

Promoting Good Governance in the Public Interest

The Governance Forum at the Institute of Public Administration provides advice, training, information and a range of supports on good governance, with a particular emphasis on state, public interest and public benefit organisations. The member organisations of the Forum include state bodies and agencies, regulatory bodies, higher education institutions, government departments, local authorities and not-for-profit organisations.

The Forum programme for 2021 is designed, once again, to give enhanced value to the membership. The benefits for each Forum member include invitations for Board and Committee members, senior executives and staff to a series of highly relevant briefing events, conferences, training and roundtable discussions. The Forum also includes the Chairpersons' Network and a Board Secretaries' Network (run in association with the ICOSA – The Chartered Governance Institute), both of which successfully launched in 2019. Members can also receive customised in-house governance advice, Board and Committee training, related consultancy services and access to advice and support from IPA governance specialists. Since its establishment in 2007, the Forum's services have grown and evolved in response to the needs of the members and in response to governance developments over the years. Recent topics addressed have included governance and culture, cyber security, risk appetite, Board effectiveness, strategy implementation, reputation management and additional appendices and guidance arising from the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

The programme is kept under constant review to ensure topicality and relevance and member feedback is always welcomed. We are particularly pleased with the positive feedback and engagement of members at the 2020 events (including in online format) and we are also indebted to the many expert speakers who shared their high levels of practical knowledge, experience and important lessons learnt at the events.

Chairpersons' and Board Secretaries' Networks

In light of feedback from members and the shared benefits of such networks, we launched a Chairpersons' Network and a Board Secretaries' Network in 2019, as additional features of Governance Forum membership. These networks allow for periodic roundtable and workshop events relevant to both Chairpersons and Secretaries, respectively, on topics of importance to these specialist positions. They also enable a useful peer network for members and the promulgation of good practices and approaches. Our annual Audit & Risk Committee Chairpersons' roundtable will also take place once again in 2021.



Looking Back on 2020

As was the case for everyone, 2020 was a particularly busy and challenging year for the Forum, adapting to the new reality created by the Covid-19 pandemic. The first 4 events of our 18-event programme went ahead in our auditorium, and attracted strong numbers. As the pandemic took hold, we initially postponed 3 events, which were scheduled for March, April and early May. Given the unlikelihood of physical events being possible for some time, we moved to online events in mid-May, with the 2020 programme resuming with our scheduled Board Effectiveness event on 14 May 2020. The remainder of the programme was delivered in online format, using both webinar platforms and a virtual roundtable platform for the Chairpersons' and Board Secretaries' Networks. The 3 postponed events were rescheduled for late 2020 and January 2021.

One of the benefits generated by online events was greater accessibility for members. Our webinars attracted upwards of 160-220 attendees per event with very positive feedback forthcoming, and our virtual roundtables for our networks attracted strong attendance numbers and positive feedback in terms of content and the engagement made possible by the platform.

All in all, the 2020 programme comprised 11 events on topics of importance (both in person earlier in the year and online webinars), 5 roundtable network events (1 of which was in person earlier in the year and the remainder were online roundtables) and 2 online training events.

We are very grateful to the broad range of speakers who inputted to our events. A total of 43 speakers were involved in the programme, and included the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform, Secretaries General, Chief Executives, Senior Executives, experts in particular fields (e.g. cyber, communications) and IPA specialists.

Membership

The benefits for each Forum member include exclusive access to:

- An 18-event programme of highly relevant briefing events, training and roundtable discussions
- The Chairpersons' Network and Board Secretaries' Network
- The Forum website, including a members' area
- A valuable network of peers from the state, public and non-profit sectors
- One day's consultancy, on a complimentary basis, from the IPA Governance Team
- Access to advice and guidance from the IPA Governance Team

Membership to the Governance Forum is €4,950 for non-corporate members of the IPA and €4,500 for corporate members.

Join the Governance Forum [HERE](#)





Governance Team Services

The Governance team at the IPA provides a range of value-added services to state, public interest and public benefit organisations. A selection of these services are outlined below and the Governance Team is available to discuss how we can assist you and your organisation during the forthcoming year.

- **Board and Committee Evaluations** – during 2020 the team undertook Board and Committee evaluations and effectiveness reviews for a range of state bodies, government departments, higher education institutions and not-for-profit organisations. We provide a genuine value-added service, comprising, in each case, a survey of members, one-to-one interviews, meeting observation and a Board or Committee workshop on the findings and next steps.
- **Governance Reviews** – the team supports organisations in assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of their governance frameworks, manuals, policies and documentation. This can be on the basis of a 'health-check' or on foot of a particular concern.
- **Risk Management** – our specialists support organisations through external evaluations of their risk management frameworks and processes, the development and review of risk registers and risk appetite statements.
- **Strategy Development** – our team supports organisations in the development of new strategic plans and reviewing the effectiveness of their implementation.
- **Board, Committee and Member Training** – during 2020 we supported numerous Boards, Committees and senior teams with bespoke training, including coverage of governance roles and responsibilities, risk management, audit and assurance, the contents and implications of respective codes of governance and new member induction.

Our other services include control effectiveness and assurance reviews, providing professional advice and support to Boards and Committees, and governance gap analysis exercises. We also provide, as necessary, confidential advice and support for Boards and those in key governance and leadership roles.

The Forum is managed by

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DATES AND TOPICS

Date	Time*	Topic
Thursday, 14 January 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Chairpersons' Network
Thursday, 28 January 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Key Governance Topics 2021
Wednesday, 10 February 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Board Secretaries' Network
Thursday, 25 February 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Department-Agency Relations – performance, assurance and autonomy
Thursday, 18 March 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Cyber and Data Governance
Thursday, 15 April 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Culture and the Role of the Board and Senior Team
Thursday, 13 May 2021	11.00 – 12.30	The Board as a Team – Characteristics and Effectiveness
Thursday, 27 May 2021	11.00 – 12.30	ARC Chairpersons' Roundtable
Thursday, 10 June 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Communicating and Engaging with Impact
Thursday, 24 June 2021	10.00 – 12.30	Finance and Financial Reporting (Training)
Thursday, 01 July 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Chairpersons' Network
Thursday, 09 September 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Board Secretaries' Network
Thursday, 23 September 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Strategy – Assessing Progress and Impact
Thursday, 07 October 2021	09.45 – 15.00	Board Members' Roles and Responsibilities (Training)
Thursday, 21 October 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Integrated Risk Management
Thursday, 11 November 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Periodic Critical Reviews – Progress and Lessons
Thursday, 02 December 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Board-Executive Relations
Thursday, 09 December 2021	11.00 – 12.30	Chairpersons' Network

**Times may be subject to change in exceptional circumstances*

Events will be online so long as public health advice necessitates this to be the case. This will be reviewed over the course of 2021.