



Job Description

Volunteering and Engagement Officer (Maternity cover)

Reports to	Head of Working with Communities
Responsible for	Developing and delivering a volunteer and community outreach programme to help people connect with their local river, to build knowledge, understanding and a commitment to look after and protect rivers.
Location	Hybrid work at home and in the office based in Leatherhead with travel across the South East, particularly South London, Surrey and Kent.

The role

We are looking for an experienced, confident and enthusiastic person to join our expanding Working with Communities Team, to develop and deliver volunteering and community outreach opportunities that connect people with rivers and inspire lifelong stewardship.

In the last 20 years, the Trust has led more than 7000 volunteers in making a positive difference to their local river, giving 40,000 hours to our cause. From river cleanups to planting days, river restoration events to invasive species management. From our formal citizen science programmes to our informative guided walks and talks and workshops. We aim to put healthy rivers at the heart of communities and working with and supporting volunteers is integral to this vision.

Our ambition is to reach as many people as possible in the south east, to teach and show them the importance of rivers, and how everyone can play a part in restoring healthier, thriving rivers. We want to be more reflective of the communities in the south east, building partnerships with new groups to reach a more diverse audience about the value of a healthy river. This is an exciting time to join the team with strategic projects on the horizon which will enable us to expand our volunteering and community outreach in terms of geography, demographic and impact.

The role would suit someone with significant experience of working with volunteers and engaging local communities, as well as skills in project management and partnership working.

About us

The South East Rivers Trust is an environmental charity bringing rivers and their catchments back to life. Working in 12 river catchments across the South East, the Trust connects communities and mobilises citizen scientists to educate and engage people on the importance of rivers, and supports and challenges stakeholders, businesses and individuals to protect them. The Trust uses data and evidence to target positive action and works with nature to make rivers healthy again. This includes tackling water pollution, addressing water scarcity, reconnecting rivers and restoring habitats. www.southeastriverstrust.org.

Working at the South East Rivers Trust is challenging, rewarding, fulfilling and busy; we work collaboratively and with passion, and this is reflected in our core values of: delivering high quality work, using expertise and scientific understanding, building good and effective relationships and bringing positive energy to all we do. If this sounds like an environment that you would thrive in, we would love to hear from you.

Key duties & responsibilities

Volunteer management and community outreach

- Design and deliver an annual program of volunteering opportunities, including citizen science and practical river events, linking into existing initiatives, activities and partner organisations where relevant.
- Coordinate our existing citizen science schemes (Riverfly, Outfall Safari, INNS monitoring), recruiting, supporting and training volunteers as required.
- Design and deliver community outreach activities linked to the Trust's projects that connect and inspire communities about the value of healthy rivers, including but not limited to guided walks, community talks, and workshops.
- Monitor volunteering and community outreach activity and produce quarterly and other reports on their impact; as required for the Trust's work and/or those needed to fulfil funders' requirements.
- Seek feedback from volunteers and participants to evaluate our organisational performance and use this to inform the development of the Trust's approach to volunteering and outreach.
- Oversee and prioritise the health, wellbeing and welfare of our active volunteers, abiding by the Trust's Health & Safety policies and the upkeep of equipment and PPE.
- Support the Head of Working with Communities to review and update procedures and processes to ensure high standards of management are applied consistently to volunteering and community outreach.
- Mentor and support the Assistant Education & Engagement Officers.

Grow the Trust's volunteering and community outreach

- Work across SERT's teams to identify opportunities and design high quality and sustainable volunteering activities to help deliver project outcomes and meet Trust targets.
- Identify barriers to engagement, particularly from under-represented groups and develop attractive and accessible new opportunities to engage new audiences.
- Promote volunteering and event opportunities and relevant work of the Trust including writing articles for publication, e-newsletters, media/social media engagement, public talks, and representing the Trust and/or assisting Trust staff at events.
- Research and apply for grants and other funding for the Trust to support the continuation and expansion of its community engagement programme.

Income generation

- Lead and build the business case for a larger corporate volunteering programme at the Trust, generating a surplus income to support community activities.
- Lead the application process for grant funding to support volunteering and engagement activities.

Person specification

Please keep this list of competencies in mind, together with the Trust's core values when completing your application. Knowledge, experience, skills and aptitudes will be assessed through the application process and at interview.

