

Job Description



Title:	Project Assistant
Salary:	£23,000 - £26,000 depending on experience (plus 9% Employer's Pension Contribution and Life Insurance Scheme)
Contract:	Fixed Term – 2 years, with aspiration to make permanent
Hours:	Full-time, / 37.5 hrs per week
Location:	Wessex RT Head Office in Salisbury / hybrid working
Reporting to:	Senior Project Manager

Background

Wessex Rivers Trust is a growing and dynamic environmental charity dedicated to the protection and conservation of rivers and their catchments in Dorset, Wiltshire, and Hampshire.

The Trust has an exciting portfolio of practical river conservation and restoration projects, and we are looking for a Project Assistant to help us develop, prepare, and deliver them. The role will operate from the heart of the Habitats Team, supporting staff with all aspects of river conservation project delivery.

The suitable candidate will be educated to degree level, or with equivalent work experience in the aquatic environment sector, and a good working knowledge of freshwater conservation.

Job summary and purpose

The Project Assistant will support in developing, preparing and delivering a range of river conservation projects, from concept to completion, across the Test, Itchen, Hampshire Avon, Dorset Stour, East Hampshire, New Forest, and Isle of Wight catchments. Projects will range from small, community-led habitat improvement projects to large complex river restorations.

Hands-on, practical fieldwork, including ecological surveys and habitat creation, is a key aspect of the role. However, the Projects Assistant will also help prepare, develop, and monitor projects and assist with partnership and stakeholder engagement. The role will also involve use of graphic design and geospatial IT tools such as CAD software, ArcGIS and SCALGO Live.

Most projects undertaken by the Trust provide multiple benefits including river restoration, fish passage, habitat creation, natural flood management, water quality improvements, non-native species eradication and more. The Project Assistant will be willing and eager to work on a diverse range of projects and the various stages involved from inception to completion.

The Project Assistant will join the Habitats Team which currently consists of a team leader, two Senior Project Managers / Officers (one of whom will manage this post), two Project Officers, a Project Assistant and a Projects Administrator. The Project Assistant will closely collaborate with all Habitats Team staff, as well as other Trust teams and external partners to ensure optimal outcomes for people and the environment, in accordance with the wider Wessex Rivers Trust vision.

Duties and responsibilities

1 Project development, preparation and delivery	
1	Support the Habitats Team in developing ideas and proposals into deliverable projects on the ground. Activities to include ecological and site surveys, GIS, stakeholder engagement, Licence and Permit acquisition, detailed design work and procurement.
2	Support the Catchments Team with water quality monitoring, non-native plant species control and stakeholder engagement on an ad hoc basis as required
3	Assist the Trust's work with partners, landowners, contractors and consultants to deliver a range of environmental improvement projects on the ground.
4	Help in the preparation and delivery of a several projects concurrently, optimising time used and resources.
5	Assist with the physical delivery of habitat improvement projects, including working in-river to install new habitat features.
6	Assist with the supervision of consultants, contractors and volunteers working on the delivery of practical projects.
7	Manage equipment and materials to ensure appropriate quantities and qualities are in place at key times to help efficient project delivery.

2 Project administration and fundraising	
1	Assist in the day-to-day management of projects and keeping good records and administration.
2	Contribute to internal and external communication activities related to projects, to include information events, brochures, interpretation panels and social and traditional media coverage.
3	Contribute to project reporting, claims and evaluation as required.
4	Contribute to fundraising and securing of grants and contracts with public and private sector partners.

3 Contributing to the work of the Wessex RT in general	
1	Contribute to delivering the Trust's wider objectives
2	Contribute to the Trust's external communications (e.g. through websites, social media and presentations), profile and good reputation
3	Undertake other duties that may be appropriate to the position
4	Positively contribute to the reputation of the Trust

Person specification

1	Qualifications and required knowledge	Essential	Desirable
1	Educated at least to a degree level in a relevant field or equivalent work experience in the (aquatic) environment sector	X	
2	Professional qualifications and/or relevant industry memberships		X
3	Good understanding of freshwater ecology, especially of rivers	X	
4	Knowledge of natural processes in rivers and chalk streams		X
5	Knowledge of the geography of the Wessex area		X
6	Good understanding of wildlife conservation and/or countryside management	X	

2	Experience	Essential	Desirable
1	Demonstrable experience of designing and/or delivering conservation projects		X
2	Experience of working in partnership with a range of stakeholders and groups, e.g. local authorities, riparian managers, farmers and water companies		X
3	Demonstrable experience of successful budget and time management	X	
4	Experience of project development	X	
5	Experience of ecological/environmental monitoring		X

3	Skills and competences	Essential	Desirable
1	Excellent IT skills, including use of Office 365	X	
2	Proficient use of GIS (preferably AGOL) for mapping and design work		X
3	Creative and technical writing for diverse audiences		X
4	Confident in speaking and presenting to a broad range of audiences	X	
5	Practical countryside management skills (chainsaw qualifications etc.)		X
6	Environmental monitoring / ecological survey skills		X

4	Personal attributes
1	Strong interpersonal and influencing skills
2	Ability to quickly develop a detailed understanding of wide ranging and complex topics
3	Ambitious, self-motivated and target driven and able to work on own initiative
4	Genuine enthusiasm and passionate about restoring rivers and catchments in Wessex
5	Being able to develop excellent stakeholder relationships
6	Willingness to learn and turn hand to whatever is required

Miscellaneous

The post will involve travelling throughout Wessex (East Dorset, South Wiltshire and Hampshire), therefore a full UK driving licence and use of own vehicle is essential. Mileage expenses will be paid at 45p per mile as set out in HMRC's Approved Mileage Allowance Payment. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required. We will also require the successful applicant to undergo a DBS check and provide satisfactory references.