This section aims to highlight our expectations from the members in addition to the more formal responsibilities outlined in the Articles of Association.

The following are the Criteria for Membership of Dóchas (as provided for in Section 4(h) of the Articles of Association):-

1. Membership Applications

Applications for membership shall be made in the manner outlined in section 4(h) of the Articles of Association and in accordance with the Procedures for Dealing with Applications for Membership of Dóchas (see 2.4, page 10) which have been approved by the Dóchas Board.

2. General Criteria for Applicant Organisations

- (i) The applicant Non-Governmental Development Organisation (NGDO) should be non-profit making, humanitarian and non-partisan in its aims.
- (ii) The applicant NGDO should exercise its activities at a national, or in any case at a wider than local level.

- (iii) A significant part of the applicants work should be concerned with development, (such as projects, development education, emergency aid or volunteers). (As per section 4(c) of the Articles of Association).
- (iv) The applicant organisation should be headquartered in Ireland, or, if it is not, the Irish branch should have substantial powers of decision-making in its own right, including control and disposal of funds and appointment of personnel.
- (v) The organisation should be established in Ireland for at least two years.
- (vi) Copies of constitution and audited accounts for the two most recent years and any other relevant documentation shall be furnished on request to the Board of Dóchas and if necessary to the Annual General Meeting.
- (vii) The existing members must be satisfied that the aims, objectives and practice of the applicant organisation reflects the spirit and intention of Dóchas as well as complying with the criteria set out above, and that it has indicated acceptance of the following policy statements:
 - (a) NGDO Charter – Basic Principles of Development and Humanitarian Aid NGDOs in the European Union
 - (b) Code of Conduct on Images and Messages Relating to the Third World

3. Criteria for Continuing Membership

- (i) All Dóchas members must submit Annual Audited Accounts to Dóchas by 30th June each year at the latest. For the purpose of calculating membership fees these should clearly show the organisation's voluntary income figure.
- (ii) Members must pay their Annual Membership fee within 30 days from the date on which the invoice is issued.
- (iii) Members failing to pay their Annual Membership fee in the required 30 days from the date on which the invoice is issued shall have their membership reviewed by the Board.
- (iv) Following the process outlined in (iii) above Members failing to pay outstanding Membership fees in the time prescribed by the Board shall forfeit membership and will have to re-apply. In the event that an organisation decides to re-apply for membership in the future any outstanding fees must be paid before any new application for membership can be considered
- (v) Members failing to attend three successive Annual General Assemblies shall forfeit membership and will have to re-apply.

- (vi) Members must continue to comply with the general requirements for membership, and demonstrate a continuing interest in active co-operation and involvement with Dóchas and its work.
- (vii) Any member organisation which appears to have ceased to comply with the requirements of Sections 2 or 3(vi) above, or which by its activities or orientation is considered to bring Dóchas into disrepute shall have its membership reviewed under the terms of reference of Section 4(j) of the Articles of Association.

4. Voting

Each member organisation shall be entitled to one vote at meetings of the AGM.

5. Amendments

These criteria for membership may be amended by a simple majority vote of the AGM convened on three weeks' notice, which notice shall include details of the proposed changes.

2.4 Procedures for Dealing with Applications for Membership of Dóchas

1. On receipt of an enquiry regarding the procedure for applying for membership of Dóchas the secretariat will send the following documents to the enquirer:
 - Background information on Dóchas
 - List of member agencies
 - Strategic Plan
 - Criteria for Membership
 - Memorandum and Articles of Association
 - Most recent issue of the Dóchas newsletter
 - Annual Report presented to the most recent AGM
 - Dóchas Undertaking for new applicants
2. All applications for membership must be accompanied by the following documents:
 - (a) A letter of application.
 - (b) The applicants constituting document.
 - (c) Activities Reports for the two most recent years
 - (d) Audited Accounts for the two most recent financial years.
 - (e) Written support from two existing members of Dóchas.
 - (f) A signed copy of the Dóchas undertaking for new applicants.

All of the above information must be received by the secretariat by 31st January in order to allow the secretariat to process the application for presentation to the Dóchas Board.

3. Upon receipt of an application for membership the secretariat will check that all of the above documents have been received and will contact the applicant in the event that anything is missing.

4. The application will be brought to the attention of the Board as soon as practicable.
5. All applications for membership will be assessed in the first instance by a sub-group consisting of the Dóchas Director and Office Manager, and subsequently by the Board, on the basis of the documentation received and its conformity to the technical requirements laid down in the Dóchas Memorandum and Articles of Association, and in the Dóchas criteria for membership.
6. In examining the applications the sub-group will revert to the “Criteria for Membership of Dóchas” as well as to the rules for Membership as outlined under Article 4 (a)-(k) of Dóchas’ constitution.
7. Following the review of the applicants documentation the sub-group will write to and/or meet with the applicants representatives in the event that further information and/or clarification is required.
8. Following this process the sub-group will make a recommendation to the Board in relation to each application for membership received.
9. If upon scrutiny it is clear that the application does not meet the criteria for membership the Board may turn it down. In all other cases the Board will pass the application to the AGM, with or without a recommendation.
10. A two-thirds majority decision of Members present and voting at the AGM shall be required for approval of membership.
11. In the event that an application for membership is turned down the applicant is free to re-apply.

