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Section 1: Terms of Reference

1.1 The name of the Panel shall be the **Register of Sign Language Interpreters (RISLI) Registration Panel**.

1.2 Functions of the Panel

1.2.1 The Regulatory Centre for Irish Sign Language Interpreters Ireland CLG has been established for the purpose of maintaining the register of Irish Sign Language Interpreters and quality assurance scheme ("the Register"), currently being developed by the Sign Language Interpreting Service. This company will operate under the business name of RISLI. A Registration Panel ("the Panel") will be appointed to RISLI, which will assume the role of decision maker in relation to all relevant matters connected with the Register. This papers contains information such as the intended functions of the Panel, its duties and obligations, its terms of reference and membership criteria. Much of this information may be contained in Bye-Laws to be made by RISLI.

1.2.2 The Panel is responsible for:

- a) Maintaining the register of Irish Sign Language interpreters.
- b) Define and set entry requirements and standards for registration and requirements to maintain registration.
- c) Recognition of education and training programmes for the purposes of registration and its maintenance
- d) Setting criteria for the selection and registration of individual assessments for Irish Sign Language Interpreters, as required.
- e) Specify standards of practice for registered Irish Sign Language Interpreters, including the establishment, publication, maintenance and review of—
 - i. appropriate guidance on all matters related to professional conduct and ethics for registered Irish sign language interpreters,
 - ii. appropriate guidance on the maintenance of the professional competence of registered Irish sign language interpreters, and
 - iii. a Code of Conduct for registered Irish sign language interpreters
- f) Maintaining the Code of Conduct and other policies, codes or documents relating to matters including the ethics and professionalism of registered interpreters.
- g) Giving guidance to professionals on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and evidence of work practice requirements.
- h) Hearing submissions and deciding on appropriate sanction(s) where the Complaints Committee decides that a complaint is upheld.
- i) Setting fees for entry to and / or retention on the register, if required.
- j) Monitoring and reviewing quality standards, policies and practices.

1.3 Panel Duties and Obligations

1.3.1 Members will be required to devote as much time as is necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties.

1.3.2 Members may be nominated to serve on committees or sub-groups, to be established by the Registration panel as required.

1.3.3 Members are obliged to comply with the relevant provisions of the *Registration Panel - Code of Conduct*. Members should also be aware of, and work within, the *Charities Governance Code*.

- 1.3.4 While there is no remuneration for the position, members can claim travel and subsistence allowances, which will be paid in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings or to transact its business. This will be in accordance with approved public sector rates.¹
- 1.3.5 Most communication between Panel members will be by electronic means. Members must be willing to accept communications through electronic means. Equal respect will be given to the use of signed languages in communications and Irish Sign Language interpretation will be provided where required. Members shall not, unless authorised by the Registration Panel or required by law so to do, disclose confidential information obtained by him or her in his or her capacity, or while performing duties, as member of the Panel. Members should abide by the confidentiality policy as set out below and be mindful of the circumstances where information shall be disclosed as outlined below.

1.4 Decision Making

- 1.4.1 The Panel will act with autonomy and independence in the best interest of the Register. All decisions in relation to the operation of the Register will be made by the Panel.
- 1.4.2 The Minister for Social Protection will nominate a Chairperson. If no Chair is in attendance the Panel members will propose and second a candidate from within the Panel members present for the role.
- 1.4.3 Decisions will be primarily made by consensus, or on the casting vote of the Panel Chairperson. In circumstances where a consensus cannot be reached, a vote may take place with the decision of the Panel made by way of simple voting majority (50% plus one). In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.
- 1.4.4 The Panel can change and amend its own policies and procedures by a majority vote at a Panel meeting. Any such changes must be included in the quarterly Registration Panel report for publication on the website (risli.ie) by the Secretariat (See Section 1.6.5), as well as communicated to registrants where necessary and implemented in the online versions of the policies and procedures at the earliest instance.
- 1.4.5 Outside supports, such as legal and other advice, may be accessed by the panel as required.
- 1.4.6 The Panel may recommend that Sub-Committees be established as deemed necessary. In this regard, the Panel shall adopt Terms of Reference for each Sub-Committee it establishes; such Terms of Reference shall outline the Committee's role and functions, their membership, their reporting requirements to the Panel and be updated on a regular basis.

