

# **NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS**

APPOINTMENT BRIEF

SEPTEMBER 2020

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**Prior to submitting a CV, we recommend that all applicants familiarise themselves with the contents of this information pack.**

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# WELCOME

Dear Applicant

## Catalyst – Appointment of Board Members

Thank-you for your interest in joining the Catalyst Board. This pack has been prepared to provide further information about our organisation and its role. Catalyst, which is the trading name of the Northern Ireland Science Park Foundation, arose from a package of economic initiatives which were part of the Good Friday Agreement. Today, it is one of Northern Ireland's major economic success stories.

Catalyst is headquartered on a 25 acre site in Titanic Quarter, Belfast. We have facilities at our North-West Regional Science Park, Derry/Londonderry, which is also the hub of a cross border economic initiative with Letterkenny Institute of Technology. We also have facilities at the ECOS centre in Ballymena.

In total we have 2,700 entrepreneurs, engineers, researchers, and executives working across our locations. In total, Catalyst's programmes support the development and scaling of a wide group of 900 high tech companies throughout Northern Ireland.

With the accelerating growth of new companies, we have ambitious plans to expand our physical infrastructure. Working with our partners, our objective is to build a strong innovation community focussing on clusters in the sectors where our region can have global competitive advantage.

We are on the threshold of an exciting future and are looking to complement the professional skills of our Board through several new appointments. Together we aim to drive this momentum and work to deliver our shared vision of Northern Ireland leading the world in key sectors. I hope the information enclosed is helpful and encourages you to apply.

Yours sincerely,

**Dick Milliken**  
Chairman

# BACKGROUND

## Appointment of Non-Executive Directors

Catalyst wishes to invite candidates who share our passion for innovation, and our ambition for Northern Ireland, to submit applications in the form of their CV for the appointment of up to four Non-Executive Directors to the Board. As an Equal Opportunity employer, we make appointments on merit and ensure there is broad diversity on our Board and throughout our organisation.

## Background to Catalyst

Catalyst is the trading name of the Northern Ireland Science Park Foundation Ltd group of companies and was established as part of the economic initiatives arising from the Good Friday Agreement. The Northern Ireland Science Park, a company limited by guarantee, was then established by the Department of Economic Development (now Department for the Economy).

Today, Catalyst is headquartered on a 25-acre site, incorporating the Thompson Dock, at Queen's Island, Belfast with additional facilities at the NW Regional Science Park, Derry~Londonderry, and the ECOS centre Ballymena with over 2,700 engineers, researchers, entrepreneurs and executives working across the three locations.

Supplemented by both financial and pro-bono support from the private sector and sponsors, our proven model invests the surpluses generated from our agile connected workspace and facilities. This provides the underwriting, necessary for the community-led development of our entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem that supports over 900 entrepreneurs per year.

An ambitious new strategy was approved by the Catalyst Board in 2019, targeting significant growth in Northern Ireland's Knowledge Economy and extending Catalyst's impact in new areas of value for our community. Following strong progress and extensive stakeholder analysis, the organisation is now focused on three pillars of growth:

**1.**

### Strong Innovation Community

Delivering a community experience, to our on-campus members and off-campus partners that adds significant value to their work and their employees' well-being.

**2.**

### Amazing Workspace

We set the standard for innovation workspace and on-campus amenities, working with partners to build an Innovation District.

**3.**

### Clusters

We focus on incubating and growing key industry clusters to over 500 companies through strategic partnerships with key institutions.

# VALUES

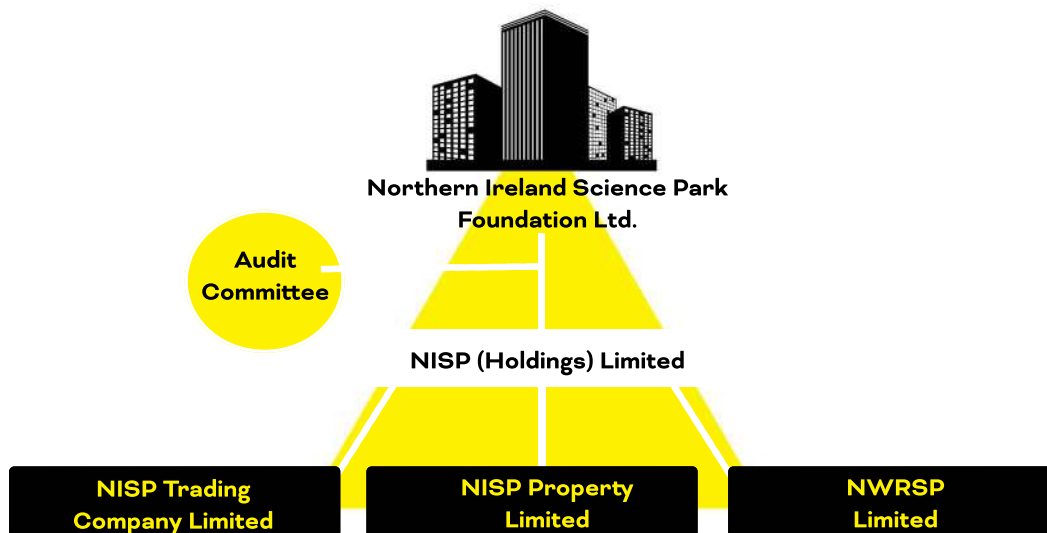
We are a force for good, bold in our approach, with integrity at our core and passionate in everything we do.

