

Avon Needs Trees Project Co-ordinator role brief

Key details

- Freelance contract, work from home (within 15 miles of Bristol or Bath or Chippenham)
- 21 hours per week for 48 weeks per year, some flexibility required including some evening and weekend hours
- £20 per hour
- This role is funded for three years

Background information

Avon Needs Trees is a new charity, buying land in the Bristol-Avon catchment area to plant trees and rewild. The objectives are carbon sequestration, improvement of habitat for key endangered species, natural flood management and public amenity space. The need for urgent mitigation of and adaptation to our climate change and biodiversity crises underlie all objectives.

The charity has recently been awarded funds from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to help buy Hazeland, 34 acres of mixed habitat between Chippenham and Calne. Local public engagement is a key objective, ensuring that the communities in the area are able to safely access the land, and that there is meaningful interpretation of both the natural and industrial heritage on-site. We will be monitoring the ecology on-site, using volunteers and professionals, and findings will need to be communicated to all visitors, supporters and funders. Ensuring that the centuries of changing land ownership and use at Hazeland is interpreted, including the role of the Berkshire-Wiltshire canal (four segments on site), is a key objective, giving local citizens a better sense of local history and their 'place' in this.

Key roles of the Project Co-ordinator will include the maintenance of records of volunteers and engagement partners (GDPR compliant); the publicising and organising of volunteer and community events; working with trustees to ensure that volunteers, the general public and specialist groups have safe, productive, learning experiences on-site; and ensuring that all supporters and funders receive regular updates on all developments.

The project expects 1500 members of the public on-site in Year 1, rising to 5000 in Year 3. The Project Co-ordinator will be responsible for collating quantitative and qualitative reports regarding public access and will work with the Trustees to develop the project and recruit new partners from across the community.

The role also incorporates an administrative element, including working with the Chair and Trustees on all aspects of the day-to-day activity of Avon Needs Trees, including fundraising and publicity.

Key outcomes of the project

Benefits to heritage:

- Identified and recorded wildlife, including key endangered species, and key aspects of habitat
- Improved resilience of wildlife with demonstrable improved populations over time
- Restoration of canal towpaths and brickwork where possible
- Improved public understanding of natural and industrial heritage through interpretation on-site and external communication and activities

Benefits to individuals:

- Open and guided access to mixed habitat land that is currently private; this will include professionally led days for specialist groups
- Opportunities to learn about natural heritage and get actively involved in restoration and improvement projects
- Opportunities to learn about industrial heritage and get actively involved in restoration
- Improved mental and physical well-being of individuals that get involved on-site, and also for those who cannot access the land but want to be involved in a positive, local, 'green' project
- Acquisition of new skills in restoration and in the identification and nurturing of natural heritage
- Acquisition of new research skills by Masters' students
- Greater awareness of the wider environment and biodiversity crises we face and the need for action at all levels of society

Benefits to community / society:

Many thousands more people will:

- Have engaged with green space, improving their mental and physical health
- Understand, be positively engaged, and have acquired important skills regarding the protection of natural heritage
- Understand, be positively engaged, and have acquired important skills regarding the protection of industrial heritage

There will be:

- Measurable improvement in carbon sequestration, species resilience and population numbers
- Improvements to natural flood management, benefitting the local and wider catchment area
- New, interesting green space for recreation and learning for the local area
- Increased use of the Chippenham-Calne cycling route

Key audiences for engagement and volunteer activity:

- Bristol University and University of the West of England, research students and Skills Bridge team
- Schools from across the catchment area, but particularly local (Chippenham and Calne)
- Local GP surgeries involved in social prescribing
- Local specialist health groups, particularly those focused on mental health
- Local specialist groups working with less advantaged sectors of population
- Youth and other community groups (WI, Ramblers, Meet-Ups, etc)
- Environmental and ecology groups, particularly those focused on endangered species such as the Wiltshire Bat Group, British Trust for Ornithology and the Butterfly Conservation Trust.

Main purposes of the role

1. To organise and evaluate engagement, volunteering and interpretation as laid out in the NLHF bid.

2. To increase the resilience of Avon Needs Trees, building supporter and volunteer engagement and relationships with partner organisations; working with the Trustees on fundraising and publicity and giving general administrative support.

The Project Co-ordinator will lead on all public engagement work and will be the lead organiser of on-site activities.

