



Project Development Officer - A Network for Nature

Job purpose:	To develop the 'A Network for Nature' project leading up to submission of the second round grant application
Contract:	Fixed term – 15 months
Hours:	Full time – 35 hours per week 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday
Salary:	c.£30,000 FTE
Reporting to:	Head of Engagement and Fundraising
Staff management:	None
Other key relationships:	Senior Fundraising Officer, Engagement Team Leader, Reserves Team Leader, Head of Conservation, Communications Lead, CEO, other staff and volunteers

Background

A Network for Nature is a bold and ambitious project – the first of its kind for Worcestershire – aiming to deliver landscape-scale nature recovery across the historic Forest of Feckenham and surrounding areas in the east of the county. The project will restore and reconnect key habitats across nature reserves, farmland, community greenspaces and urban corridors, while supporting local people to get involved in caring for and improving the landscapes where they live and work.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust has applied to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for support with land acquisition, habitat restoration, community engagement and wider delivery. The Trust has been awarded a 15-month development phase to refine the project design, raise further funds and build strong delivery partnerships. Subject to a successful Round Two application, the delivery phase of the project will run for five years.

The Project Development Officer will play a key role during the development stage, coordinating stakeholder engagement, piloting activities and shaping delivery, fundraising and evaluation frameworks. These will inform and underpin the full delivery phase, helping ensure the project is ambitious, achievable and rooted in local need.

Key activities

- a) Work with the Head of Engagement and Fundraising and the Senior Fundraising Officer to finalise a full project plan, delivery timetable, budget and cashflow and commission an independent evaluator to develop the evaluation framework.
- b) As required, support the conservation team with the commissioning of ecological surveys and condition assessments, access audits (on public nature reserves) and infrastructure reviews across Trust sites where planned capital works are taking place.
- c) Support the Head of Conservation and Reserves Team Leader with the Woodland Creation Planning Grant where appropriate, including assisting with coordination of assessments or collation of relevant information as required.
- d) Work with local history societies and community researchers to investigate the area's historic landscape and co-design heritage-related activities, events and creative outputs with local groups and volunteers.
- e) Refine project partnerships established during the application phase, ensuring strategic alignment, shaping collaborative restoration approaches and agreeing shared outcomes.
- f) Work with Trust staff to begin co-developing Parish Nature Action Plans with town and parish councils in the project area.
- g) Pilot engagement sessions with youth groups, schools, care farms and community partners to test and refine approaches for the delivery phase.
- h) Attend community events to promote the project, raise awareness of local wildlife and explore how communities can contribute to nature recovery.
- i) Work with Trust staff to run one-to-one consultations and group events with farmers, identifying barriers and shaping the delivery plan and training offer.
- j) Support the conservation team with gathering quotes and indicative costs for capital works and support procurement and planning application preparation where necessary.
- k) Work with the conservation team and Communications Lead and consult with partners and stakeholders to review access infrastructure and develop plans for inclusive signage and interpretation where relevant.
- l) Lead the preparation of key delivery phase documents, including management plans, delivery plans and risk registers.

m) Support the Senior Fundraising Officer and wider team in the development and submission of the second stage application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

n) Lead the development of the Area Action Plan required for the second-stage NLHF application, working collaboratively with colleagues, partners and stakeholders to ensure it reflects local priorities, ecological opportunity and strategic alignment.

o) Contribute to the wider work of the Trust by attending internal meetings, supporting events and activities and deputising for the Senior Fundraising Officer when needed

Legal obligations

- Manage activities and volunteers to ensure that all legal (including health and safety and data protection) and contractual obligations are fully met, working with other staff where appropriate.

Person specification

Skills:

- Excellent project management skills
- Good relationship building skills
- Able to organise and plan work effectively
- Able to work co-operatively as part of a team
- Able to work independently and lead when required
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Computer literate inc. word processing, spreadsheet and database skills
- Clean driving licence

Desirable experience:

- Developing funded projects
- Timely reporting to funders
- Managing project budgets
- Managing and reviewing project activity
- Project planning techniques
- Building partnerships, and effective partnership working
- Working with local communities
- Delivery of educational and/or engagement activities with a wide variety of groups
- Planning, producing and developing activity sessions
- Previous ecological or environmental projects

- Successful team working
- Production or design of educational resources
- Working with volunteers
- Working with the media

Knowledge:

- Community engagement and consultation techniques
- Basic familiarity with conservation issues in Worcestershire and ideally those relating to the project area
- Health and safety requirements and implementation

Personal qualities:

- Well organised and methodical
- Flexible and able to respond to changing circumstances and demands
- Personal enthusiasm for the Trust's aims
- Creativity and initiative
- Confidence in dealing with people and groups of people.