



Staff Charter

February, 2024

Nevin Economic Research Institute

Mission Statement

To influence policy outcomes that have the greatest effect on the achievement of equity and fairness in the political economy on the Island of Ireland, to the benefit of working people, their families and communities and the enhancement of the quality of life of all people living on the island of Ireland, through the provision of high-quality macro and micro economic research and analyses, awareness raising and capacity building programmes.

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1. ESTABLISHMENT HISTORY AND GOVERNANCE OF THE NEVIN ECONOMIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Nevin Economic Research Institute was launched on 27 March 2012 following its establishment as a 'Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital', in 2011, by a number of trade unions affiliated to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. The Company has been registered with the Companies Registration Office (company number 501175). The main objects for which the Company has been established are – according to the memorandum of association (paragraph 3):

“(i) To seek to advance knowledge and understanding of economics and the social sciences, with particular reference to the economic and social conditions in or affecting the island of Ireland.

(ii) To undertake, to the benefit of the public, research and analysis on the impact of economic policy development and its effects towards the attainment of a more equitable and just society.

(iii) To publish and promote research findings in order to advance awareness and comprehension of economic theory.

(iv) To undertake activities to ensure a broad dissemination of the research and analysis.

(v) To provide education, training and capacity building programmes to increase understanding of economic and social science policy among the general public

(vi) Such other activities that contribute to the achievement of the foregoing”.

The Company is also enabled to 'promote and further the main objects of the Company by conferences, public or private meetings, discussions, publications or by such other means as may be deemed desirable or necessary' (paragraph 4).

Paragraph 5 of the Memorandum of association stipulates that: 'The nominated representatives of those unions contributing financially (the 'subscribers') to the establishment and running of the Congress Economic Research Unit ('CERU'), will become the members of the Company (the 'members')'. General meetings of the Company are held annually. Members of the Company will form a 'Governing Council which should meet no less than twice per annum, the 'business and affairs of the Company shall be managed by the Governing Council'.

'The Chairperson of the Governing Council shall be the current General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.' Each member of the company 'shall be entitled to appoint one member to the Governing Council' The Governing Council 'will appoint a Steering Committee comprised of up to six members, including the current General Secretary of Congress, who will act as Chairperson of the Steering Committee. One member of the Steering Committee should be appointed by the member organisations based in Northern Ireland. The Steering Committee should meet at regular intervals throughout the year.

In July 2015 at the Biennial Delegate Conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions a motion (number 12) was adopted and, subsequently, implemented with effect from 1 January 2016. The motion reads as follows:

This Conference acknowledges:

- *The success of the Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI) since its establishment in 2012,*

The significant and valuable contribution that NERI has made to the trade union movement by way of quality and relevant research;

- *The close working relationship that NERI has established with Congress affiliated unions and the Congress Secretariat.*

This conference notes that the existing fund model for NERI expires in 2016 and this Conference resolves to adopt a funding method that positions NERI on a secure basis within the Congress financial

framework without prejudice to the existing legal and governance arrangements in place for NERI. Having regard to the foregoing, paragraph 14 of the Congress Constitution is amended to read as follows:

The affiliation fee payable by members is calculated on a hybrid system for determining affiliation fees based on four factors, an amount per member, plus an amount per delegate to which each union is entitled to have at BDC, a flat fee, and an amount per member

to fund the activities of the Nevin Economic Research institute. From January 1st 2016 the rates are as follows:

- *€2.58 per member, plus*
- *€811 per BDC delegate,*
- *€1622 flat fee per union,*
- *.75c per member to fund the activities of the Nevin Economic Research Institute.*

2. SCOPE OF WORK OF THE INSTITUTE

The Institute is staffed by professional economists in offices in Dublin and Belfast. Staff report to the Co-directors of the Institute who are responsible for the overall direction of work and delivery of the Programme of Work.

All staff members are responsible for working as a team and for the delivery of the Programme of Work including:

- regular publications of the Institute, working papers and articles including peer-reviewed academic publications.
- Training and briefing for various user audiences

Staff are expected to maintain an active research profile contributing to journals and books and updating their knowledge and skills.

A particular focus of the Institute includes:

- wages, incomes and pensions;
- various forms of wealth;
- macro-economic and fiscal policy including taxation;
- Ireland in a global and European context;
- labour market trends, employment and unemployment;
- economics of equality in the workplace;
- planning for a new type of a long-term economic and social model.

All staff are expected to ensure the implementation and maintenance of the highest quality standards and best practice in relation to the development of research, analysis and publications produced under the auspices of the Institute. Staff are also expected to build effective working relations with colleagues and departments in Congress.

The success of the Institute will depend on the maintenance of effective team-working and supportive arrangements.

Regular all-staff meetings will take place throughout the year to facilitate exchange of information, consultation and deliberation.

3. PUBLICATIONS OF THE INSTITUTE

The Nevin Economic Research Institute as an independent research company sponsored by trade unions affiliated to the ICTU is solely responsible for all publications issued in the name of the NERI. The Co-directors of the NERI have authority for authorising all material published by the Institute. The main publication outputs of the Institute include the following:

- A Working Paper Series;
- A Research in-Brief Series;
- A Report Series;
- A Report in-Focus Series;
- A NERI Long-Read Series.

All staff are expected to contribute regularly to academic and other appropriate journals as well as prepare short articles for newspapers and websites as appropriate.

Draft Working Papers prepared by staff should be fully reviewed by at least two other staff members prior to its dissemination.

The Co-directors, in consultation with a staff member who has authored a piece of research, may decide to circulate material on a confidential basis to whoever he/she wishes to consult in advance of a publication for feedback and comment. However, the final decision on what is to be published rests with the Co-directors. The Co-directors may decide not to proceed with a given publication or, alternatively, may decide to issue a caveat to the effect that a publication or some specific recommendations in it do not necessarily reflect the views of the NERI.

All NERI outputs will contain a disclaimer indicating that views or policy recommendations do not necessarily reflect those of Congress or the unions sponsoring the NERI or the Steering Committee of NERI.

A Research Review Panel (RRP) assists in the process of preparing and quality-proofing all NERI outputs (other than working papers)

4. PLACE AND HOURS OF WORK

Applicants for all posts within the NERI will be informed, before an appointment is made, of their designated place of work. That place of work will also be clearly stated in the written statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment supplied to each new employee on appointment or within eight weeks of their commencement.

4.1 Probation

A fixed probationary period will apply during which time there will be regular reviews and feedback on performance conducted by the Co-directors of the Institute, as appropriate, with the objective of ensuring a satisfactory completion of the probation term.

4.2 Hours of Work

The Institute Office in the Republic is based at 31-32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 while its Northern Ireland office is based at 45-47 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2FG.

It is expected that the staff of the Institute will devote the hours necessary to complete the duties of their office. On average over a period of year, this is likely to exceed a minimum 35 hours per working week. The minimum is a period of 35 hours per week, generally 9.15am to 5.15pm, with a one-hour break for lunch.

Flexible working arrangements are in place to facilitate earlier commencement in the morning or later finishing in the evening and to allow for a lunch break of up to two hours. However, the core working hours of 10.00am to 4.30pm must be observed. These arrangements are based on staff normally working a minimum of seven hours per day (Monday to Friday), excluding any time taken for lunch break.

The NERI may authorise a staff member to work from home for part of the working week. Authorisation for this can only be given in advance by a Co-director.

4.3 Time off in-lieu

It will be a requirement of the work in the Institute that a certain amount of attendance outside of office hours take place. It is recognised and appreciated that employees facilitate this. However, it is not intended that patterns of excessive and continuous out of hours work should arise and where this arises the working arrangements should be discussed with the Co-directors and follow-up action considered.

Time off in lieu agreement may be granted in exceptional circumstances where the employee is obliged to attend meetings or conferences on behalf of the Institute or the ICTU at weekends or on public holidays. The taking of time off must be agreed in advance with the Co-directors (or chairperson as appropriate). This provision should be taken as soon as possible with the agreement of the Co-directors and normally within one month after being incurred.

5. TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

Membership of a trade union affiliated to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is a condition of

employment in the Institute.

6. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

It is expected that all staff will support and participate in **continuing professional development** through appropriate training, mutual support, upskilling and sharing of knowledge as well as participation in conferences and seminars as agreed with the Co-directors.

7. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

Arrangements for annual leave are detailed in Section 8 of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) as well as in the contract applicable to each NERI staff member. All leave must be taken within this twelve-month period. Deferments should be on the authority of the Co-directors and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Arrangements for leave should be pre-agreed with the Co-directors whom shall accommodate requests based on the work requirements of the organisation.

Arrangements for other types of leave (sick leave, special leave, parental leave, caring responsibilities, study career break etc.) are as outlined in sections 9 and 10 of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) apply to NERI staff.

8. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

Arrangements for payment of salary and provision of pensions for NERI staff are in accordance with those in section 3 and 4 of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) unless otherwise stated in the contract for the staff member.

9. MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

The Co-Directors are responsible for setting work and overseeing the performance of the staff of the Institute. The role of the Co-directors is also supportive, helping employees to achieve, to learn on the job and communicating organisational information. Agreed objectives will be set for each member of staff on a periodic basis so that achievement and task completion is measurable. Normally, review and planning meetings will take place on a bilateral basis between the Co-directors and staff members once a month with an annual review and planning meeting. These meetings will provide an opportunity for discussion and feedback and allow for identification of difficulties and establish training and development needs.

10. REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORK OF THE INSTITUTE

Costs arising from the purchase of materials or from travel and subsistence on approved travel for the Institute will be reimbursed according to the following rules:

1. Where it is proposed to make a purchase or undertake a journey in connection with the work of the Institute approval must be sought from the Co-directors (or the Chairperson as appropriate).
2. In the case of travel within Ireland public transport should be used. Where it is proposed to use a private car instead of public transport prior approval should be sought. Costs,

including subsistence are reimbursed according to the most recent relevant circulars of the Department of Finance in the Republic of Ireland.

3. The standard NERI reimbursement form should be filled in, signed by the claimant and approver and then forwarded to the Congress Accounts office as soon as possible after the expense is incurred.
4. Where travel abroad is not reimbursed by the European Commission or other agencies involved in hosting a meeting the norms applying in the civil service in the Republic will be applied.

11. OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Staff in the full-time employment of the Institute are not permitted to accept outside employment except:

- with the permission of the Co-directors (or Chairperson as appropriate) and
- on the condition all earnings from such outside employment shall be declared and deducted from salary.

This applies to any employment of a continuous character. Fees for occasional articles, lectures, and broadcast appearances related to the work of NERI should be transferred to the Institute. Agreement with the Co-directors is required where employees are publishing articles related to work in their own name. (see Publications and Dissemination protocol).

Employees of the Institute are precluded from publishing any statement to the press, any article, book or other publication on any subject which might fall within the scope of Institute policy, save with the prior permission of the Co-directors or Chairperson as appropriate.

Employees of the Institute must seek and have the express authority of the Chairperson or Steering Committee to stand as a candidate for election to any public office.

12. NERI COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

12.1 NERI in the Media

- All NERI media appearances should be notified to a director before the interview or event takes place.
- Media interactions are primarily for the purposes of promoting and discussing specific NERI research outputs.

12.2 NERI Website

- All NERI output that is uploaded to the NERI website must be approved by the directors in advance.
- All research outputs must go through internal NERI review processes before being uploaded. A director must sign off on final document.
- All blogs must be signed off by one of the directors before being uploaded to the website.
- Only NERI events can be promoted on the NERI website.
- All seminars, podcasts and videos must be cleared with one of the directors before being uploaded. The topics for these outputs should also receive sign off from one of the directors before any work or recording is undertaken.

12.3 NERI Social Media

- The NERI twitter and Facebook accounts are a part of the NERI's corporate communication strategy and therefore the responsibility of the directors. Tweets, retweets and likes from these accounts are to be approved by the directors.
- The NERI social media account exists primarily to promote research outputs and events of the NERI and will not be utilised for any other functions.
- All activity on the NERI accounts is only to be carried out by Louisa or a designated staff member in her absence.

