Design Commission for Wales

Appointment of Commissioners/ Board Members

Information for Candidates

DESIGN COMMISSION FOR WALES
COMISIWN DYLUNIO CYMRU

The Commissioner for Public Appointments

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Introduction

The Minister for Climate Change is seeking a new Chair and up to three new Commissioners to join the Board of the Design Commission for Wales (DCFW Ltd).

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of up to three new Commissioners to the Design Commission. Here you can find more information to help you apply and understand more about the post and the appointments process. All appointments are made through an open competition process and regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

We're seeking your help with DCFW's vision for a Wales that is simply a better place. If you care about the design of the world around you and believe Wales' cities, towns and villages should be great places to live, work and play, we want to hear from you.

We are seeking up to three individuals to join its board as Commissioners from 1 April 2024, to add new perspectives and complement current members.

We invite your application for appointment to help steer our strategic direction and be ambassadors of good design in Wales.

Whilst we do not require everyone who applies to have previous board experience or work directly in the design professions, all of DCFW's board members share a real interest and passion for good design in the built environment.

You will find a lot of information in this pack, including on the specific qualities and skills we are looking for in recruiting for these roles. We want to be sure you have everything you need to make an application so remember that you will be supported by members of the existing board and a great staff team. During preparation for your application you will have the opportunity (should you wish) to meet with current DCFW Commissioners and staff and ask any questions you may have.

We're confident that there are some hugely talented and inspirational built environment enthusiasts and professionals who can add a new dimension to DCFW. Please do contact us if that sounds like you.

Background
What is the role and responsibilities of the Design Commission for Wales?

DCFW was set up in 2002 by the Welsh Government as a public body working throughout Wales to help make it a better place.

The role of the Commission is to promote good design for our places, buildings and public spaces and to communicate the benefits of good design for everybody.

DCFW also provides a Design Review Service for development schemes throughout Wales, available to all local authorities, clients, developers and members of the public. The Commission provides early-stage input to add value to development proposals along with bespoke Client Support and Training to help build capacity along with other development services for local authorities that focus on planning and project delivery and wider design awareness. Events and publications are also among the Commission's services and help to promote the value of good design in all its forms.

As a team, DCFW works with colleagues in the fields of urban design, architecture and landscape design, civil engineering, building services and the wider environmental professions who are involved in shaping the countryside, cities, towns and villages of Wales. The team engages with members of the public, stakeholders, professional bodies, local authorities, individual clients and commissioning bodies, in planning, regeneration, energy and transport infrastructure, to make their assistance available throughout Wales.

The Design Commission team holds a broad knowledge base and values the relationship that it has with the board; all of whom help guide them as champions and advocates for good design in Wales.

What does the Design Commission for Wales aim to do?

The Commission promotes good design, based on its strategic aims, as follows:

- Championing high standards of design and architecture to the public and private sectors in Wales by promoting wider understanding of design issues and the importance of good standards in enhancing the built environment across all sectors.
- Promoting design practice that is compatible with the Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Scheme, promoting best practice in energy efficiency, waste disposal and public transport.
- Promoting design practice compatible with the highest standards in relation to equal opportunity and promoting social inclusion.
- Giving due regard to promoting excellence in day to day developments, like housing estates and industrial units, as well as promoting excellence in prestige projects.

For further information about the DCFW please visit **dcfw.org** or contact the DCFW's Chief Executive, Carole-Anne Davies on **02920 45 1964** or **07779 802784** via email at **cad@dcfw.org**.

Our Board

The DCFW Board currently has eight Commissioners, including the Chair. Three Commissioners and the Chair are shortly to end their terms of office and new appointments will be made in their place as part of this appointments process. The Board plays a key role in terms of advocating DCFW's work, looking after governance and enhancing public relations.

Staff Team – Who will support you

DCFW's Staff Team is led by Carole-Anne Davies as Chief Executive. The range of the work undertaken by DCFW is wide; therefore the day-to-day management is undertaken by the Chief Executive and team. If appointed as Chair or Commissioner, the staff team are here to support you and keep you well informed. Existing Commissioners enjoy what they do and want to share their very rewarding work. New Commissioners can bring fresh experience, energy and ideas to DCFW's work, helping to deliver on their strategic direction.

Who are we looking for?
Role description and person specification for the role of Board Members (Commissioners)

We are seeking up to three new board members (Commissioners) to join us.

