



President Nomination Form

Nominee Details

ROLE	
Name	KAREN LEWIS
Triathlon Ireland Number	10080846
Club	NEWRY TRIATHLON CLUB

I have read the Person Specification for the role and wish to nominate for the board as follows (to be completed by Nominating Triathlon Club):

ORGANISATION	KEY CONTACT
Position Nominated for:	PRESIDENT
Club Nominated By:	NEWRY TRIATHLON CLUB
Club Delegate Name & TI Membership Number	SHANE MCCOURT

Candidate Statement

Please provide a statement (max 500 words) outlining:

- Your motivation for applying for the role of President
- Your experience in senior leadership and/or Board roles
- How you have contributed to strategic decision-making and organisational performance
- Your experience of chairing meetings or leading groups at Board or senior level
- How you would represent Triathlon Ireland externally and build key stakeholder relationships

Please include specific examples to demonstrate your impact.

My motivation for applying for the role of President is grounded in a strong desire to provide consistent, values-led leadership, with Triathlon Ireland firmly at the centre of every decision, and to support the continued growth and development of the sport for everyone in our community.

Since April 2024, I have served as Finance Director on the Board of Triathlon Ireland, a role I have undertaken with great pride and accountability. In this capacity, I have contributed directly to the organisation's strategic direction, governance standards, and financial sustainability. As Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, I work closely with the Financial Controller and external auditors to ensure robust financial oversight, regulatory compliance, and continuous improvement in governance practices. I have strengthened Board visibility of financial performance and risk, enabling more informed and timely decision-making, and supported the ongoing review and implementation of key policies such as the organisation's Reserves Policy.

In summer 2025, I led the Board through a mid-cycle review of the Strategic Plan. This process involved critically assessing progress against key objectives, facilitating constructive challenge at Board level, and working in partnership with the Executive team to refocus priorities for the remainder of the cycle. The outcome was a refreshed and more targeted plan, aligned with organisational capacity while maintaining an appropriate level of ambition. This experience reflects my clear understanding of the respective roles of Board and Executive, and my commitment to ensuring the Board both supports and holds the Executive to account in delivering strategic objectives.

As a Table Officer, I have played an active role during periods of both challenge and opportunity, contributing to complex discussions and helping guide balanced decisions that reflect both commercial realities and the need for strong governance. Alongside my governance experience in sport, I bring over 20 years' experience as a business leader, where I have led teams, managed conflict, and provided senior management oversight to balance commercial requirements with quality and compliance in a highly regulated industry. This has developed a high degree of commercial awareness, sound judgement, and the ability to navigate complexity while maintaining focus on long-term outcomes.

I have significant experience chairing and leading groups at senior level. Through my role as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, I ensure meetings are well-structured, inclusive, and focused on clear outcomes, encouraging constructive challenge while building consensus to support effective decision-making. Similarly, as Chairperson of Newry Triathlon Club from February 2021 to December 2025, I led the committee through an initially challenging period at the end of the global pandemic, to a period of growth and development. By introducing New2Tri programmes, expanding coaching capacity, and diversifying training opportunities, we increased participation and strengthened member engagement, leaving the club in a more stable and sustainable position for the future.

I have also developed strong external relationships across the sport. I represented Triathlon Ireland at the World Triathlon Congress in Malaga in 2024 and, more recently, led the delegation at the Europe Triathlon Annual General Assembly in Bucharest. Through these engagements, I have built effective working relationships with leaders across European and international federations, as well as with key stakeholders such as Sport Ireland. I have also represented the organisation at Sport Ireland Audit & Risk networking events, ensuring Triathlon Ireland is both visible and actively contributing within the broader sporting governance community.

In addition, my role on the Audit & Risk Committee of the Olympic Federation of Ireland has broadened my perspective on the wider sporting landscape and deepened my understanding of the strategic and stakeholder dynamics across the sector.

I have participated in a number of leadership and development courses facilitated by Triathlon Ireland and Sport Ireland, as part of the initiatives to develop female leadership within sporting roles. These courses have enabled me to challenge my thinking around leadership, learn and grow my mentoring skills, and sharpen my focus on listening and making clear concise decisions.

