



Job Description

Senior Project Officer (River & Catchment Restoration)

Reports to: Head of Restoring Rivers and Catchments

Responsible for: The development and delivery of a portfolio of physical enhancement and restoration projects in rivers and their environment. This would be achieved through working with teams across the wider organisation including Project Officers, Assistant Project Officers, Education and Engagement teams, landowners, project partners, contractors and volunteers (as appropriate).

Location: The role will be based at home, with on-site work across the SERT area. A minimum of one day per month will be in the office (Leatherhead).

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 of England, 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.

Working at the South East Rivers Trust is 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.

Initially offered as a two-year fixed term contract, it is expected that the position will be extended, subject to satisfactory performance and continued funding. This is an exciting opportunity to join and support a growing and dynamic team making a real difference for the environment.

The role

Working in the Restoring Rivers and Catchments Team, you will be responsible for the development and delivery of a portfolio of physical enhancement projects on the ground. The Senior Project Officer role is an exciting opportunity for an experienced and knowledgeable individual to oversee all stages of river and catchment enhancement projects, from conception to development, design and physical implementation. We are particularly keen to broaden our engineering competencies and would be interested to receive applications from candidates with experience in this field, although this is not essential.

Using your freshwater expertise and proven ability, you will proactively lead both large and small projects while working closely with other staff, external partners, and stakeholders. As a senior member of the team, you will also mentor junior staff, providing guidance and to act as a 'sounding board' to help them realise their full potential. Most importantly of all, you will support the whole team, your line manager and the wider organisation as much as you can.

Projects may typically include weir removals, fish passage easements (such as rock ramps, nature-like bypasses, or technical fish passes) and river re-naturalisation projects (such as habitat enhancements, reconnecting floodplains & paleochannels, re-meandering, and backwater creation). Catchment management projects are likely to include wetland creation, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures. We would be interested to know about any experience you have in the above fields when you apply.

Key duties & responsibilities

1. Developing and Designing Restoration/Enhancement Projects

- 1.1. Facilitate the feasibility and scoping processes of selecting and prioritising enhancement projects for development to delivery stage.
- 1.2. Lead the development and design of a programme of projects, using sound science and best practice.
- 1.3. Lead and manage both internal and external input of specialist/technical advice as required.
- 1.4. Secure all necessary permissions as required, such as environmental consents (e.g. FRAPs), Planning Permission, landowner agreements etc.
- 1.5. Develop and maintain positive and professional relationships with partners and stakeholders.
- 1.6. Be responsible for project management and reporting to funders.

2. Delivering Restoration and Enhancement Projects

- 2.1. Lead on a programme of enhancement projects, managing colleagues, contractors, volunteers and partners as required.
- 2.2. Be responsible for Health and Safety compliance, promoting a collaborative approach to ensure successful project outcomes.
- 2.3. Facilitate external partner organisations to deliver their own enhancement projects as part of wider restoration plans.
- 2.4. Collaborate with other staff in the design of monitoring programmes to evidence project outcomes.
- 2.5. Be responsible for budgets and delivery timeline, in line with the wider SERT schedule.

3. Contribute to the work of the South East Rivers Trust and its trading subsidiary

- 3.1. Using your experience, mentor junior staff to encourage confidence and independent thinking.
- 3.2. Contribute to the Trust's external communications (e.g. through websites, social media and presentations), profile and good reputation.
- 3.3. Support the fundraising and growth processes of the Trust and the Rivers Trust movement.
- 3.4. Other duties as may be appropriate to the position.
- 3.5. Share your specific areas of expertise by contributing to the Trust's internal capacity building programme.

Person specification

Please keep this person specification in mind, as well as the Trust's core values when completing your application. Knowledge, experience, skills, and attitudes will be assessed through both the application process and at interview.

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
Training and Experience		
Educated to at least degree level in a relevant field or equivalent relevant work experience in the aquatic environment sector.	X	
Several years' experience developing, overseeing and/or delivering freshwater and catchment enhancements or similar environmental projects.	X	
Civil Engineering with experience within the water industry, ideally being an Incorporated or Chartered member of a relevant engineering institution e.g. ICE, CIWEM.		X
Experience of surveying freshwater aquatic habitats.		X
Demonstrable experience of successful project management including budgets, milestones and reporting.	X	
Experience of working with contractors to deliver projects including procurement/tendering processes and contracts.	X	
Experience applying for and securing funding.		X
Knowledge and Understanding		
A good understanding of freshwater aquatic ecosystems.	X	
An understanding/awareness of freshwater enhancement design and associated considerations	X	
Working knowledge of Construction Design and Management (CDM) regulations/duties and other health and safety legislation.		X
Good understanding of the drivers and needs of a range of stakeholders (landowners, farmers, developers, local authorities and government agencies).	X	
A good understanding of the challenges of working in the NGO sector and/or a small organisation.		X
Skills & Personal Attributes		
Competent, physically fit and comfortable to work in and around water.	X	
Excellent organisational skills; able to delegate and oversee tasks to other team members.	X	
Proficient IT skills, particularly MS Office and Google	X	
Experience in the use of design software, e.g. CorelDraw, CAD.		X
Good team player committed to professional and personal development of self and others.	X	
Excellent communication skills for both internal and external audiences.	X	
Genuine enthusiasm and passion for delivering healthy freshwater ecosystems.	X	
A self-starter, able to work to a common goal unsupervised.	X	
Miscellaneous		
Commitment to equality of opportunity.	X	
Full driving licence and access to private vehicle for work use.	X	
Ability to work occasional evenings and weekend if required.	X	

We are also currently recruiting for a Project Officer. Please assess which role you are best suited to and fill out the relevant Application Form. Those that have previously applied need not apply again.

Conditions of service

Salary: £32,573 – £41,558 per annum, dependent on experience and capability

Contract period: The position is full time, five days a week. The appointment will be subject to a six month probationary period.

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 the office located in Leatherhead. You will need to be able to provide a suitable home working environment. 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.

Hours of work: 37.5 hours per week. 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

Benefits you will enjoy if you work for us:

- 25 days annual leave, plus bank holidays (pro-rata). After three years' service, staff receive an extra day of annual leave each year (maximum of 28 days).
- Hybrid working
- Life assurance
- Time off in Lieu
- 4 staff awaydays per year
- Flexible bank holidays
- Enhanced leave policies including sickness, maternity and paternity
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Wellbeing team, with trained Mental Health First Aiders
- Commitment to career development and training, including but not limited to:
 - Individual career development plans
 - Attendance at external training and conferences relevant to role
 - Internal training relevant to role
 - One personal development day per year
 - Access to resources and training via affiliated memberships