II. FINANCE AND PROCEDURES

1. Finance

1.1 Budget process and responsibilities

Dóchas currently has 2 bank accounts (deposit and current) and a special reserve account. The current account is used for income and expenditure relating to Staff, Office and Programme and Recurrent costs, as well as project expenses.

The annual budget is drafted by the Director and the Office Manager in consultation with the Treasurer. It is discussed with the Board and once approved is forwarded to the AGM for discussion and adoption if approved.

The table below illustrates Dóchas financial transactions:

Activity	Comment
Payrolls	Office Manager weekly, other staff monthly
Bank reconciliation	Monthly
Year End reconciliation	February/March
Membership Fees	Audited Accounts requested in June
	Fees calculated in September
	Payable in October
Irish Aid grants	As stipulated in relevant agreement
Audit	Feb-March
AGM	April
Budget process	Jan – April
Donor reports	As stipulated in relevant agreement
Activity reports	April
Annual Action Plans	Jan - Feb
Insurance	December
Rent	Quarterly
Rates	Quarterly

1.2 Delegated authority

Area of Authority	Limits	Designated Persons
Legal documents	-	Any two from: Chairperson, Treasurer, Director, Office Manager.
Leases	-	Any two from: Chairperson, Treasurer, Director, Office Manager.
Cheques	€1-3,500	Any two from Director, Office Manager, Treasurer, Chairperson
	€3,501 - upwards	One Staff Member (i.e. Director or Office Manager) + One Officer (i.e. Chairperson or Treasurer)
Petty Cash	-	Director, Office Manager
Staff Advances	-	Director
Staff Expenses	-	Director, Office Manager
Board expenses	-	Director, Chairperson
Annual/Sick Leave	-	Director
Contracts of Employment	-	Director

1.3 Audit arrangements

The auditor is appointed on an annual basis by the Annual General Meeting.

The Office Manager provides the Auditor with all of the necessary documentation in relation to the Audit. The Auditor completes the audit and presents a draft for discussion with the Director, Office Manager and Treasurer. The final draft is presented to the Board by the Treasurer. If all is found to be in order the document is signed by two members of the Board, normally the Chairperson and Treasurer. The final Audited Accounts are then forwarded to the AGM for discussion and formal adoption if approved. The Audited Accounts are subsequently lodged with the Companies Registration Office.

2. Human Resources

2.1 Employment Policy

1. Statement of Principles

Dóchas aims, as far as is possible within the constraints of its resources, to provide working conditions which are in line with best practice in comparable domestic organisations and which allow employees to work in an enjoyable, effective and productive manner.

This statement applies to all employees of Dóchas. Dóchas will seek to apply the same principles without binding itself to all other individuals working in Dóchas, whether volunteers or trainees on Government schemes, where possible.

To this end, the content and implementation of this paper will be reviewed continually in consultation between a staff representative and the Board to ensure that best practice is adhered to.

2. Recruitment and Selection

a) Advertising

Recruitment and selection of suitably qualified staff will be made from the widest possible field. Positions will normally be advertised internally and externally at the discretion of the Director. At a minimum, the job vacancy will be advertised in the Wednesday News and a notice will be sent to all member organisations.

b) Criteria

Dóchas is an equal opportunities employer and will ensure that the principles of employment equality are applied to recruitment, promotion, training and work experience and to all terms and conditions of employment. Specifically this means:

- equal access to employment, promotion, training and work experience, on merit
- equality in conditions of employment
- a working environment free from harassment

All project and assistant posts are open for job-sharing unless there are exceptional reasons preventing this.

c) Documents

A job description will be drawn up for each post to be filled, detailing the core responsibilities and tasks relating to the job. All job descriptions are subject to continual review and may be amended by the Director in consultation with the relevant staff member(s).

A person specification will be drawn up for each post to be filled, describing the experience, skills, qualifications, knowledge and personal qualities required to carry out the job satisfactorily. This ensures that, before the recruitment process gets underway, there are agreed criteria against which all applicants are assessed.

d) Short-listing and Interviews

Short-listing of candidates will be carried out, where possible, by three people, but in any case not less than two people.

The interview panel shall consist of the Director and two other people. The interview panel shall be constituted on the basis of the panel's expertise and experience with the type of post being advertised. Dóchas shall endeavour to have at least one member of the Board on the interview panel, or at least one outsider.

Travel costs for job interviews will be reimbursed to all interviewees up to a maximum of €50 for domestic travel and €300 for travel from overseas destinations. Dóchas will not be liable for visa, accommodation or living costs incurred by interviewees or for relocation costs incurred by successful candidates.

Interview panels will be given guidelines on good interview practice and on the prevention of discrimination.

A written record will be kept of the assessments made for each applicant for at least six months after a letter is sent to an unsuccessful candidate. The written record for the successful candidate will be placed in the personnel file.

Any candidate who feels that s/he has been unlawfully discriminated against has a right of complaint, which can be exercised by writing to the Director. If the complaint is upheld an appropriate remedy will, if possible, be offered. If the complaint is not upheld by management, the complainant still retains the right to have the complaint investigated by the appropriate mechanisms of the state.

e) Decision-making

Decisions of the interview panel will be based upon the agreed criteria in the person specification and job description.

Interview dates will be communicated to the Board well in advance and the decision by the interview panel shall be communicated by the Director to all Board members.

3. Contract of Employment

Upon accepting an offer of employment from Dóchas, the member of staff will receive, as soon as practicable and in any event not later than two months from the date of commencement of employment, a contract. This contract sets out the conditions under which the member of staff will be employed. All contracts will be subject to a probationary period, the duration of which will be specified in individual contracts. The member of staff will be required to sign and return the contract to Dóchas as acknowledgement and acceptance of the terms and conditions of the contract. S/he will keep a copy for his/her own reference.

Staff on temporary contracts will receive full information on a regular basis regarding the status of their contracts. In cases where an employee is being offered an extension to his/her contract the employee should receive a new contract as early as practicable. The member of staff will be required to sign and return the contract to management as acknowledgement and acceptance of the terms and conditions of the contract. S/he will keep a copy for his/her own reference.

The contract will specify the employment relationship between Dóchas and the specific employee, i.e. permanent or fixed-term, full-time, part-time or job-share.

Dóchas aims to provide permanent employment. However, in view of our funding situation, this may not always be possible. Management also aims to provide, where possible, consistent terms of employment for all employees, as detailed in this statement and in the individual employee's contract.

Members of staff undertaking other outside employment are expected to ensure that the other employment will not impair the efficiency of their employment in Dóchas and will not conflict with the interests of the organisation. Some positions do not lend themselves to being combined with outside jobs. Changes in this aspect of the contract status will be decided by the Director in the light of the overall staffing arrangements at that time, and in consultation with wider staff. Management decision is final.

4. Termination of Employment

In the event of termination of employment, staff will be entitled to receive notice in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act. Employees will be entitled to receive one month's notice, or as the individual contract of employment states, of termination of Employment. Where it is mutually agreed a lesser period of notice may be given. However, Dóchas reserves the right, in appropriate circumstances (e.g. in the event of gross misconduct and in accordance with its disciplinary procedure) to dismiss employees without notice and without payment in lieu of notice.

In the event of a staff member terminating their employment with Dóchas the period outlined above or those contained in individual contracts of employment will apply. The right to pay in lieu of notice is reserved by Dóchas.

5. Payment

5.1. Salary Scales

Each job in the organisation shall be graded, either on the basis of a job evaluation scheme, or by comparison with existing comparable grading systems in other organisations. The starting salary of candidates will be decided on the basis of agreed criteria. Candidates will receive the criteria at time of offer.

5.2 Review of Salaries

Management will review all salary scales on an annual basis, to check if the scales applying are still appropriate on the basis either of the job evaluation that took place or the comparable grade that was used. This review will include any relevant collective agreements that may have arisen in the wider sector.

5.3. Increments

An annual increment, on the appropriate scale will normally be paid to each employee subject to the conditions in the standard contract. A copy of the current salary scale will be given to each employee. Increments will be awarded annually on the anniversary of the date on which the contract of employment commenced and until the employee reaches the top of the scale.

Save in exceptional circumstances Dóchas will award a cost of living increase, based on the CPI for year on year inflation, annually on the anniversary of the date on which the contract of employment commenced in the case of employees who have reached the top of their pay scale.

Deferral of increments will only occur where there is a financial crisis or as part of disciplinary action. In such a case management will inform the employee of this decision in addition to discussing the matter with the employee, giving the reasons why it has been deferred. Employees will have the right to appeal the deferral where it is a disciplinary measure, and to be represented by their union.

Payment modalities will be decided on an individual basis. Payment will be made in arrears. Details of gross pay, deductions, etc. will be itemised on the pay slip.

5.4. Long Service Increments

In the case of permanent staff, the last point on the scale will be a long service increment, payable to those who have worked for the organisation for ten years or over and will be payable after two years at the previous point.

5.5. Payments from other organisations

Staff in receipt of reimbursements for activities carried out in the name of Dóchas, and as part of their work for Dóchas (e.g. radio interviews, workshop fees, etc.) must pass these receipts to Dóchas.

6. Hours of Work

6.1. Working Week

The standard working week shall be 35 hours, Monday to Friday, with normal office hours being from 09.00 to 17.00, less one hour for lunch. However, from time to time it may be necessary for the purposes of carrying out the job to work beyond and outside these hours and time off in lieu (see 6.2 below) of such time worked shall be allowed.

Employees may choose to avail of the flexi arrangements in operation in the Dóchas office whereby employees can start and finish outside these hours and build up time off in lieu (see 6.2. below) which can be taken at the rate of one day a month or can be added to annual leave (see 7.1.).

Staff should communicate any changes to their working hours to the Director at the earliest convenience.

6.2 Time off in lieu

Employees are entitled to time off in lieu for hours worked outside the standard office hours (see 6.1. above).

