



Private and Confidential

Candidate brief for the position of CEO Tennis Ireland

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About Tennis Ireland

Tennis Ireland has its Head Office located in Dublin and has four very active Provincial Branches. Each Branch has a Council with a President, Secretary and Treasurer. These Branches support tennis activities at club and school level including competition, regional match plays and inter provincial team competition at junior, senior and veteran levels.

The Board is comprised of representatives from the four Provincial Branches together with a Chairperson, President, Secretary, Finance Director, Communications Director and Performance Director.

The core strategies include Participation and Club Development, Performance Tennis, Health & Safety incorporating child safeguarding, Enjoy Tennis, Education & Training including coaching standards and the promotion of the sport through the media, stakeholders, clubs, sponsorship and Sport Ireland.

Tennis Ireland is responsible for the governance of the sport together with the design, publication and enforcement of the rules of the sport and the procedure for the handling of complaints and objections.

Tennis Ireland has c. 62,000 members across 180 clubs in Ireland. A number of International Tennis Federation tournaments are hosted each year and the successful running including the securing of the necessary sponsorship is a key activity for the further development of the sport in Ireland.

There is 18 full time staff and 8 part time, as well as the team of international coaches responsible for the development of Tennis nationwide. Annual turnover is c. €3mil and the building up of this turnover is critical to supporting the development of the sport.



The Opportunity

The CEO is the Accountable Officer with responsibility for developing (in conjunction with the Board) and delivering on the vision, mission, strategic direction and goals of the overall organisation and leading it to ensure the sustainability of the sport, its reputation and achievement of outstanding success.

Establish Strategic Direction

- Ensure the development and delivery of the overall strategic direction of the organisation and sport to ensure success in line with agreed outcomes;
- In collaboration with the Board, establish, agree and deliver the strategic (vision, mission, policy direction) and annual operational plans with measurable performance outcomes for the organisation and the sport;
- Monitor, review and report to the Board on the operational and financial performance of the organisation and in particular the early identification of opportunities, issues or risks together with an appropriate action plan;
- Ensure the entire organisation is kept informed of the significant challenges, opportunities, developments and trends which may affect it to inform future direction and bring people along with it;
- Advocate on behalf of the sport to ensure the success in the sporting, business and political landscapes.

Ensure Governance and Regulation Control

- Inform the Board of any relevant matters relating to the organisation and its wider operations (to ensure it is conducted in accordance with ethical governance, current legislation and financial regulations);
- As agreed with the Board, ensure the necessary and appropriate checks and balances are put in place to ensure all business affairs of the organisation are conducted to the highest ethical standards to protect the reputation of the organisation and the sport, report on progress and escalate any matters of concern to the Board;
- Establish people, financial and operational regulatory mechanisms and controls through the implementation of a comprehensive framework of policies, processes and procedures, which comply with legislation and are benchmarked with best practice to enable good governance and risk management across the wider organisation;
- Ensure the implementation of education / awareness programmes throughout the sport so everyone is up-to-date on the evolving rules, regulations, practices and safeguards and that they are adhered to;

Operational Management and Development of the Sport Organisation

- Oversee the implementation of agreed strategies to grow participation, club development and ensure the longevity of the sport and to create a sustainable pipeline of high performance 'elite' athletes to represent Ireland in the four Grand Slams both junior and senior and the Olympic games;
- Oversee the implementation of agreed strategies to facilitate access, grow participation, membership and club development throughout Ireland and ensure that the organisation is fulfilling the requirements of its members and to develop a sustainable pipeline of high performance 'elite' athletes to represent Ireland in the four Grand Slams both junior and senior and the Olympic games;



- Ensure the necessary infrastructure, systems and integrated development pathways are in place to enable participants to perform to the best of their ability in local, national, international competitions and to enable the development of the sport;
- Ensure there is consistent quality of service and efficiency delivered across operations in line with agreed Service Level Agreements in a cost- effective manner;
- Oversee the planning and monitoring of major sporting events (Inter provincial competition, International Tennis Federation (ITF) events, Men's Irish Open, National Match Plays to name but a few across Ireland to ensure their success against agreed objectives;
- Enable the Performance Co-ordinator to drive and deliver the Emerging talent plan program to achieve the agreed ITF points and rankings targets;
- Make sure Talent Identification Development and Systems pathways are in place for high performance athletes and determine the decision-making criteria in relation to the athlete investment strategy;
- Ensure that a transparent selection policy and process is in place and published for national team and national match play selection.