1.5 Meetings & Reporting Mechanisms

- 1.5.1 Meetings will take place as necessary. It is expected that the Panel would meet at least four times a year. Minutes of each meeting of the Panel will be prepared.
- 1.5.2 A quorum for the purposes of a Panel meeting shall be 50% plus one.
- 1.5.3 Panel members should endeavour to attend all Panel meetings, and any meetings of sub-committee of which they are a member. If a member misses three consecutive meetings, they will be deemed to have resigned.
- 1.5.4 There may be circumstances in which members are unable to attend a meeting, in which case they should send their apologies as soon as possible to the relevant Chairperson and/or the Secretariat of the meeting of the panel or subcommittee.
- 1.5.5 The Panel will provide updated **quarterly Registration Panel Reports** in writing to the Secretariat for publication on the website (www.risli.ie) and for submission to The Regulatory Centre for Irish Sign Language Interpreters Ireland. CLG. (RCISL) These reports will provide:

¹ See <https://www.revenue.ie/en/employing-people/employee-expenses/travel-and-subsistence/civil-service-rates.aspx>

- a) general information in relation to the Register
- b) names of those accepted onto the Register
- c) policies, procedures, and any changes thereto
- d) recommendations

1.6 Conduct Guidelines

- 1.6.1 Panel members and the Secretariat supporting the operation of the Register and are expected to maintain highest ethical standards in their role, standards are contained within the Code of Conduct for Panel Members.
- 1.6.2 Panel members should bear in mind due to the manner of their role, even when they consider themselves to be working in a private capacity, or for another organisation, they should be mindful of their conduct.
- 1.6.3 Any breach of Code may result in action being taken against the Panel Member, Secretariat or partners concerned, including, but not limited to collective discretion of the Panel, to withdraw membership or participation in the Panel or its subgroups.
- 1.6.4 A Panel Member must act in a manner which is consistent with the aims and interests of Panel and shall seek to enhance its reputation.

1.7 Secretariat

- 1.7.1 The Secretariat will provide administrative and operational support to the Panel. This includes, but not limited to, the drafting of the Agenda of the Registration Panel meetings in collaboration with the Chairperson, the preparation and circulation of papers for such meetings, ensuring they are sent to members in a timely fashion and the drafting of Minutes for each meeting.

Section 2: Panel Membership – Selection and Appointment

2.1 Panel Composition

- 2.1.1 The Panel will consist of up to eleven (11) members who serve on a voluntary basis.
- 2.1.2 It is intended that the Panel will comprise of
 - a) One Registered Irish Sign Language Interpreter
 - b) One academic expert in interpreting or Deaf studies
 - c) One member with international experience of sign language interpreting register
 - d) One professional interpreting representative
 - e) One public body representative
 - f) One external registration panel member
 - g) One representative of appointing body (Minister for Social Protection)
 - h) Three members of the Deaf community

2.2 Appointment of the Panel

- 2.2.1 Members of the Panel are appointed by the Minister for Social Protection. For the initial Registration Panel, the members will be appointed from within the recommendations of a **Selection Committee**. It is intended the Selection Committee will be composed of the following:
 - a) a nominee of the Minister for Social Protection who shall be the **Chairperson** of the Selection Committee

- b) a Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS) Board Member
- c) a representative from the Irish Deaf Society (IDS)
- d) a nominee of the Council of Irish Sign Language Interpreters (CISLI)
- e) an external representative with experience of an established professional register

2.2.2 With the exception of the appointment of the initial Registration Panel, the members will be appointed by the Minister for Social Protection from within the recommendations of the Registration Panel.

Applications for membership of the Registration Panel will be advertised publicly, including on RISLI's website.