Role and responsibilities

As a Commissioner, you will sit on the Board of DCFW and be expected to act as an ambassador for DCFW and its work. You will be eager to play a part in good governance and advocate the importance of good design for a high-quality built environment in Wales. You will strive to promote DCFW, its activities and needs to as many individuals and bodies as possible so as to enhance the organisation's profile and purpose.

The Chair and Commissioners are collectively responsible for agreeing the DCFW's strategic direction and acting in the interests of the success of the organisation.

The appointments process aims to allow new board members to familiarise themselves with the operation of the organisation by attending and observing board meetings and other events.

Person Specification

We do not require everyone who joins us to have previous Board experience or to work directly in the design sector. We seek applications from people who are curious, eager to build and communicate their understanding, of design issues.

We are seeking to appoint individuals who can demonstrate the following ***essential*** criteria:

- Awareness of and enthusiasm for good place-making, design and architecture in the built environment (but not necessarily as a practitioner) with the ability to operate in an inter-disciplinary arena;
- Interest and ability to undertake leadership, advocacy, management and governance;
- Ability to communicate and influence across all levels;
- A clear understanding and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and to challenging discriminatory practices; and
- An understanding of the importance of high standards in public life as reflected in the Nolan standards.

We welcome applications from individuals who can demonstrate the following ***desirable*** criteria for appointment:

- A knowledge of corporate governance, finance, and communications
- A knowledge of the interface between architecture, engineering and urban design relevant to transport, energy and other forms of infrastructure.
- A knowledge of design practice and strategies which contribute to decarbonisation and high environmental performance.

Even if you do not meet all of the desirable criteria, we are still interested to hear from you, whatever your background. We want to know how your interests and skills could contribute to our work whether it comes from experience in your professional working life, your own business, community or as a volunteer.

Welsh Language

The ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh is ***essential*** for up to one new member and ***desirable*** for up to two new appointments, with the following skills set required:

Essential

- **Reading** - Full understanding of all work-related material;
- **Writing** - Can prepare written material for all work-related matters;
- **Understanding** - Can understand all work-related conversations; and
- **Speaking** - Fluent.

Desirable

- **Reading** - Can read some basic words and phrases with understanding;
- **Writing** - Can write basic messages on everyday topics;
- **Understanding** - Can understand parts of a basic conversation; and
- **Speaking** - Can hold a basic conversation in Welsh.

Key facts
Further information

Location:
Board meetings are likely to be held mainly in Cardiff, but also at locations across Wales and online via video conference. You may also wish to attend Commission events throughout the year at various locations across Wales.

Time Commitment:
Commissioners will need to commit about 2 days per month to prepare for and attend board meetings 4 times a year including the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Tenure of office:
The appointments will be for an initial period of 4 years, renewable subject to satisfactory review, for a maximum of two terms of office.

Remuneration:
Commissioners of DCFW are appointed via the Public Appointments process and serve in a voluntary, unpaid capacity as non-executive Directors of DCFW Ltd. Commissioners are entitled to travel and other reasonable expenses within reasonable limits, agreed in advance.

DCFW is a Private Limited Company incorporated in England and Wales and is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Welsh Government. Commissioners are Directors of the company and therefore need to comply with all relevant legal requirements. Support and information in this regard is provided by the wider board and staff of the DCFW.

Conflict of Interests
When applying you will be asked to declare any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with the role and responsibilities as a Commissioner of the DCFW, including any business interests and positions of authority outside of the role in DCFW.

Any conflicts of interest will be explored at interview. If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on a register which is available to the public.

Due diligence
Due diligence checks will be undertaken on all candidates successfully sifted to interview. This will include, but not necessarily be limited to social media and internet searches. As a result, you may be asked questions at interview in relation to any due diligence findings.

Standards in public life
You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, you can access this document at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies

How do I make an application?

The above provides information on the role of Commissioners, the person specification and the role and responsibilities of DCFW, whilst the attached Annex provides detail on the selection process.

To make an application please visit the Welsh Government public appointment website here: Public Appointments - Welsh Government (tal.net)

To apply for this role, click on the vacancy for **Commissioners – Design Commission for Wales (DCFW)** and click on 'Apply' at the bottom left-hand corner. The first time you apply for a post, you will need to complete a registration form for the Welsh Government's online application system. You will only need to register once, and you will be able to keep yourself updated on the progress of your application, and any other applications you make, via your registered account.

