

**APPOINTMENTS TO A COLLABORATIVE FORUM OF FORMER RESIDENTS OF  
MOTHER AND BABY HOMES AND RELATED INSTITUTIONS**

**CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

**Closing Date: 5pm Wednesday 30th May 2018**

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs has established an independent selection process to identify suitably qualified candidates for appointment to the Collaborative Forum of former residents of mother and baby homes and related institutions.

Interested persons should familiarise themselves with the information in this booklet. Completed Expressions of Interest can be submitted for consideration by the Selection Panel to:

**Collaborative Forum Applications**

**By Post: Department of Children and Youth Affairs**

**43-49 Mespil Road**

**FREEPOST F5055**

**Dublin 4, D04 YP52**

**By E-mail: [CollaborativeForum@dcya.gov.ie](mailto:CollaborativeForum@dcya.gov.ie)**

**Tel: +353 1 6473200**

**Web: [www.dcy.gov.ie](http://www.dcy.gov.ie)**

**If you would like assistance in completing the application form, please Contact the Department of Children and Youth Affairs on 01 6473200.**

<b>APPOINTMENTS TO THE COLLABORATIVE FORUM OF FORMER RESIDENTS OF MOTHER AND BABY HOMES AND RELATED INSTITUTIONS</b>	
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	Forum meetings will be held at locations in Dublin city centre, with the possibility of an occasional meeting outside of Dublin.
<b>Number of Vacancies:</b>	19 vacancies. A panel will also be formed to fill any vacancies which may arise over the next 12 months on the Forum and/or its subcommittees.
<b>Remuneration:</b>	Non-remunerated - it is not intended that participants will be paid a per diem or other form of remuneration. Travel and subsistence expenses will be payable in accordance with civil service rates and regulations.
<b>Time Requirements:</b>	A half day meeting per calendar month. Some preparatory work will be required in advance of each meeting. Members will also be expected to participate in one of the Forum subcommittees which will meet separately once or twice a month.
<b>Term:</b>	The term of appointment is for a period of 12 months from the date of appointment.

## 1. Background

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr Katherine Zappone TD, is establishing a Collaborative Forum to facilitate dialogue and action on issues of concern to former residents of the mother and baby homes and county homes and their families and supporters, which historically focused on services for unmarried mothers and their children. The Minister recognises that a significant number of people have been deeply affected by the experiences which they, or family members and relatives, may have had in these institutions.

The establishment of this Collaborative Forum is a direct response to the theme of “*nothing about us without us*” which emerged from the consultations with former residents of these institutions and their advocates. This innovative approach will support, facilitate and empower former residents to actively contribute to decisions on matters of concern to them and their families.

The Collaborative Forum is separate from the independent Commission of Investigation (Mother and Baby Homes and certain related matters) which is continuing to investigate issues of significant public concern in relation to these institutions.

### Eligibility Criteria

This opportunity is open to former residents as well as people with a personal connection and/or interest in these matters.

The Minister wishes to encourage as many persons as possible to consider participating in the work of the Forum. Previous engagement with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, or any other state body, on these matters is not required.

*Expressions of interest are therefore invited from individuals who are:*

- a) former residents of a Mother & Baby Home or with comparable experience in a County Home, or
- b) are family members of such former residents of a Mother & Baby or County Home, or
- c) individuals providing, or who have provided, support to former residents or who have involvement with relevant advocacy or support groups;

## 2. Charter for the Collaborative Forum

A Charter for the Collaborative Forum constitutes the broad framework of guiding principles for the work of members of the Forum. The Charter builds upon and is informed by a series of workshops with former residents undertaken in 2017. It is built around and reflects the core principle of “nothing about us without us”. It sets out the general functions of the Forum and details key methods and approaches in pursuing this important work.

The Charter provides that the purpose of the Collaborative Forum includes to:

- Enable former residents to identify, discuss and prioritise the issues of concern to them;

- Facilitate the active participation of former residents in recommending actions and solutions to address their concerns, including those issues raised in the reports of the facilitated meetings;
- Focus on persons who were resident for a time in a mother and baby home and those with comparable experiences in a County Home, and
- Enhance public understanding and appreciation of the impact of their experiences on the lives of former residents and their families.

Arising from the consultations with former residents in 2017 a number of areas were identified as priorities. These comprise of

- a. Terminology, Identity, and Representation
- b. Health and Well-being Supports
- c. Memorialisation and Personal Narratives

Accordingly, the Charter provides for the establishment of three sub-committees by the Collaborative Forum to examine these specific issues.

The Charter and the Forum reflect a commitment to “open and consistent engagement between the State and former residents” and a desire to provide a strong voice for former residents in decisions which affect them. Therefore the Forum’s programme of work is flexible. It may develop according to concerns identified by survivors through dialogue and engagement with the Forum.

The Forum may also wish to consider further issues upon the release of the report and recommendations of the Commission of Investigation, expected in 2019.

The Forum will:

- Be a participant-centred process which adopts a consensus-oriented approach to decision making;
- Ensure consistent communication and meaningful engagement with former residents, their families and advocates during this collaborative project;
- Have access to expertise, advice and administrative support, and
- Conduct its activities in a manner which does not impact upon or pre-empt the outcome of the statutory investigations being conducted by the Commission of Investigation (Mother and Baby Homes and certain related Matters).