6.3. Recording Time

The time worked by employees will be recorded on a standard time sheet by each member of staff. Staff will record the reason for any time worked outside standard hours as agreed in advance with the Director on the time sheet. The time sheets, showing accrued time owed or owing, will be given to the Office Manager at the end of every month. The Office Manager will maintain the records on time owed to staff. All staff will have access to the records.

6.4. Working from home

Staff may work from home on specific occasions as agreed with the Director. Staff working from home should be available for standard working hours (see 5.5 above).

Staff should be able to claim expenses for phone calls made from home during the course of their work on production of an itemised bill.

Staff working from home should acknowledge the impact this is having in the office and ensure that staff in the office do not have to carry any extra work as a result if this is possible.

6.5 Working outside the office

When staff are working outside the office they should arrange to notify the Office Manager.

6.6. Part-time hours

The minimum working hours which an employee on a part-time contract can work is 17.5 hours, or 2.5 days.

7 Leave Entitlements

7.1. Annual Leave

The holiday year runs from 1st January to 31st December each year. Employees employed on the 1st January in any year shall be entitled to a total of 28 days annual holiday, including Good Friday (in addition to Public Holidays and Bank Holidays, see 6.2. below) with pay. In the case of part-time staff this figure is reduced pro-rata. The Dóchas office is closed for the Christmas and New Year period from the last working day before Christmas Eve until the first working day after New Year's Day. Three of these days are public holiday's (Christmas Day, St Stephen's Day and New Years Day) and the remainder will be taken from holiday entitlements.

Holiday dates should be agreed and approved with the Director. Annual leave plus time off in lieu may be accrued to the next consecutive holiday year to a maximum of seven days.

In the event of termination of employment for any reason employees shall be entitled to annual holiday, or pay in lieu thereof, based on the number of months worked in that year less any holiday leave already taken. Where holidays have been taken in excess of accrued entitlement at the date of termination such excess shall be deducted from monies due.

Staff members going on leave of more than one week should do a hand-over briefing to ensure that issues s/he is handling are tracked.

The Office Manager is responsible for keeping a record of leave. All staff members will have open access to the record for the purposes of helping them to plan their own leave schedule.

Each individual staff member should also keep a record of the leave they have taken.

7.2 Public Holiday Entitlements

In addition to annual leave (see 7.1. above) employees are entitled in accordance with the Holidays (Employees) Act, 1973, to paid leave on the following public holidays if falling on a weekday or, if not, the next day: 1st January (New Year's Day); St Patrick's Day; Easter Monday; the first Monday in May; the first Monday in June; the first Monday in August; the last Monday in October; Christmas Day and St Stephen's Day.

7.3. Absence/Sickness

Employees, unable to attend work due to illness or for any other reason should contact the Director or the Office Manager as soon as possible on the first day of absence and if possible before 10.30 a.m. Payment will be made for absence from work due to sickness or injury for the first three days without a medical certificate. A maximum of eight uncertified days are allowable per annum (January to December).

A medical certificate will be required for continuous absence in excess of three days. Should employees fall ill whilst on leave and furnish appropriate medical evidence, the period covered by that evidence shall not be counted as part of annual leave. In the event that employees become entitled to statutory sick pay benefit, Dóchas will make up any difference between those statutory benefits and the employee's normal salary for the following periods of time within any period of 12 months service, depending on the employee's length of continuous service with the organisation:

Under 6 months continuous service - no entitlement;
6 to 12 months continuous service - up to 6 weeks;
12 to 36 months continuous service - up to 13 weeks;
Over 36 Months – up to 6 months

Payment beyond six months for certified absence due to illness will be at the discretion of the Board.

For the purposes of this clause continuous service is taken to mean contractual employment with Dóchas for a minimum of 17.5 hours or more per week. This provision does not cover office volunteers or government sponsored employees.

7.4. Acting up arrangement when the Director is on leave

Acting arrangements will be put in place for the post of Director where the period of absence is unrelated to annual leave and is anticipated to be more than three weeks, or passes three weeks. The Board will appoint the acting Director after collective consultations with all staff.

If the period of absence is anticipated to pass four months the post will be advertised externally from the outset. Where an unanticipated absence passes 4 months, it will then be advertised.

The Acting Director will be remunerated on the basis of a flat rate payment which will be agreed in advance with the Board, and reviewed where any extension of the period occurs.

8. Special Leave

8.1. Compassionate leave

An employee will be allowed five consecutive leave days, with pay, on the death of a spouse, co-habiting spouse, son, daughter, father, mother, guardian, brother or sister.

In all other cases (i.e. hardship or difficulty which might arise from urgent domestic distress or upheaval or urgent exceptional personal circumstances and necessitate a request for absence from work) compassionate leave may be allowed with or without pay at the discretion of the Director and/or the Board. Requests for special leave should be made to the Director in the case of all employees and to the Board in the case of the Director.

8.2 Paternity/Adoptive Leave

Employees are entitled to paid paternity/adoptive leave for up to ten working days. This leave may be taken up to one month before and within four months after the child's birth/adoption. This leave must be taken with the prior consent of the Director and/or the Board.

