

Fundraising & Finance Officer - Upper Irthing PRISM Landscape Recovery Project

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Company: UK Civil Service

Location: United Kingdom

Category: computer-and-mathematical

Job summary

Forestry England is a governmental department that looks after the nation's forests with the aim that everyone in England should feel connected to them. For over 100 years, we have been growing, shaping and caring for over 1,500 of our nation's forests for the benefit and enjoyment of all, for this generation and the next. As part of our national Growing the Future strategy and Biodiversity Plan we are looking to restore fully-functioning ecosystems and landscapes.

North England Forest District has a complement of 132 staff who care for 61,000 hectares of forest and 25,000 hectares of open land. Annual timber production is 550,000 m³ and there is a planting programme of more than 3 million trees a year.

Kielder Forest is a hub of nature recovery, home to breeding populations of hen harrier, osprey, pine marten and red squirrel, all monitored and supported in their recovery as part of a diverse, multi-purpose forest. Projects such as the restoration of the Border Mires, native woodland restoration at Kielder Wildwood, reintroduction of the water vole and others are helping to make this landscape, in conjunction with our partners, a leading location for wildlife to thrive.

The post will be embedded within the Kielder forest team for management purposes but will have a strong partnership.

Job description

Upper Irthing PRISM Project

As part of a partnership of landowners, Forestry England have secured development funding

through DEFRA's Landscape Recovery scheme to develop a new landscape scale project, creating a new model for integrated land management in the Upper Irthing Catchment. Over 2 years (to end March 2026) the Upper Irthing PRISM Project will undertake the necessary survey, data collection, partner liaison and stakeholder engagement required to put forward a long term (20 year minimum) proposal for the management of 9,500 ha of land spanning the Northumberland/Cumbria border. Encompassing the south-west corner of Kielder Forest, as well as several thousand hectares of neighbouring privately owned and managed land, the project will look at a holistic, catchment wide approach to the management of natural habitats, species and resources as well as the rural economy and enterprise to provide a plan that works for nature, landowners and local communities.

PRISM is an acronym for **P**eatlands, **R**ivers, **I**nvasives, **S**pecies Recovery and **M**eadows, which gives some idea of just how wide ranging the project will be. This breadth has been guided by the key criteria of this round of Landscape Recovery funding:

Net Zero (peatland restoration and woodland creation).

Protected Sites (designated habitats such as SSSIs, NNRs and SACs the project area has more than 20 designated parcels of land).

Wildlife rich habitats (riparian corridors, species rich grasslands, transitional habitats; Invasive species control and species recovery within these areas).

Food/timber production (working with project partners to better understand how working land can support both thriving habitats and species, and commercial enterprise).

At this stage, the project has received 2 years funding for a development phase. If the developed plans are accepted, there is the possibility for extended involvement with the project beyond the 2-year period (April 2024 to March 2026), but this cannot be guaranteed at this time. If a further funding period is approved, it is likely that the Project Team (and possibly the host organisation) would change at the transition point to adapt from a development model to a delivery model. The best systems for future delivery, and the required changes, will be considered and developed during the initial two years.

Forestry England have a successful heritage of nature recovery and habitat restoration in Kielder Forest, supported by our National leads, local partnerships, long-term monitoring, and academic research. This project will build on this established heritage in a new, targeted, partnership approach through the Landscape Recovery funding scheme. This new approach to

landscape scale land management allows partnerships to work cross boundary and overcome barriers associated with fragmented land ownership. It also supports private landowners and managers to facilitate positive environmental improvements on their land, while allowing for food, fuel and fibre production activities to continue.

One of the key differences between this and previous projects is the mechanism of funding, with Landscape Recovery projects being required to develop a blended finance approach for the implementation stage of the project.

The Finance and Fundraising Officers (FFO) primary role will be to develop a blended finance plan and business model, which is one of six key deliverables required from the development phase. To be clear, the initial 2-year development period is already fully funded, so the plans produced will relate to the implementation period. As the Landscape Recovery scheme is still at a pilot phase, the creation of that plan is intentionally very open to interpretation, and innovation and originality is encouraged. The Finance Officer will be encouraged to seek out opportunities for funding from a wide range of sources. Some public funds are expected to be made available but will be conditional on the projects ability to attract additional funding from other sources, particularly private and / or green finance sources.

The Finance Officer will work with and be supported by the Project Manager in the creation of these plans and will work with the project team members to understand the budgetary requirements and scheduling of the developing plans, so that income sources can be strategically programmed to facilitate those aspirations. As part of the finance plan and business model, the Finance Officer will work with project partners throughout the process to ensure that the conditions and requirements of the funding sources are acceptable to landowners, and to develop legal agreements which will underpin the future receipt of funds.

We welcome applications from those with experience of fundraising, and coordinating various income streams, from a wide range of backgrounds. Experience of projects related to nature conservation farming is an advantage but not essential. Familiarity with grant applications, schemes such as Peatland Code or Woodland Carbon Code, private investment support, rural enterprise diversification and others will all be relevant and useful experience.

Purpose of Job

The successful candidate will:

Have primary responsibility for the development of a blended finance plan a business model

during the 2-year development phase.

Work closely with the Project Manager, project partners and legal advice to develop legal agreements which will facilitate future receipt of funds.

Support other team members in the development of other aspects of the project plan as required.

Contribute to project reporting, especially in keeping partners apprised of funding options, and the associated opportunities, implications and requirements of different funding options.

Participate in stakeholder engagement and publicity efforts, with especial focus on potential for community fundraiser or other income streams.

Person specification

Experience, skills and knowledge

Essential

Experience of working to investigate and evaluate novel land and nature-based funding streams and business models.

Experience working successfully within the development and/or delivery of complex partnership projects to set up new business models to deliver longer term objectives.

Experience of working closely with partners and stakeholders to develop and deliver a novel project (inc. other landowners and managers, and/or community groups).

Familiarity with the land management sectors of farming, nature conservation and forestry and woodland management.

Strong organisational skills, including the ability to manage multiple work streams simultaneously.

Ability to work effectively within a small team, supporting team members to achieve their best efforts whilst delivering your own key work areas.

Degree level qualification (or equivalent) and relevant experience in finance management and business accounting.

Competent in IT including core Microsoft Office applications.

Please clearly demonstrate how the above applies to you throughout your application. Failure to do so will mean that your application is automatically sifted out.

Desirable

Excellent communication skills in a range of media to a variety of audiences. Able to adapt communication styles to present complex messages in a way that maximises accessibility to understanding.

Membership of a relevant professional body: Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Behaviours

We'll assess you against these behaviours during the selection process:

Seeing the Big Picture

Making Effective Decisions

Working Together

Communicating and Influencing

Managing a Quality Service

Benefits

Alongside your salary of £37,485, Forestry Commission contributes £8,063 towards you being a member of the Civil Service Defined Benefit Pension scheme.

Learning and development tailored to your role

An environment with flexible working options

A culture encouraging inclusion and diversity

A with an average employer contribution of 27%

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