



SEAGRASS PROJECT OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

OVERVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Job Title :	Wester Ross Seagrass Project Officer.
Responsible to:	WRFT Chair, WRFT Senior Biologist, WRFT Administrator.
Responsible for:	Field work assistants and volunteers
Location:	Gairloch, with field sites in Loch Ewe and nearby
Salary:	£31,200 pro-rata. Fixed term until 31 March 2028.
Hours:	16 hours per week (0.4 FTE), flexible hours required
Probation period	3 months, with monthly reviews. Notice period 1 month.

PURPOSE OF JOB, PROJECT OVERVIEW

The post holder will be responsible for the day-to-day coordination and running of the Wester Ross Seagrass Project. Work will be under the supervision of the Wester Ross Fisheries Trust (WRFT) senior Biologist, with assistance from the WRFT administrator, Chair of the WRFT Trustees and the SMEEF Project Officer. The project will include partnerships with local marine conservation groups and community volunteers.

This project is supported by the Scottish Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund (SMEEF) and will run for 3 years from 1st April 2025. The main aim of the project is to restore a seagrass bed at Inverasdale, Loch Ewe, Wester Ross. This restoration area is within the Wester Ross Marine Protected Area, where living fragments of a former seagrass bed were present until around 2010. An initial area of 0.5ha will be targeted, with potential for additional restoration of seagrass beds over a greater area within the Loch Ewe area over future years.

The work will include surveys of seagrass beds and potential restoration sites, using approved SMEEF protocols. Seagrass will be collected, propagated, planted and monitored over the 3 year period. A key element of the project will be the developing best practice for using seagrass fragments washed up on local shores after storm events as the main donor material for restoration. Cultivation of these fragments and rhizomes will take place in nursery ponds close to the restoration site. The post holder will also be responsible for data collection and reporting, for organising and training field work teams, and for communicating the project through workshops, events and knowledge exchange activities.

WRFT are a registered charity focusing on the conservation and enhancement of native freshwater fish and their inland and coastal water environments. As an important habitat for young sea trout and other migratory salmonids, the health of seagrass is key to wild fish conservation work. This post may be extended to include additional hours for wider WRFT work depending on experience.

Closing date 16th March 2025. Interviews last week in March.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

The main responsibilities of the role include, but are not limited to:

- The coordination and implementation of project objectives. Keeping the project to time and within budget.
- Designing and taking the lead on seagrass surveys, propagation, restoration and monitoring work, guided by SMEEF protocols
- Accurate data collection and the reporting of data, project progress and findings to funders, WRFT Trustees and wider audiences as required.
- The recruitment, training and supervision of teams of paid fieldwork assistants, volunteers and other personnel.
- Liaising with project stakeholders including citizen science groups and organisations working with young people.
- Ensuring the required permissions for work are in place.
- Keeping risk assessments and PPE equipment up to date.
- Administrative duties, including reporting to the SMEEF Project officer and producing quarterly budget claims.
- Marketing and publicity, on social media, websites, newsletters and other media.
- Any other tasks required by WRFT. Additional hours may also be available for wider WRFT work depending on experience.

IMPORTANT PERSONAL QUALITIES

- An enthusiasm for marine conservation and a positive creative outlook in the event of challenges and uncertainties.
- Able to work flexible hours, to suit the project goals and a tidal environment. This may involve working more days per week during major field campaigns and fewer during less busy periods.
- Ability to work independently and to prioritise tasks.
- Ability to work in a small team and to manage staff and volunteers

ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- A degree in marine biology, ecology, conservation science or similar, and an understanding of marine environment conservation and seagrass biology.
- Experience of biological surveys and accurate data recording.
- Experience of snorkeling, or a willingness to undertake snorkel training.
- Ability and willingness to work in a practical outdoor marine environment, involving light physical activity.
- