



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Independent Recruitment Consultant

Chief Executive Officer Recruitment Process

1. PURPOSE

The Board seeks to engage an independent Recruitment Consultant to support the recruitment and appointment of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The consultant will provide independent advice and professional recruitment services to ensure the process is transparent, merit-based, confidential, and aligned with the organisation's future strategic direction.

A key component of the engagement will be the review and refresh of the current CEO Job Description to ensure it reflects the organisation's current operating environment, strategic priorities, governance expectations and future leadership requirements.

2. BACKGROUND

The Board has commenced planning for the recruitment of a CEO following the completion of the incumbent CEO's second term.

In considering the organisation's future direction, the Board has determined that a full open recruitment process is appropriate to:

- ensure transparency and probity;
- test the market;
- attract high-quality candidates;
- support confidence in the appointment process; and
- identify the leadership capability required for the organisation's next phase.

The Board has also determined that the current CEO Job Description requires updating before recruitment commences.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this engagement are to:

1. Support a robust, transparent and merit-based CEO recruitment process.
2. Refresh the CEO Job Description to reflect current and future organisational requirements.
3. Support any required job sizing or remuneration review process.
4. Attract a high-quality and diverse candidate pool.
5. Provide independent assessment and recruitment advice.

6. Protect confidentiality and organisational reputation throughout the process.
7. Support the Board to make a well-informed appointment decision.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

4.1 Recruitment Planning

The consultant will work with the Recruitment Committee to develop and implement an agreed recruitment strategy and process.

This will include:

- recruitment planning and timeline development;
- advice on market approach and candidate attraction;
- recommended advertising and search strategies;
- identification of recruitment risks and mitigation measures;
- governance and decision-making milestones; and
- advice on confidentiality, probity and conflict management.

4.2 CEO Job Description Review

The consultant will review and refresh the CEO Job Description to ensure it:

- aligns with the organisation's strategic direction;
- reflects current operating realities and stakeholder expectations;
- clearly articulates leadership requirements;
- supports recruitment and assessment activities;
- can be used for remuneration review and future performance management purposes.

The refreshed Job Description will be submitted to the Recruitment Committee and Board for approval.

4.3 Candidate Attraction and Market Search

The consultant will design and implement an appropriate candidate attraction strategy.

This may include:

- advertising;
- executive search;
- targeted candidate outreach;
- engagement with relevant networks and sectors; and
- advice on local, regional and international candidate markets.

The objective will be to attract the strongest possible candidate field while ensuring a fair and open process.

4.4 Candidate Management

The consultant will manage all aspects of candidate engagement, including:

- application management;

- candidate communications;
- responding to enquiries;
- maintaining confidentiality;
- record keeping; and
- ensuring candidates are treated fairly and consistently.

4.5 Assessment and Selection Support

The consultant will support the Recruitment Committee and Board throughout the assessment process.

This will include:

- assessment of applications;
- preparation of longlist and shortlist reports;
- comparative candidate analysis;
- interview design and support;
- development of interview questions and assessment tools;
- reference checking and due diligence;
- identification of candidate strengths, risks and development considerations; and
- advice to support final appointment decisions.

The Board retains sole authority regarding appointment decisions.

4.6 Appointment and Transition Support

The consultant will provide support during the appointment phase, including:

- final candidate reporting;
- offer process support;
- candidate communications;
- feedback to unsuccessful candidates; and
- transition and onboarding recommendations.

5. GOVERNANCE

A Board-appointed Recruitment Committee will oversee the recruitment process and act as the primary point of contact for the consultant.

The Recruitment Committee will:

- oversee delivery of the recruitment process;
- review consultant recommendations;
- provide guidance and direction;
- make recommendations to the Board.

The Board retains final approval authority regarding:

- recruitment approach;
- CEO Job Description;
- shortlist;

- appointment decision; and
- remuneration package.

6. PROBITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The recruitment process must be conducted to the highest standards of integrity, confidentiality and fairness.

The consultant will:

- maintain strict confidentiality;
- manage conflicts of interest appropriately;
- ensure assessment is based on agreed criteria;
- maintain appropriate records;
- identify and report any probity concerns; and
- support a transparent and defensible recruitment process.

7. DELIVERABLES

The consultant will provide:

1. Recruitment Plan and Timeline.
2. Refreshed CEO Job Description.
3. Support for Job Sizing / Remuneration Review.
4. Candidate Information Pack and Advertising Material.
5. Longlist Report.
6. Shortlist Report.
7. Interview and Assessment Materials.
8. Reference and Due Diligence Reports.
9. Final Recommendation Report.
10. Transition and Close-Out Report.

8. INDICATIVE TIMELINE

Activity	Indicative Timing
Appointment of Recruitment Consultant	September 2026
CEO Job Description Refresh	October 2026
Job Sizing / Remuneration Review	October 2026
Advertising and Search	October 2026
Longlisting	October 2026
Shortlisting	October 2026
Interviews	Nov-Dec 2026
Final Recommendation	December 2026
Contract Negotiation	January 2027
Commencement of CEO	Mar-April 2027

The timeline may be adjusted by the Board as required.

9. REQUIRED EXPERIENCE AND CAPABILITY

The consultant should demonstrate:

- executive and CEO recruitment experience;
- experience working with Boards and governance bodies;
- understanding of public sector and stakeholder environments;
- executive search capability;
- experience reviewing executive position descriptions;
- understanding of remuneration and job sizing processes;
- strong assessment and reporting capability;
- high standards of confidentiality and probity;
- ability to manage culturally appropriate recruitment processes.

10. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should include:

- consultant profile;
- relevant experience;
- proposed methodology;
- proposed timeline;
- recruitment approach;
- executive search capability;
- proposed project team;
- fee structure;
- replacement guarantee (if offered);
- references; and
- conflict of interest declaration.

11. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria	Weighting
Executive recruitment experience	25%
Governance and Board experience	20%
Recruitment methodology and market reach	20%
Job description review capability	15%
Probity and confidentiality approach	10%
Value for money	10%
Total	100%

12. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals should be submitted electronically to:

The Chairperson

Cook Islands Investment Corporation

Email: fletcher.melvin@cookislands.gov.ck

Closing Date: 4pm (Cook Islands Time), Friday 25 September 2026

Late submissions may not be considered.