Key tasks include:

1. Organising engagement activities on the land for a variety of interested groups. The Project Co-ordinator may, on occasions, be required to be present on-site to facilitate / lead some low-dependency activities if Trustees are not available, but this will be the exception.
2. Maintaining and building relationships with all specialist community groups, keeping them informed of planned engagement days, and undertaking booking of professional input as needed.
3. Ensuring that risk assessments for all onsite activities are completed and filed and that all events are compliant with our safeguarding, health and safety policies. He/she will inform the Chair and Trustees of any issues or concerns.
4. Publicising open access days for the wider community. The Project Co-ordinator will maintain a database (GDPR compliant) of interested parties in the wider community, supporters, and of local media. The Project Co-ordinator will use press releases, social media and printing where necessary to publicise events.
5. Publicising and organising volunteer days to work on the land and the canal. The Project Co-ordinator will be responsible for timely and accurate communication, plus the organisation of volunteer 'thank you' events.
6. Liaison with local site guardians to confirm that land is left in good condition and inform the Chair and Trustees as soon as practicable if issues arise.
7. Continuous collation of quantitative and qualitative data from on-site activities and engagement events across the catchment area, and from engagement with digital output. The Project Co-ordinator will present quarterly / monthly reports to NLHF plus receipts to draw down grant money.
8. Collaboration with the Chair and Trustees to ensure that there is learning from all monitoring and evaluation work, and that this feeds into interim evaluation and end of project evaluation.
9. Support for the Chair and Trustees on all administrative matters including the organisation and attending of evening Trustee meetings twice per month, writing up and distribution of minutes. The Project Co-ordinator will work with the Chair to ensure that all Trustees are fully informed regarding the charity's accounts, publicity, fundraising and engagement activities and that plans are presented to each Trustee meeting.
10. Responding to public enquiries regarding the charity – by phone, email, post, Facebook and Twitter. Sending out gift cards, publicity materials and organising the distribution of collection cans.
11. Ensuring that all publicity and fundraising material is kept up-to-date and in sufficient quantities and that all enquiries are dealt with speedily and courteously. The Project Co-ordinator will need to maintain relevant databases and spreadsheets, and ensure good communication with funders and supporters at all times.
12. Writing regular Mailchimp news emails to supporters.

13. Paying invoices to contractors and ensuring that all receipts and invoices are filed and accounts are kept up to date and prepared in the required format.
14. Supporting the Chair and Trustees in all publicity and fundraising initiatives.
15. Working with the Chair and Trustees to promote Avon Needs Trees and ensure the smooth-running of the charity in all its tasks.

Knowledge, skills, experience

1. The ability to communicate clearly and accurately in English, in all written and spoken formats.
2. A professional but friendly manner and an understanding of the need for timely, positive responses to all enquiries.
3. Good organisational skills and an understanding of the need to maintain up-to-date records and accounts. Confidence with technology including email, document editing, file management, spreadsheets, presentations and online tools such as Mailchimp, Google Drive, Doodle, Twitter, Facebook, Zoom etc.
4. A willingness to support the Chair and Trustees in their work, and a genuine enthusiasm for the goals of the charity.
5. The applicant will need to be able to work alone, manage their time effectively and report hours to ANT.

Other information

This role is a freelance contract averaging 21 hours per week for 48 weeks per year. You will not be an employee of ANT and will not receive paid leave (but requirements will be flexible to allow for holidays etc), sickness benefits, national insurance or pension contributions or other employment benefits. You will be responsible for declaring your income and paying your own taxes. This hourly rate is calculated to allow for this.

You will receive £20 per worked hour, paid monthly in retrospect against invoices. This rate will be reviewed annually.

ANT does not have offices and you will work from home (or other suitable location as you wish), the hourly rate for this role is designed to allow for this and no expenses for office accommodation or equipment are offered. You will be required to provide your own laptop computer, smartphone, printer, broadband internet at your own expense (ANT will reimburse reasonable costs of consumables, stationary, phone calls, etc against receipts).

Although it is anticipated that the working days will be agreed in advance, flexibility may be required (with notice) on occasions. Hours will include two monthly evening meetings of Trustees.

Own transport is desirable but the site can be reached by public transport plus walking /cycling. Travel expenses will be paid by ANT to/from your home location within 15 miles of Bristol or Bath or Chippenham.

It is likely that the post-holder will require a DBS check but unspent convictions which are not relevant to the role will not necessarily be a problem.

This role is funded for three years and although it is our ambition that the role becomes permanent, this cannot be guaranteed.

Application procedure

Applicants should write a cover letter setting out how their skills and experience make them suitable for the post; they should refer to the roles and responsibilities in the role brief, and ensure they demonstrate the ways in which they meet the 'knowledge, skills, experience' section. Attach the cover letter, along with an up-to-date CV and email to cathy.bedford@avonneedstreets.org.uk with 'Job application' in the subject line.

If you would like to discuss the role, in the first instance please contact Cathy Bedford on cathy.bedford@avonneedstreets.org.uk to arrange a call.

Closing date for receipt of applications is October 9th 2020.