## Staffing

Catalyst currently operates with a staffing complement comprising 35 full-time employees. Executives report to the Group Boards of Directors, which currently comprise 11 Non-Executive Directors with a rich blend of skills and experience.

## Group Structure

Northern Ireland Science Park Foundation Limited (“the Foundation”) is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. The Foundation is the parent company of the group of companies summarised below. The Group consists of the Foundation, its wholly owned subsidiary, Northern Ireland Science Park (Holdings) Limited, (“Holdings”) and three wholly owned subsidiaries of Holdings, Northern Ireland Science Park Property Limited, Northern Ireland Science Park Trading Company Limited and North West Regional Science Park Limited.



The Foundation’s memorandum and articles are constructed so as to conform to the UK Science Park Association’s definition of a science park, regarding business support and technology transfer. The Foundation is not structured to undertake trading or other business activities. Any profits accruing to the Foundation will be reinvested to promote its objectives.

Holdings operates with general commercial objectives and has shareholdings in subsidiary companies, each of which will undertake specific business activities within the Foundation’s remit. The property company has ownership of the Belfast site and manages the estate and its tenants. A copy of the latest audited financial statements of each group company is available upon request.

The Audit & Risk Committee, which meets approximately 4 times per year, endeavours to ensure that appropriate Corporate Governance provisions, relevant to an organisation of Catalyst’s nature and scale, are applied.

# ROLE PROFILE

## Responsibilities of Non-Executive Directors

The main duties are:

- 1.** To act as an ambassador for the Board, representing and acting impartially in good faith and in the best interests of Catalyst at all times.
- 2.** To undertake the duties of a Company Director according to lawful and ethical standards and within the principles of the Combined Code.
- 3.** To prepare for and attend Board meetings, Committee meetings and other relevant events.
- 4.** To provide strategic leadership and direction to Catalyst and ensure delivery of the strategic objectives and vision.
- 5.** To analyse and review complex issues, weighing up conflicting points of view and reach sound and reasoned decisions.
- 6.** To ensure that constructive relationships are built and maintained between executive officers and Non-Executive Directors; and formulate positive working relationships with other Board Members.
- 7.** To ensure that there is an effective risk management system in place.
- 8.** To constructively challenge and uphold the integrity of financial information.
- 9.** To ensure that Catalyst acts as a responsible employer.
- 10.** To contribute to the annual assessment of Board Effectiveness.
- 11.** Whilst not a public body, the Catalyst Board adheres to and feels passionately about the Nolan Principles. Board members should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour.

# ROLE PROFILE

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**NB:** The above reflects typical duties for the Non-Executive Directors and are not intended to be a comprehensive list of all tasks.

### Time Commitment and Remuneration

**Commitment:** 1-2 days per month.

Successful applicants will be expected to attend most Board meetings, Committee meetings and other events. By applying for the post it is assumed that you can meet the time commitment. If shortlisted this issue will be explored at interview. Most meetings will take place during normal working hours.

**Remuneration:** Currently £10,500 per annum.

**Term of Appointment:** Up to three years (one term) but can seek re-appointment for up to five additional one-year terms. An annual assessment of the performance of Non-Executive Directors is carried out by the Chair of the Board throughout the period of appointment. Reappointment may be considered subject to satisfactory standard of performance during the initial period of office.