If elected as President, I would lead with integrity, transparency, and a strong sense of responsibility to our members and stakeholders. I would focus on strengthening governance, supporting the delivery of the Strategic Plan, and ensuring Triathlon Ireland continues to grow participation, develop performance pathways, and maintain its reputation as a well-governed and forward-looking National Governing Body. I am confident in my ability to represent the organisation externally, build meaningful stakeholder relationships, and provide the leadership required to support its continued success.

Please summarise your skills and experience relevant to the role of President.

Skillset	Detail
<p>Strategic Expertise (Please include an example of strategy development/delivery and measurable outcomes)</p>	<p>In summer 2025, I led the Board of Triathlon Ireland through a comprehensive mid-cycle review of the organisation’s Strategic Plan. The purpose was to assess progress against each strategic pillar, critically evaluate delivery to date, and reset priorities and targets for the remainder of the plan period.</p> <p>As part of this, I worked with the Executive team to establish an evidence-based assessment of performance across all strategic areas. I then facilitated a Board session focused on strategic positioning, ensuring we remained future-focused and aligned on ambition, setting stretching but achievable targets.</p> <p>This process resulted in a revised Strategic Plan, providing greater clarity of focus and aligning organisational priorities more effectively with the evolving needs of the sport. The updated plan positions Triathlon Ireland strongly for the 2026–2028 period, with clearer prioritisation, improved measurability of outcomes, and stronger alignment between Board oversight and Executive delivery.</p> <p>Over 20 years in business has given me the experience I need to see how strategy and operations come together, and I will use these skills to drive triathlon forward in Ireland, creating opportunities for members at all levels within our community.</p>
<p>Financial & Risk Management (Please include experience in financial oversight, budgeting, and risk management)</p>	<p>I bring a strong and diverse background in financial management, budgeting, and risk oversight across both professional and voluntary sectors.</p> <p>My career began in financial management within the education sector, where I held responsibility for approving budgets, assessing and monitoring financial plans and the overall financial health of six further and higher education colleges in South West England. I also had responsibility for the approval and monitoring of financial plans for capital programmes including multi-million pound investments into new campus facilities. Part of this role involved working with the Department of Education Adult Education Inspectorate where I was part of a team carrying out finance and risk inspections in further and higher education colleges, and work-based training facilities.</p> <p>Over the past 20 years, I have jointly led a business operating in a highly regulated environment, with responsibility for securing and delivering large-scale contracts. This has required balancing commercial, technical, and quality considerations, while managing financial risk and ensuring sustainable delivery.</p> <p>In governance roles, I served for 10 years as Treasurer (Responsible Officer) on the Board of an independent primary school, providing oversight of financial management, monitoring accounts, and managing public funding allocations. I represented the School with the Department of Education Northern Ireland to discuss financial risk affecting grant maintained integrated primary schools, and worked to develop solutions for cashflow and increase the availability of capital support for maintenance schemes in schools in this sector.</p> <p>Within sport, I have been Finance Director on the Board of Triathlon Ireland since April 2024 and Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee. In this role, I work closely with the Financial Controller to provide both support and constructive challenge on financial planning, budgeting, and risk management. I ensure the Board maintains clear oversight of financial performance and fulfils its responsibilities in relation to grant funding and stakeholder income. I am a signatory on the review of applications to our funding partners Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland, and have an excellent understanding of the funding processes, the parameters, and constraints in which the organisation must operate.</p> <p>Additionally, as an independent member of the Audit & Risk Committee of the Olympic Federation of Ireland, I contribute external perspective and scrutiny to financial governance, including budget setting, reserve management, and ongoing financial monitoring.</p>

