



Scottish Invasive Species Initiative Project Officer

Job Description

The Scottish Invasive Species Initiative is a multi-year multi-partner project working across approximately 1/3rd of mainland Scotland. Its success relies upon effective local working of its Project Officer team (employed by partners) and in the co-ordination of this work across the wider project area. These are challenging and exciting roles - but give great opportunities to make a difference to local and regional environments whilst strategically contributing to the largest invasive non-native species control project in Great Britain. Sound like a job for you?

Each Project Officer is the point of contact for the project in their area. The Project Officers, overseen by the Project Manager and supported by local partners, work as a team to deliver genuine and measurable improvements to Scotland's iconic natural environments. You will lead the delivery of all aspects of the project in your area - particularly invasive non-native plant and American mink control, volunteer recruitment and management and engagement and collaboration with landowners, managers and local stakeholders. You will also work with our Volunteer and Communications Officer to generate content promoting action and achievements in your area.

A. Key Tasks and Responsibilities

1. Project Management and Reporting

- Work with the Project Manager and project team to schedule work and ensure delivery of activities to necessary time schedules and seasonal requirements
- Support overall coordination and delivery by participation in team meetings with the Project Manager, Administrator, Volunteer and Communications Officer and other Project Officers
- Manage project activities with local partner staff and management structures
- Manage project equipment and identify future needs with the Project Manager and Administrator
- Maintain local financial and activity records and support the preparation of partner funding claims
- Following established project protocols and methods, maintain and regularly provide area information e.g. volunteer time contributions, chemical records and mink control activities and captures, to support required project reporting schedules
- As a pioneering project which is always looking to improve, you should be confident and willing to contribute new ideas or suggestions to team discussions to enhance the success of the project and delivery of outputs and outcomes

2. Invasive non-native species control

2.1 Invasive non-native plant control

- Develop and deliver a strategy to control priority invasive non-native plant species using –
 - Knowledge of plant distribution based on previous or future survey work

- Seasonal control windows for each species
 - Adopting a top to bottom approach to strategic catchment control
 - Coordinated control by contractors, volunteers, landowners / managers and project staff
- Engage and recruit volunteers, land managers and landowners and community groups to undertake collaborative and coordinated invasive plant control
- Undertake invasive plant control work (including chemical application by backpack spraying and stem injection) individually, supervising volunteers or working with landowners / managers
- At priority locations, appoint and manage contractors, following competitive tendering procedures, to deliver invasive plant control
- Undertake invasive non-native plant species abundance monitoring using the DAFOR recording method and fixed-point photography at monitoring locations within control sites
- Maintain accurate records of invasive non-native plant control activities at each site including:
 - chemical application records and
 - physical control effort
- Work with local land managers to agree voluntary management agreements which transfer invasive plant control responsibilities to land managers following initial work by the project
- Use the information above and standard project approaches to evaluate and assess invasive plant control effectiveness and progress by site and species on an annual basis

2.2 American mink control

- Develop, coordinate and expand a programme of American mink control delivered largely by volunteers and supported by landowners and land managers
- Ongoing recruitment of volunteers to deliver site by site mink control on a catchment wide basis
- Manage and promote the use of project Remoti units (used to notify staff and volunteers of trap activations) to support mink control delivered by the volunteer network
- Maintain accurate records of mink control which quantify volunteer and trapping effort, trap activity and mink capture information
- Equip volunteers to maintain control activities and communicate effectively to share local progress and ensure maximum volunteer retention
- Provide or ensure reliable and legally competent mink dispatch at all control locations

3. Volunteer Management

- Working with the Project Manager, Volunteer and Communications Officer and local project partners recruit, coordinate and maintain a network of volunteers to support delivery of invasive non-native plant and mink control programmes
- Identify local land-managers, ghillies, gamekeepers, communities, volunteers and others who could engage with project volunteering activities
- Provide training to volunteers. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - The set-up, maintenance and running of mink rafts and Remoti units
 - Safe operation of plant control tools (including the use of chemical application equipment)
 - Identification skills for key native species and non-native plants
 - Data collection according to standardised protocols
 - Humane dispatch of mink (where appropriate)
- After training, maintain records of volunteer registrations and time contributions for your area using the project Volunteer Management System and standard time reporting systems and which protect the personal data of volunteers
- Provide high quality and safe work sessions with individual and groups of volunteers to support, particularly, invasive non-native plant control

- Maintain regular communications with plant and mink control volunteers working to maintain engagement, inform volunteers of progress and encourage ongoing participation
- Promote volunteering opportunities with registered volunteers and to the wider public and, with the Volunteer and Communications Officer, using the project website and social media platforms

4. Communication, Awareness and Education

- Act as an ambassador for the project to promote our work and raise awareness of the threats invasive non-native species present to native biodiversity
- Generate content and material for use on the project website and social media platforms working with the Volunteer and Communications Officer
- Deliver presentations and talks and prepare written materials e.g. blogs to promote our work
- Engage with relevant local stakeholder groups, forums and meetings
- With support, and following training, be able represent the project in local media opportunities in the press, radio, television and online

B. Experience and skills

1. Essential

- Experience of working in a team and/or within a partnership project or setting
- Able to set and manage competing tasks, independent of daily or direct management instruction
- Experience of working and/or engagement with communities and volunteers
- Excellent communication skills (written and verbal) – ability to tailor style to suit audience
- General knowledge of invasive non-native species and biodiversity issues
- Excellent organisational skills, able to prioritise, manage and schedule multiple and competing tasks e.g. completing invasive plant within fixed control windows or with competing time demands
- Good understanding and working capability in Microsoft Office programmes – particularly word, excel and PowerPoint – and an organised approach to document management and retention
- Holder of UK driving licence
- Environmental degree or applicable training or sectoral experience

2. Desirable

- Experience of managing invasive non-native plant and/or animal species
- Experience of handling and trapping wild animals
- Experience in environmental survey techniques
- Experience in delivering training, coaching or mentoring – to groups, volunteers or individuals
- Holder of PA1/PA6/W qualifications (safe operation of handheld chemical sprayers and injectors)
- Holder of an air weapon certificate issued by Police Scotland
- Holder of current Outdoor First Aid Certificate
- General knowledge of Scottish conservation and countryside legislation and issues
- Experience in working and engagement with land managers and landowners or other countryside sectors or users