8.3 Maternity Leave

Employees are entitled to maternity leave in accordance with the terms of the Maternity Protection Act.

The granting of maternity leave will be subject to conditions laid down in the Act and must be complied with in any application for maternity leave. In particular Dóchas requires a certified notification of pregnancy and at least 4 weeks notice before the beginning of any maternity leave. All staff, regardless of length of service, will be entitled to 22 weeks maternity leave and to paid time off for ante-natal and post-natal visits, provided two weeks notice is given.

- (a) Staff with more than one year's service: A distinction is made between staff intending to return to work (and who subsequently do return for at least twelve weeks) and staff who do not intend to return to work.

Prior to commencing maternity leave, staff who state in writing their intention to return to work are entitled to a total of 40 weeks leave, of which 22 weeks are on full pay, 6 weeks on part pay and 12 weeks unpaid leave.

Staff who indicate that they are not returning to work are entitled to 22 weeks comprising 6 weeks on full pay and 16 weeks on part pay. Maternity Benefit paid to staff will be deducted from salaries paid during maternity leave.

Part pay is the Department of Social Welfare entitlement based on employees PRSI contributions.

The staff member must confirm whether or not she intends to return to work by the seventh week after the birth of the baby. Four weeks before the provisional date of return, a firm date in writing must be given to the Director.

If staff, having indicated their intention to return to work do not do so, or having returned, do not remain in Dóchas' employment for a continuous period of at least 12 weeks, a sum equivalent to 12 week's salary must be repaid to Dóchas.

Women will be able to return to the same position held before maternity leave. For full-time staff wishing to return on a part-time basis consideration will be given depending on the needs of the job.

- (b) Staff on Fixed Term Contracts: Where a staff member in an established post on a fixed term contract has signified her intention to return to work, but the contract expires during the period of maternity leave and is not renewed, then her maternity leave entitlement will only continue for up to six weeks after the expiry of her contract. For those staff on fixed term contracts, who are not in established posts, maternity leave and pay will cease on the last day of the contract. Dóchas cannot guarantee to extend contracts.

8.4 Parental Leave

Employees are entitled to leave under the Parental Leave Act (1998). Up to 14 weeks unpaid leave is allowed for each child born after 3rd June 1996.

8.5. Trade Union Duties

No trade union is currently in place within Dóchas. However, Dóchas has no objection to there being a union and in the event that such is established Dóchas will allow reasonable time off with pay to the employee representative/s in order to carry out industrial relations duties, including local negotiation, representing members in grievance or disciplinary procedures, attending training courses.

8.6. Jury Service

Employees are entitled to take time off work for jury service. An employee will be granted paid leave to attend for jury service.

8.7. Secondment

Management recognises that under certain circumstances:

- Staff may be seconded from another organisation to work in this organisation;
- Staff from this organisation may be seconded to work with another organisation.

This will normally be done on an 'exchange' basis, and will be for a maximum of eighteen months.

Management will in all cases ensure that the secondment is in both the interests of the organisation and of the individual employee, and that the conditions of service of staff will not deteriorate while on secondment.

Management will interview and select staff for secondment to this organisation according to the organisation's recruitment criteria and Equal Opportunities Policy.

8.8. Miscellaneous Reasons

Short periods of paid or unpaid leave may be granted as required, but at the discretion of management to whom advance applications must be made.

9. Pension

At the end of the probationary period or at the latest within six months of the commencement of their employment Dóchas is agreeable to paying employees, in addition to their annual salary, 10% of their salary in lieu of a contribution to a pension scheme in recognition of the fact that there is no Company Pension Scheme. Dóchas will also provide access to a Personal Retirement Savings Account (PRSA) if desired. Payment will be made in accordance with the individual pay modalities agreed between the Director and the employee.

10. Appraisal

Appraisals will be carried out with all staff annually, with an interim review after six months, under the direction of the Director. The annual appraisal of the Director will be conducted by the Staff Liaison Officer.

12. Expenses

- 12.1. Travel Expenses: Dóchas is agreeable to paying mileage expenses at a rate of 30 cent per kilometre for all necessary mileage done while carrying out Dóchas business. Dóchas will also pay parking expenses as well as bus and train fares incurred while carrying out Dóchas business.
- 12.2. Out of Pocket Expenses: Dóchas is agreeable to paying all necessary out of pocket expenses incurred by employees while carrying out their duties. Such expenses will require the approval of the Director.

In the case of 12.1. and 12.2. above employees will be required to complete an Expenses Claim Form and provide documentary evidence (receipts, etc.) in respect of all such claims.

13. Disciplinary/Grievance Procedure -

These procedures are laid down in the Dóchas Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures section (see section 2.2., pages 23, 24).

14. Changes in Employees Circumstances

Employees are required to notify the Director of changes in their circumstances such as marital status, number of dependents, address and home telephone number within one week of the change taking place.

15. Changes in Terms and Conditions

From time to time employees main terms and conditions of employment may be subject to variation. Should this occur employees will be consulted and informed by personal written notification.

2.2 Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure

a) Grievance Procedure

This procedure is to be followed if any employee feels that s/he has a grievance against the operation or decisions of the Director, Board or another employee, which affects her/his ability to perform her/his job satisfactorily and which cannot be resolved in the normal course of work.