The Forum will be established on an administrative basis. It will not have statutory or executive powers. While the Forum will respect and protect the privacy of individuals and their contributions, it is anticipated that general information on the matters considered, issues arising and conclusions reached will be routinely made available. The Forum will have access to a standing network of

appropriate academic experts, professionals and representative of State departments and agencies as it deems necessary.

The Forum will report directly to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. An initial report must be delivered within 6 months of its establishment.

### **3. Is this for me?**

As outlined above, it is intended that the Forum will comprise a majority of former residents of Mothers and Babies and County Homes and their family members. Additional expertise and experience, while desirable, is not essential.

Members of the Forum will be appointed to a position of trust and responsibility on behalf of the wider community of former residents of these institutions. In the interest of public trust and confidence applicants should be able to demonstrate suitable motivation, experience and character in support of their application.

Successful applicants may be required to provide appropriate documentation to confirm their identity, their standing as a former resident, family member if applicable.

In order to assist persons in deciding whether to apply, it is recommended that interested persons consider the following questions before applying:

- Am I a former resident of a relevant institution, or can I otherwise constructively contribute to the Forum's work programme in an independent and objective manner;
- Am I committed to the principles of fairness, accountability and equal participation of all members;
- Can I manage outside interests so they do not conflict with the focus and work of the Forum;
- Can I listen to and consider different opinions and perspectives to my own;
- Can I fairly articulate and represent the concerns and interests of former residents;
- Do I enjoy supporting and working collectively with others to meet challenges;
- Am I equipped and prepared to contribute on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- Am I comfortable with the public, political and media attention which may be associated with this role;
- I understand that serving on this Forum is a role of significant responsibility which must be respected, and
- I am in a position to make the necessary time commitment to this role and appreciate that attendance at meetings is only one aspect of this commitment.

These self-assessment questions are intended to provide you with an indication of the requirements to be an effective participant in the Forum process. If you can answer yes to these statements, the role is likely to suit you. You are not required to submit this self-assessment as part of the application process.

#### 4. Term of Appointment

- Appointments to the Forum will be for a period of 12 months from the date of appointment, and such subsequent period, if any, as may be agreed by the Minister with the Forum.
- The membership of any member of the Forum may be terminated by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs at any time, for misconduct, on the basis of reasons stated by the Minister.
- A member of the Forum may resign his or her membership of the Forum by notice in writing to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Minister receives this notice.
- Members of the Forum will not be permitted to nominate stand-ins to deputise on their behalf at Forum meetings.

#### 5. Submitting your Expression of Interest

If you wish to be considered for appointment to the Forum, please complete and submit a written application form clearly marked as “**Collaborative Forum Applications**” to the address below. Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by return.

Collaborative Forum Applications

By Post: Department of Children and Youth Affairs

43-49 Mespil Road

FREEPOST F5055

Dublin 4, D04 YP52

By E-mail: [CollaborativeForum@dcya.gov.ie](mailto:CollaborativeForum@dcya.gov.ie)

A hard copy of this policy and related documents can be forwarded to you directly by contacting us at Tel: +353 1 6473200. All relevant documentation is also available to view and download from the website of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs Web: [www.dcya.gov.ie](http://www.dcya.gov.ie)

If you would like assistance in completing the application form, please Contact the Department of Children and Youth Affairs on 01 6473200.

#### Important Note:

Please take care when submitting your application. As the Selection Panel will make selections based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you complete each question in full and clearly outline how your particular background and experience support your application to a position on this Forum. This will help ensure that the Selection Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your application and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to the Forum.

You will be required to confirm in writing that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediments which could be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part in the Forum.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact us using the email or phone contact details above.

## **6. Assessment Criteria**

The following constitute criteria against which applications will be considered:

- That the person is eligible for appointment to the Forum – that is to say s/he comes from among one of the eligible groups outlined in section 1 concerning eligibility criteria above;
- Nature of experience of the person (e.g duration of residence, whether resident in multiple institutions) in the Mother & Baby/County Home relative to other applicants;
- Diversity of stakeholder perspectives and experiences in the membership of the Forum
- Representation from among mothers, children, fathers, other family members, adoptees, persons of mixed race, diverse faiths etc

In addition, matters such as geographic spread, diversity across institutions, involvement with known advocacy groups, periods of time spend in other State or church run institutions, engagement with other inquiries concerning allegations of historical abuse, may be considered when considering applications.

## **7. Assessment Process**

A panel has been convened by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs to undertake the selection process from the applications in response to this notice.

The Selection Panel will select the 19 members to reflect the Forum's purpose and guiding principles, based on submitted application forms alone. The Selection Panel may also nominate a separate list of suitable persons to fill vacancies which may arise over the next 12 months on the Forum and/or its subcommittees.

The Selection Panel shall take decisions by consensus, when possible, and in the absence of consensus, by a majority vote of the Panel.

The Selection Panel will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by persons in submitting an expression of interest.

## **8. Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 2014, expressions of interest and related documents will be treated in confidence and accessible only to those directly involved in the selection process. Certain items of information, without being specific to any individual, may be extracted for general statistical purposes and to facilitate responses to enquiries about this process.

## **9. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003**

When your application is received, we will create a record in your name, which will contain much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record will be used solely in processing

your expression of interest. Please note that your expression of interest and related information may be retained for up to one year. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003.