Once you've registered, you'll be able to access the application form. To apply you will need to upload a personal statement and CV to the 'Reasons for applying' section of the online application form.

Personal Statement

The personal statement is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. How you choose to present the information is up to you. However, you should aim to provide detailed examples that demonstrate how your knowledge and experience matches each of the criteria, and which describe what your role was in achieving a specific result. **It will also benefit the selection panel if you can be clear which particular evidence you provide relates to which criteria. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice.**

Please limit your personal statement to two pages. Your application may be rejected if you exceed this limit.

CV

Please ensure your CV includes brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role. Please identify any past or present Ministerial appointments.

References

Please provide two referees (employer and personal) who will be contacted for successful candidates only.

Indicative timetable

Closing date:	11 December 2023
Shortlisting:	14 December 2023
Interviews:	w/c 5 February 2024
Start Date:	1 April 2024

Diversity Statement

The Welsh Government believes that public bodies should have board members who reflect Welsh society - people from all walks of life - to help them understand people's needs and make better decisions. This is why the Welsh Government is encouraging a wide and diverse range of individuals to apply for appointments to public bodies. Applications are particularly welcome from all under-represented groups including women, people under 30 years of age, black, Asian and minority ethnic people, disabled people, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Disability Confident

The Welsh Government accepts the social definition of disability, in which it is recognised that barriers in society act to disable people who have impairments or health conditions or who use British Sign Language. We are committed to removing barriers so that all staff can perform at their best. The Equality Act 2010 uses the medical definition of disability ("a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities").

We guarantee to interview anyone who is disabled whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. By 'minimum criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence for the role and any qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential.

We are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. If you would like a recruitment adjustment please contact **publicappointments@gov.wales.**

If you have an impairment or health condition or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process, please contact **publicappointments@gov.wales** as soon as possible and a member of the team will contact you to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.

Contacts:

For further information regarding the selection process, please contact:
Public Appointments Team
Public Bodies Unit
Email: **publicappointments@gov.wales**

For further information regarding the role of Commissioner to DCFW please contact:
DCFW
Tel: 07779 802784

Stuart Ingram
Welsh Government
Tel: 03000 255040
Email: **Stuart.Ingram@gov.wales**

If you need any further assistance in applying for this role, please contact **publicappointments@gov.wales**.

For further information about Public Appointments in Wales, please visit **www.gov.wales/publicappointments**

Annex A
The Selection Process

The interview panel will assess candidates' CVs and personal statements to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview. The panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and statement to assess whether you have the skills and experience required. Please ensure that you provide evidence to support how you meet all of the essential criteria.

The selection panel will be chaired by Neil Hemington, Chief Planner, Welsh Government and will also comprise Gayna Jones, Chair of DCFW (DCFW Panel Member) and Ruth Marks as an Independent Panel Member.

Your application may be "long-listed", subject to the volume of applications received, before it is passed to the shortlisting panel for consideration. You should be aware that in this situation, your application might not be considered in full by all of the panel.

We anticipate that during December the panel will have decided who will be invited for interview, to take place in February 2024. It is our intention that interviews will take place virtually, via MS Teams.

The panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the guaranteed interview scheme **and you meet the minimum essential criteria** for the post, then you will also be invited for interview.

If you are invited to interview, we will aim to provide you with as much notice as we can of the interview date and location or if it is to be held online. If you are unable to make the arranged interview date, we will endeavour to re-arrange it but it might not be possible due to time constraints within the appointment timetable or selection panel availability.

You will receive email communication from Welsh Government's application centre to let you know whether or not you have been invited to be interviewed. If invited to interview, the panel will question you about your skills and experience, asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post.

Candidates who the panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to Ministers who will make the final decision. The Minister may choose to meet with appointable candidates before making a decision. If she/he does, she/he will meet all candidates and in the presence of the panel chair or their nominated representative. There will be a time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.

If you are successful, you will receive a letter appointing you as a Commissioner of the DCFW, which will confirm the terms on which the appointment is offered.

If you are unsuccessful at interview, you will be notified through the Welsh Government's application centre. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. As a result, the letter will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish.

Queries

For queries about your application, please contact **publicappointments@gov.wales**.

If you are not completely satisfied

Welsh Government will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact **publicappointments@gov.wales**.

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