



Irish Centre for European Law

Invitation for Applications

Deputy Secretary

The Centre:

The ICEL is an educational charity, a Centre of the School of Law of Trinity College Dublin and a company limited by guarantee and a registered educational charity. The ICEL is the leading organisation promoting the knowledge and practice of EU and European Human Rights law across the island of Ireland. Recent events in Europe and Ireland's Council Presidency in 2025 make this more important than ever.

The ICEL is governed by [an independent Board and Committees](#). The Board chairperson is the Centre's President, Hon Mr Justice Anthony M Collins (a serving member of the Irish Court of Appeal and former Advocate General at the Court of Justice).

It was founded in 1988 by Senator Mary Robinson SC (later 7th President of Ireland, and now the Centre's Patron) as a membership-based association to further education in the law and research of the European Union and European human rights.

The Centre serves the legal professions, legal academics, law students, public institutions, the voluntary sector, businesses and the wider public.

The Centre organises conferences and seminars across the island of Ireland in various areas of EU law (in particular, environmental, public procurement, data protection, Brexit and competition law) and in human rights law. The Centre is also the Irish member of the European Law Association for Criminal Law and the Protection of the Financial Interests of the EU, which is run by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

The Centre has annual revenues of approximately €150k, and an Executive Director based in our offices in Trinity. The Centre has recently launched activities in Northern Ireland, and additionally has recruited a part-time Assistant Director for Northern Ireland based in Belfast.

The Role:

ICEL is seeking a Deputy Secretary who will assist the Secretary, Benedict Blunnie BL (a practising barrister in the full-time employment of the State) in providing comprehensive legal and administrative support and guidance to the Board of the Centre.

The Secretary and Deputy Secretary are assisted by the Chief Executive Officer in carrying out her/his tasks.

The vacancy arises as a result of the promotion of the previous Deputy Secretary to the role of Secretary. (Together with secretarial responsibilities, the Secretary is also responsible, as a senior Officer, for co-leading the Board and managing the activities of the Centre.)

The Deputy Secretary will be a volunteer. S/he will not be a director or charity trustee, or (unless otherwise agreed) a secretary either for the purposes of company law or charities compliance.

Responsibilities will include the following:

The Deputy Secretary will assist the Secretary in record-keeping of meetings, and in advising the Board on the Centre's compliance with its legal obligations. The ICEL maintains a high standard of internal governance, and compliance with requirements of company and charity law. [The Centre's governance is set out here.](#)

The Deputy Secretary:

- Attends but is not a member of the Board (i.e., is not a company director and a Charity Trustee);
- Attends and may be a member of the Officers' Committee (together with the President, Deputy President, Treasurer and Secretary), which oversees implementation of Board decisions;
- Together with the Secretary and Executive Director, accounts to the independent Audit & Governance Committee on governance matters; and,
- Attends the Advisory Council and the General Meetings.

The Deputy Secretary may also play a key role in development of the Centre's strategy, governance and activities, and will be committed to the charitable purposes of Centre. The Centre is currently embarking on a strategic review, and is seeking to increase sustainable income. It is hoped the Deputy Secretary will play a key role in those discussions.

Specific responsibilities:

- Collaboratively working with the Board and Executive Director on implementation of the highest levels of governance and Board effectiveness, and advising the President and Executive Director on same
- Advising the Board, Secretary and Executive Director on compliance with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements as a company and a charity (other than those for which the Treasurer is responsible), including internal governance obligations
- Primary responsibility for drafting the Agenda of Board, Officers' Committee, Advisory Council and General Meetings and preparing and circulating the agenda and any other papers
- Primary responsibility for drafting the Minutes of the Board, Officers' Committee, Advisory Council and General Meetings, and ensuring same are approved by the relevant Chairpersons and circulated to members promptly after the meeting
- Primary responsibility for the maintaining a record of Minutes at Board, all Committee and General Meetings in accessible format (including working with the Executive Director on developing Sharepoint storage or similar for staff and Board)
- Ensure all other required records are maintained (including membership records)
- Follow up on decisions taken at meetings in consultation with the President, Deputy President and Secretary
- Follow up on all action points agreed at meetings in consultation on action owners and to report on the status of all action items to the board.

- Assisting in accounting to the Board and Audit & Governance Committee for the Centre's compliance with legal obligations and best practice for charities and companies

General responsibilities will include the following:

- Providing input to the strategic direction of the ICEL and contributing with insight, oversight, and experience of strategy formulation in the sector
- Policy formation, planning and implementation as required
- Governance responsibilities, including service on Committees
- Comply with the Centre's governing document
- Ensuring the Centre is complying with its charitable purpose for the public benefit
- Acting in the best interest of the Centre
- Act with Reasonable Care and Skill

Requirements

- A Qualified Solicitor, Barrister, Chartered Secretary or Chartered Director with at least 2 years' post-qualification experience, or professional experience equivalent thereto.
- Knowledge of the relevant requirements of company law, corporate governance principles, Irish charities legislation and the Charities Governance Code
- Experience of acting as a company secretary or equivalent, ideally with a charitable organisation, a public sector body or large company

Desirable experience

- Experience as a company director, charity trustee, a committee member, school governorship or similar voluntary role;
- Experience in funding of charitable or voluntary organisations;
- Commercial experience;
- Experience in event management/planning and professional educational seminars, events or similar;
- Experience in marketing / digital communications;
- An interest in matters related to the European Union and/or the Council of Europe.

Time Commitment

(1) Total

Inclusive of meetings, the expected time commitment for the role is approximately 0.5-1 days per month.

NB It is not expected that the Deputy Secretary play a role in or attend other voluntary activities of the Centre (in particular events in EU and Human Rights law), although this would be welcome.

(2) Board, Committee and General Meetings

The Deputy Secretary is required to attend on **12** days annually, for meetings of **1-2** hours:

- **4** scheduled Board meetings (in March, June, September and December);
- **2** scheduled Advisory Council meetings (held on the same day as the June and December Board meetings);

- 1 scheduled Annual General Meeting per year (held on the same day as the September Board meeting);
- 4 scheduled Audit & Governance committee meetings (held 1 week before Board meetings); and,
- 8 scheduled Officers' Committee meetings a year (held midway between Board meetings and one week before Board meetings).

Dates of meetings may change to suit Board members.

(3) Timings of meetings

Board meetings typically take place at 5pm. The timing of Committee meetings is decided by agreement.

(4) Forum of meetings

Board, General and Advisory Council meetings are normally held online or in hybrid form (physical attendances are preferred, in **Trinity College, Dublin**). Committee meetings are typically held online.

(5) Method of communication

Work of voluntary board members is flexible and will mostly be conducted by email: liaison between volunteers may take place outside office hours; liaison with staff may take place during office hours.

Appointment & Term

The Deputy Secretary will be appointed on and with effect from 28th September 2026 or such other date as may be agreed and determined by the Board.

The Deputy Secretary will be appointed for renewable terms of 1 year or more.

Diversity

The ICEL is committed to diversity in appointments to the Board and Committees, in terms of: gender; age; ethnicity; sexual orientation; the inclusion of members of the legal professions and those involved in legal education; geography in terms of residence or place of business on the island of Ireland (including both legal jurisdictions).

The Nomination, Employment and Remuneration Committee has been asked to have regard to the skills and diversity on the Board and Committees and to recommend appointments, where possible, on the basis of bringing the Board and Committees towards gender balance.

Application Deadline

Applications should be made to recruitmenticel@gmail.com on or by **26th June 2026** and will be treated strictly in confidence. It is intended interviews will take place in the week beginning 20th July 2026.