It is agreed that all disputes and grievances will be dealt with without undue delay and at the earliest possible level of this procedure.

Dóchas wishes to provide a fair and equitable system for dealing with employee's grievances as speedily as possible. At each stage of the procedure employees have the right to be accompanied by another person of their choice, if they so wish. Accordingly, it is required that all grievances should be dealt with in the following manner.

On any occasion of disciplinary action being taken against an employee, s/he will be advised that s/he is entitled to union representation.

Stage One:

In the event that an employee has a grievance or wishes to raise with Management any matter directly concerned with their employment this should first be raised with the Director as appropriate. Where the Director has a grievance, or where the grievance is with the Director, the matter will be raised verbally with the Staff Liaison Officer. The appropriate person will do her/his best to resolve the matter as soon as possible, and in any event within ten working days.

Stage Two:

If no solution can be reached at Stage 1, the matter may be referred to the Chairperson (or to the Vice Chairperson in his/her absence) for further consideration within a period of five working days. The Chairperson will make every effort to resolve the issue at this stage.

Stage Three:

Failing resolution of the problem at stage two, the Chairperson will refer the matter to the Board, which will investigate the matter and hear representations from the persons concerned within ten working days and will make a formal proposal for its solution as soon as possible and not later than five working days from the complaint being heard by them.

Stage Four:

Should the matter still remain unresolved ten days after the end of the meeting at stage 3, it will be referred to an outside arbitrator (e.g. a Rights Commissioner or a Conciliation Officer).

Stage Five:

If the matter is not resolved after the intervention of the above mentioned, the issue will be referred to the Labour Court or the Labour Relations Commission for recommendation or the Employment Appeals Tribunal for a determination.

No form of industrial action will be taken by either side until a recommendation has been issued and then not until 14 days notice, in writing, has been given of such action.

During the operation of this Procedure, employees, including the employee/s concerned, will continue to work as directed. By mutual agreement, any of the above stages may be omitted where there are exceptional circumstances or issues.

At each stage every effort will be made to resolve the issue and the time limits above may be changed by mutual agreement at each stage.

b) Disciplinary Procedure

The following disciplinary procedure is operated if the employer feels that there has been a breach of general and/or specific conditions of employment. For example, poor time-keeping, unauthorised absenteeism, misconduct, sub-standard work, breach of confidentiality or any other action which may be detrimental to the smooth running of Dóchas or injurious to its reputation.

The employee has a right to a short summary of the main areas of complaint before the meeting. The employee has the right to present her/his case and to be represented throughout the procedure. The employee must be informed of these rights before any meeting takes place. A written record must be kept of all such meetings.

The employee will have the right to appeal to the Dóchas Board at all stages of the disciplinary procedure, giving written notice to the Board within seven days of the decision.

Dóchas' policy is that systematic warning will be applied for minor offences. Such warnings will state the nature of the offence, the potential consequences should performance or conduct not improve and will provide a reasonable time period for such an improvement to be achieved. Where Management considers it necessary to take this type of disciplinary action, the following procedure will apply:

Stage One:

In the first instance the Director or Staff Liaison Officer will give the employee a verbal warning, outlining the nature of the complaint. This warning shall lapse after a period of six months of satisfactory work performance and/or conduct.

Stage Two:

If the employee fails to meet the required standard within a six-month period following the issuing of the verbal warning a written warning will be given to her/him by the Director or Staff Liaison Officer. The written warning will refer

to the fact that an oral warning has been given, specify the nature of the complaint, the action required for improvement and a period in which the improvement is to be made and indicate that further unsatisfactory work performance and/or conduct could result in more serious action being taken by management. The written warning will lapse after a period of one year of satisfactory work performance and/or conduct.

Stage Three:

If there is no improvement within the timeframe specified under Stage two, the Director or Staff Liaison Officer will issue a final written warning which will state formally the reason for the warning, the improvement required of the employee and that if no improvement is forthcoming further disciplinary action may be taken, in the form of a suspension. A copy of this warning will be supplied to the employees union representative if applicable.

Stage Four:

If the employee fails to meet the required standard, the Director or Staff Liaison Officer will recommend to the Board that the person be suspended. If deemed appropriate the Director or Staff Liaison Officer will then suspend the employee without pay for up to one week.

Stage Five:

Should the staff member continue to fail to sustain the required standards following her/his return from suspension, the Director or Staff Liaison Officer will recommend to the Board that the person be dismissed. If deemed appropriate the Director or Staff Liaison Officer will then dismiss the staff member.

Suspension with pay may be used at any stage in the process where management are investigating a disciplinary issue and believe that it is not in Dóchas' best interests to allow the employee to continue to work in a post while the investigation is continuing.

Reversion:

Following a warning at Stages 2 and 3 in this procedure, where an employee's record remains clear for a minimum of one year then the previous stage will be reverted to in the event of a further breach.

Following suspension at Stage 4 of this procedure, where an employee's record remains clear for a minimum of two years then Stage 1 will be reverted to in the event of any further breach.

