



GUIDES SERIES:

# Candidate Guide

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**Boardmatch** Ireland  
supporting the development of nonprofit boards

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[www.boardmatchireland.com](http://www.boardmatchireland.com)



## 1. OVERVIEW

Boardmatch – a new model of volunteering - offers you the opportunity to volunteer your time, energy and skills to the nonprofit (community and voluntary) sector at a board level. While many people already volunteer within the sector, including on boards, there is an ongoing need for new people with diverse skills to join boards.

In return, you get a chance to give something back, to expand your skill set and experience, particularly in governance issues, and to build your leadership skills.

**“Boardmatch is a fantastic opportunity for those who have always wanted to make a positive contribution in the voluntary sector but do not know where to start. It really does open up a whole new world”.**

*Matched Candidate*

The free Boardmatch service matches your skills and expertise as a candidate with the needs and requirements of a nonprofit organisation via proactive work by you on the Boardmatch website. You manage your own matching, and choose what organisations to match with.

If you have any queries about any aspect of matching, please contact Miriam Enright or Brian Sheehan at the Boardmatch Ireland office on (01) 4535023 or [info@boardmatchireland.ie](mailto:info@boardmatchireland.ie)

## 2. MATCHING STEPS – IN BRIEF

The web-based matching service happens at [www.boardmatchireland.ie](http://www.boardmatchireland.ie)

The process which you, as a Candidate, will follow when using the web service is:

- You register online with Boardmatch and enter your profile details, including:
  - employment, education and volunteering history.
  - nonprofit areas which interest you (e.g. Theatre, Education, Human Rights, Sports, International Aid/Relief etc.)
  - the amount you have available per month (e.g. 4-8 Hours)
- You search for a match for your preferences against currently available Board positions. All details for the nonprofit organisation are available – name, contact details, organisation profile.

In essence, you build a shortlist of organisations which attract your interest, and contact them. We suggest you contact all those you are



interested in together – like applying for jobs – and you can make choices later depending on the outcomes of your discussions.

Note too, that sometimes it takes a couple of months for an opportunity that specifically interests you to become available. So do check back regularly.

- Where you are interested in a particular organisation/position, you can send a message to the organisation, inviting them to look at your profile. At this stage, you are identified only by your job title and company. Your name and contact details are withheld.
- The organisation responds, indicating if your profile matches their requirements and if they would like to talk to you further on the position. Notifications of any messages received are sent via email to your external email address, and you Login to get the actual email content.
- Additionally, organisations are very proactive in searching through all registered candidates for matches for their positions and may invite you, by sending you a message, to look at their profile. You can indicate your interest (or not) to them by sending them a message through the website.
- If there is mutual interest between you and the Organisation you then disclose your name and contact details and the matching process moves offline from Boardmatch.
- Usually there would be a few conversations and meetings between you and the organisation (e.g. CEO, Board Chair, other board members) and if mutual interest remains, you would join the board of the organisation.

At any stage when using the website, click on the HELP button for further information.

### **3. MATCHING STEPS – DETAIL**

The overall objective of website is to match your skills and expertise as a candidate with the needs and requirements of a non-profit organisation via proactive work by you on the Boardmatch website.

As a candidate there are four stages in becoming an active board member of a non-profit organisation. The first stage, registering and entering your profile is done once, with stages two and three, searching and making contact with organisations ongoing until you find a mutual match with an



organisation. The final stage is where the matching process moves offline – where you and the organisation meet to discuss if the initial interest can translate into you joining the board of the organisation – that choice will always be a mutual one – you can decline a position at any time.

### 3.1 **STAGE 1: REGISTER AS A CANDIDATE AND COMPLETE A PROFILE**

The first stage of the process is go to [www.boardmatchireland.ie](http://www.boardmatchireland.ie) and register as a candidate. Choose a login name (we suggest you use your email address), add an email address and password and begin.

You are now brought straight to the Candidate Profile entry screens. The Profile will take 5 to 10 minutes to complete, and while it can be edited later, it is useful to complete as fully as possible now – that way organisations searching for a match will be able to make clear decisions on inviting you to check them out.

You will be brought through seven screens of information that make up your profile. All information will automatically be saved as you move to the next window. (*Click on HELP at any time for further information*)

These screens include:

**Contact details:** Your name, email address and telephone number and other contact details will be requested. Ensure the email address which you enter is the one where you want to receive all correspondence from Boardmatch. This correspondence will be either messages from Boardmatch itself or notifications of messages sent to you by an Organisation (you can then login to see the actual detail of messages from an Organisation).

Contact detail fields are mandatory and it is important to update these if you change emails etc. Disclosure of your name and contact details are entirely at your own discretion and are normally only revealed when you have established mutual interest with an organisation. You will be identified to an Organisation only as your Job Title and Company – e.g. Accountant, PwC – those are also mandatory fields. That helps an organisation see at a glance what your background and skill set is likely to be, and encourage them to check out your profile.