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
Training & Experience		
Demonstrable experience of developing and managing a programme of volunteering and community outreach activities, reaching a diverse audience.	X	
Demonstrable experience of leading and delivering practical work with volunteer teams.	X	
Demonstrable experience of leading and delivering public presentations, guided walks and other community events.	X	
Proven experience of project management including budgets, reporting and evaluation.	X	
Experience of working with people from a wide range of backgrounds and ages.	X	
Experience of working in partnership with a range of other organisations (NGO's, volunteer groups, Local Authorities and Government Agencies).	X	
Experience of running a corporate volunteering programme.		X
Previous experience of the Trust's citizen science schemes.		X
Experience developing projects and applying for grant funding.		X
Hold licences/qualifications relevant to river habitat management and volunteer supervision (first aid, water safety, brushcutting/strimming).		X
Knowledge & Understanding		
Basic working knowledge of rivers and freshwater habitats.	X	
A thorough understanding of the health and safety issues around working with volunteers and water.	X	
An awareness of safeguarding in the content of volunteering.	X	
Familiarity with the rivers of the south east of England.		X
Understanding of the drivers for businesses to support environmental work through volunteering or sponsorship.		X
Skills & Personal Attributes		
Ability to manage, motivate and inspire volunteers from all walks of life.	X	
Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to interact with and engage a range of audiences.	X	
Strong organisational and planning skills, able to prioritise workloads.	X	
Proficient IT skills, particularly MS Office and design software such as Canva.	X	
Friendly and approachable attitude and the ability to be diplomatic when speaking to the public about potentially contentious issues.	X	
Miscellaneous		
Commitment to equality of opportunity.	X	
Happy to work some weekends and evenings, particularly through months April – September, with time off in lieu.	X	
Current driving licence and vehicle which can be used for work purposes, and happy to drive a van.	X	
Suitable, safe home working environment.	X	

The successful candidate will be required to undertake an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Conditions of service

Salary: £28,000 - £34,000 depending on level of qualifications and experience.

Contract period: Full time or 0.8 FTE, starting 12th/19th September 2022. This contract, as temporary maternity cover, will terminate upon the return of the employee on maternity leave, which we expect to be after 12 months.

Pension: SERT operates a contributory pension scheme and will pay 9% of salary subject to a 6% employee contribution.

Homeworking and vehicle: The Trust operates a mix of home and office based working, with travel across the SERT area, and so you will need to be able to provide a suitable home working environment, with the Trust office located in Leatherhead. We will provide a laptop and mobile phone. We would prefer the post-holder to be based in the SERT area, but this is not an absolute requirement. A full driving license and access to your own vehicle is required.

Annual leave: Annual leave entitlement is 25 days plus public holidays, pro rata for part time.

Hours of work: The basic working week is 37.5 hours. Some evening or weekend work will be required for which time off in lieu can be taken. No overtime will be paid.

Right to work in UK: All applicants must have the right to work in the UK. We do not sponsor applicants from overseas.

Employee benefits

- Hybrid working and homeworking
- Flexible and part-time working opportunities
- Pension contribution of 9% salary, subject to 6% employee contribution
- Life Assurance cover with SERT's Pension Scheme
- Annual Cost of Living Adjustment Review (COLA)
- Enhanced leave policies including sickness and maternity
- Four staff away days per year
- Commitment to career development and training
- Free Employee Assistance Programme
- Wellbeing team, with trained Mental Health First Aiders
- Annual Staff Survey

Application process

At SERT we believe in equality of opportunity and positively encourage applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital/civil partnership status, or pregnancy and maternity. We are committed to better reflecting society and the communities who use, need and enjoy our rivers within our workforce. We welcome requests for flexible working. All applications will be judged solely on merit.

Please email the following to jobs@southeastriverstrust.org:

- a completed Application Form for the relevant job role that you are applying for

- a completed Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form

The deadline for applications Thursday 4th August 5pm with interviews taking place on Friday 12th August via Zoom. Please get in touch if you are unable to make this date.

If you would like to discuss the position please email jobs@southeastriverstrust.org, with your enquiry and we will arrange to call you back.

Applicant privacy policy

When submitting your application to us, it is important you are aware of what will happen to your personal data after the position is filled. Please download and read our Applicant Privacy Notice from the website.