

## **Policy on Declaration of Interest of Grants Assessors**

In order to ensure fairness and equity in decision-making, a panel member must declare an interest where they have a close personal or professional link with the applicant or are linked in any way with the application.

Where an 'interest' is deemed to be pecuniary (financial), e.g. a prospective panel member is a grant applicant or acting as an advisor/consultant on a project, such person will not be approached by the Heritage Council to sit on the panel.

Where an 'interest' is deemed to be non pecuniary (e.g. familial relationships, personal partnerships, or formal or informal business partnerships), the interest must be declared as soon as the panel member becomes aware of it. This may be at the point when the panel member is approached to sit on the panel (if the interest is known at that stage) or following receipt of the list of applicants. Where an interest is declared, the panel member will not receive papers relating to that applicant and will be required to leave the room when the specific application is being reviewed. In the event that a vote is required, the panel chairperson will vote in lieu of the panel member.

In some instances, a panel member may not realise that a conflict of interest exists until (s)he receives and reviews the panel papers. In such instances, the panel member must alert the Heritage Council and the panel chairperson as soon as they become aware that a conflict may exist.

In the event of two panel members declaring a conflict of interest for the same application, the remaining panel members will make a decision on that specific application.

If the nominated panel chairperson has a conflict of interest, (s)he must declare it in writing in advance of the meeting, or as soon as (s)he becomes aware of it. In this instance, another board member will chair the discussion on that specific application.