<p>Corporate Governance (Please include your experience operating at Board level, ensuring compliance, and supporting effective decision-making)</p>	<p>As a Board member of Triathlon Ireland since April 2024, I have played an active role in supporting effective, compliant, and well-informed decision-making, in line with the Sport Ireland Governance Code, the organisation’s Constitution, and Board Terms of Reference.</p> <p>My professional background in quality assurance within a highly regulated industry has given me a strong appreciation of the importance of governance in protecting organisations and their stakeholders. I bring a disciplined and principled approach, ensuring that decisions are grounded in compliance, transparency, and accountability.</p> <p>I am motivated by doing the right thing and ensuring governance frameworks are not only adhered to, but actively enable better decision-making.</p> <p>During my 10 years as a Board member (Responsible Officer) of an independent primary school, I held a senior governance role with responsibility for finance, risk, and compliance. I supported the Board in ensuring all decisions aligned with Department of Education regulations, funding requirements, and capital investment guidelines, safeguarding the interests of all stakeholders.</p>
<p>Board Leadership & Chairing (Experience chairing meetings, leading Boards/committees, and managing diverse views)</p>	<p>I have over 30 years’ experience leading and chairing meetings, being involved with, committees, Boards, and working groups. My leadership style is inclusive and structured, encouraging open contribution while ensuring discussions remain focused, balanced, and outcome-driven.</p> <p>I am confident in chairing formal meetings, ensuring adherence to governance requirements, maintaining alignment with the agenda, and managing conflicts of interest or recusal appropriately. I place strong emphasis on enabling all voices to be heard while guiding the group toward clear and effective decisions. As a business leader I chair meetings regularly, with diverse groups from internal teams, to client project management, and formal meetings with our external inspection bodies.</p> <p>Within Triathlon Ireland, I have chaired Board meetings and currently serve as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee. I also led the Board’s strategic review process, ensuring clarity between Board and Executive roles, maintaining focus and structure, and delivering a coherent and actionable outcome for implementation.</p> <p>My approach combines strong governance discipline with the ability to manage diverse perspectives constructively and build consensus</p>

<p>Stakeholder Engagement & Representation (Experience representing an organisation externally and building key relationships)</p>	<p>I am highly experienced and comfortable representing organisations at senior level, engaging with a wide range of stakeholders including partners, suppliers, and regulatory bodies.</p> <p>In my professional role, I regularly represent my organisation in interactions with key stakeholders, building relationships based on integrity, consistency, and professionalism.</p> <p>Within triathlon, I have developed strong relationships across the national and international landscape. I have represented Triathlon Ireland at World Triathlon Congress and recently led the Irish delegation at the Europe Triathlon Annual General Assembly.</p> <p>Through this work, I have established connections with leaders across other National Governing Bodies, as well as with senior figures within Europe Triathlon and World Triathlon. These relationships provide valuable insight, influence, and collaboration opportunities that support the ongoing development of the sport in Ireland.</p>
<p>Sector Knowledge (Understanding of triathlon and/or the Irish sports sector, including key challenges and opportunities)</p>	<p>I bring a well-developed understanding of both triathlon and the wider Irish sports sector. Through my Board role and broader engagement, I have built strong relationships across multiple National Governing Bodies and remain actively informed on sector developments.</p> <p>I recognise the significant opportunities for growth in triathlon and sport in Ireland more broadly, particularly in participation, performance pathways, and visibility. At the same time, I am acutely aware of the challenges facing the sector, including funding constraints, resource capacity, and increasing regulatory requirements.</p> <p>I am a club athlete, a club committee member, a Level 2 coach, and a Technical Official - and Board member. I see and experience triathlon from all sides; this balanced perspective gives me the understanding and the skills to recognise and protect the organisation from the challenges and make the most of every opportunity to develop our sport from grass roots participation to high performance and Olympic pathways.</p>

<p>Leadership Style</p> <p>(Your approach to leadership, collaboration, and Board culture)</p>	<p>My leadership is grounded in integrity, consistency, and clarity of purpose.</p> <p>At Board level, I believe leadership is about setting the tone - creating trust, openness, and accountability, while providing steady, considered direction.</p> <p>I will foster a Board culture where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Every voice is heard and valued * Different perspectives are encouraged and respected * Stronger decisions are made through constructive challenge <p>I see the Board as a team, with a shared responsibility to both support and challenge the Executive - ensuring effective governance while enabling delivery.</p> <p>As President, I will build a culture that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Collaborative and respectful * Focused on outcomes, not just process * Enabling, not restrictive <p>Governance should do more than meet standards - it should help the organisation perform at its best.</p> <p>I am committed to maintaining strong governance, financial oversight, and high standards, while supporting the sustainable growth of our sport.</p> <p>Just as importantly, I will prioritise open communication with members - listening, being transparent about both opportunities and challenges, and building trust in how we lead.</p>
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I wish to be nominated for the above role, and if elected, agree to act first and foremost in the best interests of Triathlon Ireland and the sport nationally at all times, regardless of any regional or club affiliation. If elected, I agree I will declare any real or potential conflicts of interest to my fellow board members:

Signature: KAREN LEWIS

Digitally signed by KAREN LEWIS
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