Serious Misconduct

An employee may be liable for serious disciplinary action which can be up to and including dismissal in serious cases of misconduct, such as fighting, assault, sexual harassment, theft, fraud, dishonesty, regardless of the amount or value, wilful damage to company property, reporting for work under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol, breaches of trust, actions which are injurious to the reputation of Dóchas, conviction of a criminal offence whether committed within or outside the employment which renders the employee unsuitable for the work s/he is employed to do, etc.

The employee will be informed of the reasons for the proposed serious disciplinary action. S/he will be advised of her/his right to be accompanied by a union representative and the right of the employee to state her/his case. A full investigation into the situation will take place and the employee may be suspended with pay to facilitate this.

Following the investigation, Dóchas may decide to take serious disciplinary action, this may include summary dismissal.

Appeal

In the event that dismissal is confirmed and the employee wishes to challenge the decision, then in accordance with normal procedures, the matter shall be referred to a Rights Commissioner, the Labour Court, the Labour Relations Commission, the Employment Appeals Tribunal or an Equality Officer as appropriate.

A written record of each meeting and outcome will be kept by Management and the employee will be asked to sign a copy of this record following consultation with her/his representative. Copies will be provided to the employee and representative as soon as possible after the meeting.

No form of industrial action will be taken by either side until the appeals procedure has been fully exhausted.

III. OPERATIONS PROCEDURES

1. Working Groups

1.1 Creation of Dóchas Working Groups

1. Proposals for the creation of a new Working Group (WG) are prepared by the Director following consultation with the membership.
2. Exploratory meetings of members to explore the potential for the creation of a new group may be organised if required.
3. Terms of Reference and an action plan for groups are developed and are discussed and adopted if approved by the Board.

1.2 Terms of Reference Dóchas Working Groups

1. **Scope:** The scope of each working group will be as determined by the Board, and in accordance with the annual plan drawn up by the working group and agreed with the Board. (organigram(s) will be attached where applicable).
2. **Responsibility:** The Working Groups are established by and responsible to the Board, and in between meetings to the Director, but are encouraged to take initiatives and to make proposals as they see fit. It should be clear that any proposal or project emanating from a working group is undertaken in the name of Dóchas in general rather than of a particular working group. While working group projects and programmes require the overall approval of the Board or the Director, nevertheless once Broad approval has been given, each Working Group is encouraged to go ahead and use its initiative to carry out the project, while keeping the secretariat and the Board informed, consulting with them where necessary.
3. **Annual Plan:** Each Working Group is asked to submit an annual plan and timetables to the Board for discussion and approval, and to cost any proposals which are likely to involve expenditure.
4. **Membership:** Membership of any or all Working Groups is open to each member agency. Member agencies are simply asked to notify the Dóchas secretariat in writing of the name (or names) of those they wish to represent them in each Working Group; confirmation of participation shall be made at the beginning of each year by each agency. Representation from agencies need not be confined to staff or council members of the agency. Dóchas representatives on CONCORD Working Groups are expected to participate on the appropriate Dóchas Working Groups if applicable.

5. Term: Each Working Group is in principle established for three years, and this may be renewable subject to review by the Board. However, from time to time, the Board may establish Working Groups for shorter periods to carry out specific functions or projects.
6. Officers: Each Working Group shall elect a Chair, Vice-chair and Treasurer annually, and will also appoint a recording secretary at each meeting. Elections shall be by WG members on the basis of one vote for each agency participating in the Group; elections shall be notified to and subject to ratification by the Board, (for example, in case the same person or agency was elected to several offices).
7. Reporting: Each WG will report orally to the Director who will keep the Board up to date on WG activities. Written reports on WG activities will be submitted by the Chairperson of each WG in advance of the Annual General Meeting and these will be incorporated into the overall Dóchas Annual Report, which will be circulated to all Dóchas members in advance of the AGM.
8. Attendance at meetings of the Board: If the Chair of each WG is not already a member of the Board, s/he will, when required, attend meetings of the Board in a non-voting capacity.
9. Communications: In the interests of good communications, each WG will submit regular reports to the Dóchas secretariat for inclusion in the Dóchas Newsletter and website.
10. Sub-Committees, ad hoc groups: Each WG is free to appoint sub-committees and ad hoc groups as it sees fit, subject to consultation and approval by the Director (to ensure they can be properly serviced and that any expenditure implications are known and approved).
11. Participation of non-agency persons: Each WG is free, following consultation with and approval of the Director, to invite someone who is not a member of or associated with a member agency, to participate in the Working Group, provided the numbers of such persons remain less than those of the member agencies represented in the WG. Such persons would not be eligible to be elected as WG Chair, Vice-Chair or Treasurer. The status and number of these observers in Dóchas Working Groups shall be reviewed annually, for approval by the Board.

1.3 Working Groups Officers

Each Working Group shall elect a Chair, Vice-chair and treasurer annually.