(Note that Boardmatch will never give your contact details to any third party).

**Educational History:** Enter any educational qualifications you think may be relevant, normally any more recent qualifications will suffice. Filling in this section is optional but based on experience to date, organisations do look at this section to get an overview of you as a candidate

**Employment History:** Again, enter details of any jobs you have held which you think may be relevant. All non profit organisations use this section to access your level of work experience and level of responsibility.



**Volunteering History:** Information relating to any previous volunteering can be entered in this section. This is useful in indicating to organisations if you have experience working in the voluntary sector, or previous experience on a voluntary board.

**Skills and Experience:** Tick the boxes to indicate the skills and experience which you have gained over the years. This is similar information to your work experience except in this tick-box format the information will be used by the Boardmatch as it matches you to available positions.

**Non-profit Interests:** This section enables you to indicate your own particular preferences in organisations (e.g. Arts, Theatre, Human Rights, Children etc.). By ticking the various boxes, you can give picture of your preferences which will be used in matching with organisations with available Board positions. It is useful to be as wide as possible in your reach here to see have the widest choice when matching. Once you have completed this section, you have now entered your personal profile which can be viewed or updated at any time.

A key field here is the Time you have available per month for Board work. This is matched with time commitment that would be expected by an organisation.

**Confirmation:** You will now be sent an email requesting you to confirm your profile. The email asks you to click on a web address which will complete your profile (this is to avoid spammers). Once confirmed, you're ready to begin matching.

### 3.2 **STAGE 2: SEARCH FOR A MATCH**

Once you have confirmed your personal profile, you can now proactively search through the available board positions to make initial contact with organisations that interest you.

A list of the available positions that best match the profile information you have entered (all those tick-boxes) will be returned and you can choose to follow up with one or many of the positions. You:

- send a message to the organisation asking them to look at your profile by clicking on 'read more' and clicking on 'contact organisation'
- they will view your profile and respond indicating if your skills/experiences are appropriate for them, or not

If they are interested, you can then disclose your name/contact details to them and both of you can discuss the possible match further. It is worth noting that an organisation can also search through currently available



candidates (comparing their tick-boxes with those you've entered in your profile), find you, view your profile, and indicate their interest in you.

- they will send a message to you asking you to look at their profile
- if you are interested, you can respond giving your contact details, and both of you can discuss the possible match further
- If you are not interested, you can send a message indicating so.

(Note: your name and contact details are never disclosed until you give explicit permission to do so – you will be identified to an organisation as your Job Title/Company - e.g. Asst.Manager/Bank of Ireland)

To find the most appropriate position for you, we suggest that you regularly check the website and try matching, as new positions are added daily. It may take some time to find a position that interests you, and where there is mutual interest from an organisation.

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In our experience, making initial contact with a number of organisations is advisable as it offers you a choice of possible board positions, some of which you will be very interested in and others which you might decide do not suit your interests.

It is worth noting that an organisation can also search through currently available candidates (comparing their tick-boxes with those you've entered in your profile), find you, view your profile, and indicate their interest in you.

- they will send a message to you asking you to look at their profile
- if you are interested, you can respond giving your contact details, and both of you can discuss the possible match further
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To find the most appropriate position for you, we suggest that you regularly check the website and try matching, as new positions are added daily. It may take some time to find a position that interests you, and where there is mutual interest from an organisation.

### **3.3 STAGE 3: RESPOND TO MESSAGES FROM ORGANISATIONS**

An email will be sent to your external email account (which you detailed when completing your profile) letting you know that a message is waiting for you within the Boardmatch system. These emails will be in response to your initial contact to an organisation, or where an organisation has viewed your profile and wants to talk with you further about their position.



It is important to respond to messages within a short timeframe (we suggest a week) otherwise communication is slow and organisations lose interest in you as a candidate. We at Boardmatch regularly check that communication between you the candidate and the organisation is continuously moving.

If the interest is mutual, you can then move to the next stage – Stage 4 – where you discuss the Board position with organisation.

(If at any stage you wish to discontinue your interest in the Matching process, and make yourself unavailable to organisations, either for a short or longer period, just let the team at Boardmatch know via email at [info@boardmatchireland.ie](mailto:info@boardmatchireland.ie) and we can de-activate you from the website until further notice from yourself.)

### **3.4 STAGE 4: MEET WITH THE ORGANISATION**

The final stage of the recruitment process is after you have disclosed your contact details to the organisation, they will arrange to contact or meet you in person so you can discuss the board position in detail. This enables you to gain a greater understand of the organisation, the Board role and the personnel involved and it allows the organisation to establish if you would fit in with their requirements and with their present board structure.

A final decision to commit to an organisation is made after this meeting, or meetings. The decision is a mutual one, and you can of course, decline any offer of a position with the organisation at any time.

We would appreciate if you could let us know the outcome of these discussions.

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Good Luck!