2.2.3 It is intended that advertisements will outline the criteria for membership and duties of panellists, and will also state any requirements for candidacy, determined by the composition of the Panel, as per Section 2.1.2 above. Advertisements will call for **Expressions of Interest** in being a Registration Panel member.

2.2.4 The Secretariat will receive all Expressions of Interest from candidates for the Registration Panel and communicate with candidates throughout the recruitment process.

2.2.5 Expressions of Interest received will be reviewed with regard to the necessary composition of the Panel as outlined in Section 2.1.2, and against the selection criteria in Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 below.

2.2.6 To assist in decision-making, the Selection Committee or Registration Panel may request all those shortlisted from an Expression of Interest process to send in further information or attend for a short meeting with Selection Committee or Registration Panel members.

2.2.7 The Selection Committee or the Registration Panel, through the Secretariat, will send a **Recommendation for Selection (Registration Panel) Notice** to Minister for Social Protection for appointment.

2.2.8 Where a member is not in a position to complete his or her term of office such that a vacancy occurs, the Minister for Social Protection will appoint a replacement panel member from within the recommendations of the Registration Panel, whilst ensuring that the constituency requirements set out at 2.1.2 are met.

2.3 Criteria for Panel Membership

2.3.1 Efforts shall be made to ensure Panel members shall be selected who are:

- a) familiar with the Deaf and/or disability sectors, or can demonstrate capacity to acquire this knowledge, as well as the legislative, educative, and regulatory environment in which the Panel operates
OR
- b) experienced in panel, committee or board membership and/or public administration experience

2.3.2 Panel members should ideally possess the following qualities:

- a) relevant experience of the Deaf community and interpreting world, or the corresponding profession or industry in which they are based
- b) effective judgement and decision making
- c) demonstrated experience in identifying solutions to complex issues and understanding their impact and implications
- d) excellent interpersonal and team-working skills, with proven ability to build relationships with different stakeholders
- e) excellent communication skills in written / spoken English and/or Irish Sign Language, with the ability to negotiate and challenge when necessary
- f) a strong sense of ethics and integrity with the ability to bring objectivity and scrutiny to the operation of the Register

- 2.3.3 Induction will be provided to new Panel members. This will consist of an introduction to all policies, process, background to the Register, explanation of duties. A face-to-face (or virtual) meeting with the Chairperson will be arranged. This induction will involve ensuring that Panel members have familiarity with all the functions, policies and processes of the Panel. Topics within the induction may include some or all of the following:
- a) the governance structure of the Panel
 - b) the legislative and administrative framework in which the Register sits
 - c) the Code of Conduct used by the Register
 - d) the Registers' complaints and appeal processes
 - e) the processes around membership of Specialisation Panels once established
 - f) Confidentiality and GDPR requirements as they pertain to the Register

2.4 Terms of Office

- 2.4.1 It is envisaged that a member of the Panel appointed will hold office for a term of three years from the time of appointment. However, to ensure consistency and continuity in the future by avoiding a situation where the entire Panel leaves office at the same time, members of the Panel as initially constituted will be appointed for a term of either two years (50% members) or three years (50% members) on establishment of the panel by random selection. Except for the Chair who will be appointed for three years.
- 2.4.2 The Panel will be chaired by one of its members, who will be appointed by the Minister for Social Protection for an initial term of three years.
- 2.4.3 Panel members cannot remain members for more than two consecutive terms. Second terms will be appointed by Minister for Social Protection.
- 2.4.4 A Registration Panel member term will cease in the following scenarios:
- a) Resignation of the Registration Panel member
 - b) A breach of the Code of Conduct for Panel Members. Non-attendance of a Registration Panel member at 3 successive Panel meetings
 - c) Death of the Registration Panel member

References

CORU, *Code of Conduct for Council and Registration Board Members*.

http://coru.ie/uploads/documents/Code_of_Conduct_for_Council_and_Registration_Board_Members.PDF.pdf

CORU, *Guide for Council and Registration Board Members*.

http://coru.ie/uploads/documents/Guide_for_Council_and_Registration_Board_Members_-_Online.pdf