Working Group Chairperson

- Is an observer member of the Board;
- Sets the tone for the Group's work;
- Ensures that Working Group members have the information needed to fulfill the aims of the Working Group;

- Oversees, plans and monitors the work of the Working Group;
- Serves as external contact point for the Working Group;
- Reports to the Board through the Director;
- Works closely with the Director and other staff as agreed to by the Director;
- Assigns work to the committee members, sets the agenda and runs the meetings, and ensures distribution of meeting minutes;
- Initiates and leads the Working Group's annual evaluation.

Working Group Vice-Chairperson

- Performs Working Group Chairperson responsibilities when the Chairperson is not available.
- Performs other responsibilities as assigned by the Working Group members.

Working Group Treasurer

- Is responsible for the identification, formulation and monitoring of the financial implications of the activities proposed and undertaken by the Working Group.
- Reports to the Director on the use of the funds made available for the Group's work by Dóchas.
- Ensures that all members of the Working Group are aware of the financial situation of the Working Group.

1.4 Procedures for Press Statement by Dóchas Working Groups

The following guidelines for press statements apply to all Dóchas Working Groups:

- All press statements issued on behalf of Dóchas Working Groups will be developed by the Dóchas Secretariat and the relevant Working Group;
- The statement must be approved by at least three members of a working group;
- The final draft of the statement must be signed off by the Director of Dóchas - or by the Dóchas Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson in his/her absence - in the case of statements that are a re-formulation of positions developed earlier;
- In the case of new positions, the statement will be circulated to the membership with a time limit for comment and feedback. The time limit will be set by the Director, in consultation with the Working Group, and the statement must be approved by the Dóchas Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson;
- Dóchas members are asked to assist the Secretariat, where necessary, in the distribution of the statement.

Statements issued in relation to other Dóchas activities, not related to Working Groups, are the responsibility of the Dóchas Secretariat, and must be signed off by the Director and the Chairperson.

2. Dóchas Representation

2.1 Criteria for Dóchas representation

1. All requests for Dóchas representation, or representation from the development sector, will be channelled through the Dóchas secretariat.
2. Upon receipt of an invitation the Office Manager will, where possible, request the department/organisation tendering the invitation to provide a brief person specification outlining the skills that would be advantageous.
3. The invitation will be forwarded to all Dóchas members by the Office Manager with:
 - all relevant information about the event/conference/task
 - the person specification (where possible)
 - a closing date for receipt of nominations which allows a reasonable time for reply.
4. All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter from the sponsoring organisation, and – if applicable – a brief CV which indicates how the nominee meets the required criteria.
5. The Director will evaluate and rank the applications according to:
 - the degree to which they meet the person specification
 - gender equity in overall Dóchas representation
 - balance in representation from tendering organisations
6. The Board will consider the information presented by the Director and decide accordingly. Board members who represent the same agency as a nominee should be mindful of possible conflict of interest if speaking during the discussion, and should a vote prove necessary they must abstain.
7. Should a decision be required at a time when the Board has not scheduled a regular meeting, it can be taken by the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Treasurer (the officers) collectively, and reported to the next meeting for the record. If one or more of the officers represent the same agency as a nominee the Director in consultation with the Chairperson should name another member(s) of the Board to take the decision.

2.2 Procedures for Appointing Dóchas representatives

Since the creation of CONCORD, the system of “National Delegates” that was in operation under the CLONG no longer exists.

However, Dóchas can nominate people to the Board of CONCORD, and can also nominate people to participate in CONCORD Working Groups. The terms for participation on the CONCORD Board or on its Working Groups are set by CONCORD. Dóchas representatives to CONCORD Working Groups are appointed on each January by the Dóchas Executive Committee.

The mandate of anyone appointed to represent Dóchas on the Board of CONCORD or as a representative on any CONCORD working group may be withdrawn following a two-thirds majority in a postal ballot of Dóchas Members or of those present and voting at a General Assembly.

Appointment of Dóchas representatives to outside bodies and working groups shall be in accordance with the procedures set out below:

1. Persons appointed shall represent and be responsible to Dóchas, not to any individual member agency.
2. Dóchas representatives to other bodies and groups shall be nominated by the Board of Dóchas.
3. To be eligible to represent Dóchas, candidates must possess a mandate in writing from at least one member agency. Should the member agency in question notify Dóchas in writing that a delegate no longer has a mandate from it, the delegate shall be obliged to tender his/her resignation and the Board of Dóchas shall decide whether or not to accept it. If the resignation is accepted, a successor will be appointed by the Board.
4. Whoever is appointed shall serve on the body in question for whatever term of office its constitution specifies subject to paragraph 7 below; if the question of serving a further term arises, the Board of Dóchas shall decide whether or not to renew the appointment. In the event of a representative retiring before the expiration of his/her term of office the successor will be appointed by the Board.
5. Where no term of office is specified, the Board shall appoint for a specified period not to exceed three years, after which the appointment shall automatically lapse unless formally renewed by a decision of the Board.
6. In nominating representatives to other bodies, the Board, where appropriate, shall organise an election and where possible take the views of the Annual General Meeting into account. In other circumstances the Board shall canvass member agencies for candidates, and consulting its own Working Groups where their remit is relevant to the appointment in question.
7. The Board shall be empowered to cancel or withdraw the appointment of anyone representing it on another body, in writing to its representative and to the body concerned.



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