

AONTAS Annual General Meeting (AGM)

22nd May 2019

Nominations for the AONTAS Board of Directors

NOMINATIONS FOR POSITIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL MEMBER (GENERAL)

1. Liam Ahearn, Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETB)

Liam Ahearn is currently on the Board of AONTAS. He has served as Learner Representative on the Board of Tipperary ETB since 2013. He has been actively involved in adult and community education sector for over 14 years.

2. Brian Dooney, Age and Opportunity

Brian has worked in adult education for over 20 years, in All Hallows College/DCU and more recently in Age and Opportunity, the national non-profit organisation which promotes opportunities for greater participation by older people in society. Programmes he is currently involved in with Age and Opportunity include Changing Gears: Building Resilience in Mid to Later Life, which has run in Family Centres, Community groups, Men's Sheds and Prisons (Mountjoy Training Unit, Arbour Hill Prison) and Creative Exchanges which brings together artists and activities co-ordinators to improve quality of life for older people in residential or day-care settings. He completed his doctorate in English Literature in TCD (2009). What he brings to AONTAS (he has served on the Board for three years) is a passion for the creative role of the arts in adult and community education.

3. Dr Mary Fenton, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Dr Mary Fenton is currently Head of Department of Education and former Head of Adult and Continuing Education at Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). She has a proven track record in developing and delivering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes for adult learners and for educators from community, adult and basic, primary, second level, FET and higher education sectors. She is a member of the HEI FET Forum, a network of higher education institutes who deliver Teaching Council-recognised qualifications for the FET sector. Her experience working in higher education and in community and adult education has given her an insight into the particular needs of adult learners, and she will be a strong advocate for them as a member of the AONTAS board.

4. Seona Hyland, Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI)

Seona Hyland is an Adult Guidance Counsellor with KWETB. She is also a member of the Adult Education Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI), a national body of adult guidance counsellors in the 16 ETBs around the country. She has been working as an adult guidance counsellor for 16 years.

5. Gabriel Keating, Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)

Gabriel Keating is involved in the promotion of adult learning in County Clare. He has been active in his local community for the last 50 years and has had involvement in both regional and national organisations. He is a current member of the AONTAS Board and represents County Clare Local Authority on the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB). His knowledge and experience of a wide range of adult learning programmes would enhance his contribution to the Board.

6. Michelle Kinsella, Dyslexia Association of Ireland

Michelle Kinsella is an adult education practitioner working across the adult education sector with various organisations in which she undertakes teaching, research and advocacy roles. Her work is underpinned by a commitment to equality in education and she has been involved in various projects including European Research and Arts Council Funded Artwork with a community focus. She has Board experience, having served on the Board of Management of an Educate Together/ETB secondary school. She has been teaching on various Adult Education programmes at Maynooth University for a number of years and is the Development Officer for Adult Services at the Dyslexia Association of Ireland. Her daily work involves collaborating closely with Education and Training Boards and community education providers in order to facilitate the upskilling of Further Education (FE) staff while advocating for policy change in relation to reasonable accommodations for learners both at FE and at Higher Education (HE) levels. She is passionate about adult education and believes in the power of transformative education experiences. She believes that her extensive knowledge of the adult education sector both from the perspective of a teacher and an advocate for those with the hidden disability of dyslexia makes her an excellent candidate for the AONTAS Board of Directors.

7. Moira Leydon, Association of Secondary Teachers (ASTI)

Moira Leydon is an Assistant General Secretary with the Association of Secondary Teachers (ASTI), Ireland with responsibility for policy development, external engagement and research. She represents the ASTI in a wide range of external agencies and on the Global Solidarity and Women's Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Moira is a graduate in Sociology and Political Economy, and holds a Masters' Degree in Equality Studies from NUI Dublin. She also holds a Master's in Human Rights and Social Policy from NUI Maynooth. She has a long association with AONTAS and has been an advocate for adult education in many policy forums. She was instrumental in promoting adult education provision in voluntary secondary schools and works closely with adult education co-ordinators in community and comprehensive schools. A long-time member of AONTAS, Moira is a current member of the AONTAS Board of Directors.

8. Michael Maher, Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB)

Michael Maher is a Galway County Councillor. He is currently a member on the Board of Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB), where he is also a member of the Further Education Committee and a member of the GRETB Finance Committee. He is former Chairperson of the GRETB Board and of the Further Education Committee. He is a member of the ETBI Board Reserved Members Forum and the ETBI Finance & Audit committee. He is a Governing Body member of Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and sits on the GMIT Finance Committee and Strategic Policy Committee. He has many years' experience in both post-primary and adult education. Through his years of involvement in the education sector, Michael's knowledge of adult learning would contribute highly to the AONTAS Board.

9. Deirdre Markey, ALBA Association

As a chartered accountant with over 13 years' experience leading finance teams in the private sector, if elected, Deirdre will bring strong financial skills to the Board. As a recent graduate of the Adult Learning BA for Personal and Professional Development (ALBA) programme she will bring first-hand experience of adult education as a learner. Her ALBA journey has instilled in her a passionate commitment to lifelong learning. It also strongly influenced her decision to change focus from the private to the community/voluntary sector wherein she now works part-time, in an operational role for an NGO. At Spirasi, she leads an innovative integration programme for asylum seekers and refugees who are survivors of torture. Working with this disadvantaged group has highlighted to her the multifaceted nature of integration in society and the importance of formal and informal support systems.

NOMINATIONS FOR POSITIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL MEMBER (COMMUNITY EDUCATION)

10. Liam McCarthy

Liam McCarthy's contribution as an Organisational Member (Community Education) of the AONTAS Board will be towards building a strong voice for Community Education in Ireland through i) Contributing to organisational governance and policy development; ii) Bringing practice knowledge of group-work education methods for personal and social change; iii) Supporting connections and networking between groups; and iv) Advocating methods for deep changes to our wider systems. These anticipated contributions will be grounded in over 18 years' of experience to date of working on Boards of Management (10 with Cork Simon Community [three as Chairperson], three with the Federation of Simon Communities of Ireland, three on the SHEP Management Committee and six years on a school board). As a Senior Training and Development Officer for 15 years with The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP), which a significant organiser of Community Education in the Munster area, his main practice expertise involves developing and organising: experiential learning community education courses; reflective practice courses for community and voluntary staff and volunteers; and courses in participatory approaches to community and organisational development. He has undertaken and published research (Inter-Agency work and Community Education) and been

involved in policy development of various kinds, most recently in relation to supports for Community Education. In earlier parts of his career he held senior operations and personnel management roles. Liam has trained formally in electrical engineering, social policy, counselling, group facilitation and social work.