**Starting Date:** November 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.

**Location:** Most Board meetings are usually held at Catalyst, Queen's Road, Queens Island, Belfast.

**Expenses:** Following appointment, travel and subsistence expenses are payable within reason.

All remuneration is subject to deduction of income tax and national insurance.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

Catalyst seeks to recruit Board members who have experience operating at a high level in one or more of the following areas:

1. Property: Particularly Asset/Estate management or Project/Facilities management.
2. Knowledge based sectors: Particular areas of interest would include but not limited to Biotech, Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals, Fintech, Digital, Software.
3. Public Affairs and Political Landscape: Understanding and experience of the political and policy making processes of Government in Northern Ireland, London, and Brussels.
4. Legal: Corporate or commercial law.
5. Finance: Particular areas of interest would include but are not limited to audit and risk management, and venture capital financing.
6. Marketing: Strategic marketing expertise with a focus on corporate brand positioning and building community.
7. Skills & Innovation: An understanding and experience of the development of skills and innovation as key elements of economic growth in advanced economies.

## Essential Criteria

Applicants must demonstrate in their CV that they can satisfy at least three of the following criteria:

1. Recent and relevant experience of operating either at Board level as a Board member, or as part of a senior executive team.
2. Experience (as head or as part of the senior executive team), of leading an organisation through strategic development and direction setting, delivery and execution of strategic plans.
3. Experience of the principles and practice of effective corporate governance.
4. Experience of enabling or participating successfully in regional economic initiatives. These may include, for example; research networks in the UK, in Ireland or in the EU; or in the development of sectoral clusters; or in cross border projects; or in encouraging entrepreneurial eco-systems, or in supporting inward investments.
5. Experience as a successful entrepreneur, or working with an entrepreneur, of a growing company targeting internal and/or export markets.
6. Successful international business experience.

Applicants should also be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

**Strategy/policy formulation:** Strong strategic planning skills and the ability to work with others to develop strategic vision.

**Delivering Results:** Motivated by success and passionate about working and achieving higher results even in the face of difficulties, is optimistic and tenacious all through.

**Building constructive relationships in external environments:** Must be able to make an impact, persuade and influence individuals or groups in order to gain support and action for ideas, proposals or initiatives put forward in order to achieve a specific objective or result.

**Higher Cognitive Skills:** The ability to solve problems by analyzing situations and apply critical thinking in order to resolve problems and decide on courses of action and implement novel solutions developed with empathy.



# APPLICATION PROCESS

## How to Apply

Professional CV's should be sent to: Shauna Collins

Director of Human Resources, Catalyst  
The Innovation Centre, Queen's Road,  
Queen's Island, Belfast, BT3 9DT

Or by email to: [Shauna.collins@wearecatalyst.org](mailto:Shauna.collins@wearecatalyst.org) with the subject title 'NED Application'

## Closing date

All CV's must be received by **12.00noon, Wednesday 30th September 2020.**

## Time Frame for Process

Interviews to be held the week commencing 19th and 26th October 2020.

Applicants invited for interview are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable travelling expenses.

## Information for shortlisting and interview purposes

Applicants should refer to the Role Description and Person Specification and identify the extent to which they satisfy the essential criteria (including the competencies). Applicants will be assessed at shortlisting on the basis of the information provided on their CV - no other information, other than that supplied under the criteria sought, will be taken into account when shortlisting.

## Criteria-based selection process

Your CV should provide clear and relevant evidence of how your experience demonstrates the criteria being sought.

## Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Catalyst is committed to equality of opportunity. All applications are considered strictly on the basis of merit. Catalyst welcome applications from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not they have dependants.

Catalyst is an Equal Opportunities employer. Applicants are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Information form. The information is purely for monitoring purposes. It is not made available to the selection panel and does not play a role in the decision-making process.

## References

Applicants are required to provide details of two referees. Referees will only be sought if under consideration for appointment.

## Further Information

Should you have any further queries about the appointments process then please contact Shauna Collins, Director of Human Resources on 07917765152 or [shauna.collins@wearecatalyst.org](mailto:shauna.collins@wearecatalyst.org)

All discussions will be held in the strictest confidence.

# CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Board Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared.

There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. Both are a problem, as the perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict. It is important, therefore, that candidates consider their own circumstances when applying for these appointments and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived. Information which might be relevant could include for example financial interests or share ownership, or membership of some societies or organisations.

# ABOUT CATALYST

Catalyst is an independent, not for profit organisation working together for the greater good, enabling a connected community of like-minded innovators in an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Northern Ireland.

The epicentre of Northern Ireland's tech sector, we provide the home, support and networks to nurture innovators and entrepreneurs to aim higher and succeed faster. We invest the surplus generated from our property operations to provide the underwriting necessary for our community-led innovation ecosystem that supports over 900 startups, entrepreneurs and innovators pro bono each year to create and scale innovation companies in Northern Ireland.

To learn more about Catalyst, visit our website: [wearecatalyst.org](https://wearecatalyst.org)