

## Project Manager - Upper Irthing PRISM Landscape Recovery Project

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Company: UK Civil Service

Location: United Kingdom

Category: business-and-financial-operations

### 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 m<sup>3</sup> 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 SSSI's, NNR's and SAC's 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. ♦ ♦ ♦

The Project Manager will have oversight of the whole project programme and team. ♦ They will be the primary point of contact for all project related matters, especially for project partners (including local FE teams) who are key to the effective development of the project. ♦

Additionally, the role will:

Undertake or oversee all reporting of project milestones and finances to ensure the project proceeds on schedule and budget.

Review and verify the plans produced by other team members (such as Land Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Access and Financial), providing support throughout the development of those plans, and will lead on the development of other required plans and proposals including Project management and Governance, and Stakeholder Engagement.

Coordinate use of the project budget to ensure aims are delivered within the agreed budget.

Support the Finance and Fundraising Officer in the development of the blended finance plan and business model for the 20 year phase of the project.

Feedback to FE locally and nationally to share lessons learned through the experiences of delivering a Landscape Recovery funded project.

### **Purpose of Job**

The successful candidate will:

Have primary responsibility for the effective running of the Project and the associated team during the 2-year development phase. This will include: Line management of 1 project officer, Day to day leadership of the whole project team (expected to be 3 members, including the Manager).

Lead on the development of key aspects of the project plan, including project management and governance and stakeholder engagement.

Support other team members in the development of plans covering Land Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Access and a blended finance and business model. Sign off on completed plans prior to submission. This support will be varied, covering eventualities from assisting with surveys and monitoring efforts, discussing proposals and options with landowners, reviewing potential income streams, liaising with local authorities or other statutory bodies and more.

Oversee project budgets and ensure financial compliance of activities such as procurement.

Chair the project steering group meetings.

Ensure project reporting is completed on time and to the necessary standard.

Participate in stakeholder engagement and publicity efforts.

## **Person specification**

### **Experience, skills and knowledge**

#### **Essential**

Experience of managing the development and/or delivery of a complex partnership projects, with a good track record of project, budget and contract management.

Experience of working closely with partners and stakeholders to develop and deliver a 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 effectively lead a small team, delegating where appropriate, and supporting team members to achieve their best efforts.

Experience producing habitat management plans and proposals.

Experience of procurement and contract management.

HND or degree level qualification (or equivalent) or relevant experience in forestry or land management for farming or nature conservation.

Competent in IT including core Microsoft Office applications; GIS experience beneficial.

Formal project management qualification, eg Association for Project Management, or Prince.

A full driving licence. ♦♦

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** ♦♦

Sound understanding of UK ecology, habitat management and restoration, and species recovery.

Experience of public sector procurement and contract management.

Excellent communication skills in a range of media to a variety of audiences.

Familiarity with relevant legislation related to nature designated sites.

Experience of grant / funding applications or other fundraising activities.

Membership of a relevant professional body: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Institute Chartered Foresters, Chartered Project Professional.

### **Behaviours**

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

Seeing the Big Picture

Making Effective Decisions

Working Together

Changing and Improving

Communicating and Influencing

Delivering at Pace

### **Benefits**

Alongside your salary of ♦29,863, 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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