12.4 Personal Social Media accounts

- All personal social media accounts in which you identify yourself as a NERI staff member must also state that the content of that account does not reflect the views of the NERI.
- Interacting with other users on social media can be beneficial to the diffusion of NERI research to a wider audience. However, it is necessary to remain professional when discussing NERI research and policy commentary online. While your remarks may be made in a personal capacity you are still a representative of the NERI.
- In using personal social media:
 - Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures. How you conduct yourself in the online social media space not only reflects on you, it is a direct reflection of your professionalism and your employer.
 - Think before you post. Anything you post that is inaccurate or unfair will ultimately be your responsibility.
 - You may come across negative posts about NERI, but you should avoid responding yourself. The post in question should be forwarded to the co-directors.
 - Know that the internet is permanent. Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a permanent record, even if you 'remove/delete' it later or attempt to make it anonymous.
- There is implied mutual trust and confidence between employer and employee in all employment contracts. However, a very negative, defamatory communication by an employee may entitle NERI to invoke the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure.

13. OWNERSHIP OF MATERIAL WITHIN THE INSTITUTE

Any material produced on behalf of the Institute remains the property of the Institute.

14. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The NERI is an equal opportunities employer in conformity with those provisions set out in Section 11 and Appendix IV of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) with the proviso that the Co-directors are, de facto, the first point of reference where mention is made of General Secretary/Assistant General Secretary.

15. ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Harassment involves certain forms of behaviour which are directed towards another person and which has an adverse effect on working relationships or on an individual's work. The Institute is committed to ensuring that everyone can work in an environment free from any form of harassment and be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment of employees will not be tolerated in any form. The Institute's policy and procedures for dealing with bullying and

harassment is in conformity with those set out in Appendix VII of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) with the proviso that the Co-directors are, de facto, the first point of reference followed by the Chair of the Institute where necessary.

16. NERI GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures at the NERI are in conformity with those set out in Appendix VIII of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) with the proviso that the Co-directors are, de facto, the first point of reference where mention is made of General Secretary/Assistant General Secretary.

17. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety Procedures at the NERI are in conformity with those set out in Section 17 and Appendix XIX of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) with the proviso that the Co-directors are, de facto, the first point of reference where mention is made of General Secretary/Assistant General Secretary.

18. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

ICT practices at the NERI are in conformity with those set out in Section 18 and Appendix XXI of the ICTU Staff Manual (November, 2019) with the proviso that the Co-directors are, de facto, the first point of reference where mention is made of General Secretary/Assistant General Secretary.

19. GIFTS

In order to maintain the integrity of all our operations and practices Institute staff shall not under any circumstances solicit gifts from persons from whom they come in contact in the discharge of their duties. It is NERI policy not to accept gifts other than those of a token nature.

20. INSURANCE

Staff members are covered by both a special NERI public liability insurance and NERI employer liability insurance.

21. RESPECT AND DIGNITY IN THE WORKPLACE

It is essential that all NERI staff are treated with respect and dignity in the workplace at all times. At the same time, all NERI staff should endeavor to ensure that their own interactions take place in a collegial and respectful manner. This includes interactions with individuals and organisations that are external to the NERI, including but not limited to the ICTU and its affiliates.

Disagreements are not inconsistent with respect and dignity and are inevitable in a think-tank. However, it is essential to NERI making progress in its mission statement that the institute and its staff are perceived internally and externally as rigorous, thoughtful, respectful and approachable.

NERI staff should report any instances where they feel they have not been treated in an appropriate manner to one or both of the Co-directors and the Co-directors will investigate the issue and address it as appropriate.

In the event of a complaint being received by either of the Co-directors from an internal or external source alleging disrespectful conduct by a NERI staff member, or conduct that brings the reputation of NERI into disrepute, the complaint will be investigated by the Co-directors who may invoke the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures as appropriate.