Financial Management and Income Generation

- Optimise both the short- and long-term financial performance and viability of the organisation;
- In conjunction with the Board, set all budgets, and ensure controls and delegation of authority are established throughout the organisation in line with financial regulation and good governance;
- Prepare and present to the Board, financial strategies and investment plans (including developing new income generation models), which will enable the sustained success of the sport at national, international, Grand Slam and Olympic levels;
- In conjunction with the Board, secure funding against agreed targets to optimise the financial performance of the organisation and to support the goals of the Emerging talent strategy;
- Ensure all financial arrangements and reporting requirements of funders / sponsors are met in line with all contractual and Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

People Leadership

- Overall responsibility for the leadership, direction and development of the organisation and Senior Management Team;
- Provide leadership to create a performance, results driven, culture to optimise the potential of all employees and maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the wider organisation;
- Through sound leadership ensure the attraction, development and retention of a highly capable senior management team and organisation;
- Ensure the robust and consistent application of a performance management system across the Senior Management Team and organisation; agreeing clear objectives, monitoring and measuring results to ensure KPIs are met and supporting the development of the team to ensure the flexibility and capability of the organisation;
- Ensure clear and consistent communication processes are in place to inform and engage staff at all levels across all parts of the wider organisation.



Stakeholder Engagement

- Represent the organisation with all key stakeholders and always be a good ambassador for the sport nationally and internationally;
- Act as the key point of contact to represent, lead and enable the organisation within the national, international Tennis and Olympic communities;
- Build and cultivate strong effective working relationships internally and externally to advance the interests of the sport nationally and internationally;
- Ensure the development and implementation of a marketing and media strategy to build and optimise the brand, image and reputation of the sport in the public domain.

Develop and Manage Infrastructure

- Develop, manage and maintain the physical infrastructure and organisational assets;
- Ensure the management and maintenance of the infrastructure and assets of the organisation (facilities, IT systems and databases and support services and equipment);
- Ensure the effective management of any third- party contracts in relation to facilities management;
- Ensure disaster recovery and contingency plans are in place to maintain operations.



The Individual

Essential criteria

- Significant experience (breadth and depth) within a business or similar environment.
- Passion for sport and genuine desire to grow the sport at all levels.
- Evidence of managing multiple stakeholders and ensuring they all feel valued.
- Ability to manage and develop multiple sources of funding – e.g. government, sport, sponsorship, philanthropic etc.
- Full, valid driving licence.
- Strategic experience in a similar field.

Leading the Culture for Success:

- Experience at Senior Management level of positively leading and managing teams.
- Understands the key levers of business and how and when to use them to achieve the required results.
- Sound knowledge and understanding of sporting structures and working within them for success.
- Manages individual and team performances ensuring each individual is challenged and focused on the key deliverables.

Establishing an Approach and Achieving Results:

- Experience of working positively with Boards and operating at a strategic level (with the ability to 'think strategically').
- A track record of driving innovation and change.
- A strong record of delivering results.
- Ability to work flexibly, under pressure, and to achieve demanding deadlines, including the ability to prioritise and manage conflicting demands.
- Strong financial management with experience of managing significant budgets.

Enabling the Optimal Environment (for Organisational and Personal Development):

- Demonstrable track record of implementing organisational change and continuous improvement to evolve capability and capacity.

Strengthening Relationships and Working Together for Success:

- Experience of building sustainable relationships to further organisational interests within a highly complex 'political' environment.
- Experience of driving strategies to secure revenue including from commercial partnerships and other external sources.
- Ability to manage and positively influence media relations.



- To foster the recruitment, training and retention of volunteers for the broad range of volunteer activities within the sport.
- Clear understanding of and proven commitment to our child safeguarding processes.
- Ability to develop a multi media including Facebook, Twitter, Web site strategy and deliver on same.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

- Degree or similar level qualification in a sports or management-related discipline or equivalent.
- Experience at Senior Management level of positively leading and managing teams within a business and/or a sport related environment.
- Experience of working within a not-for-profit organisation.
- Experience of working with the media.
- Experience of participating in a sport ideally at a senior level.



Candidate Charter

Talented people are our lifeblood

Whether we approach you about a specific opportunity, or you contact us to share your biography and career ambitions, we want you to have a constructive experience of engaging with Odgers Berndtson.

We recognise that we have a commitment to you as well as to our client, and we undertake that our dealings with you will be professional, courteous, rigorous and honest.

We will:

Approach you after considered analysis and in relation to roles where we think there is a strong match. Your time is valuable; we don't want to waste it.

Work to make your candidacy as strong as it can be.

Represent you effectively and discreetly to our client, based on accurate information that you give us in confidence.

Be inclusive, open and fair-minded.

Keep you informed, communicating outcomes promptly, and giving fair and honest feedback where we can.

Celebrate your success in the event of a successful outcome, and share any lessons in the event of disappointment.

Take a long-term view, recognising that you have a multi-year view of your own career. Where possible, we will help you fulfil your ambitions.

Embrace continuous improvement, for example by carrying out regular independent audits of those we shortlist for roles.

If at any stage you feel we have not lived up to the letter or spirit of our values, please tell us. We do want to know and invite you to email Helen Thomas, Research Principal and Head of Candidate Care at helen.thomas@odgersberndtson.com.

Contact details

If you are interested in this role and would like to discuss any aspect of it further, in confidence, please contact:

Helen Thomas

Principal and Head of Candidate Care

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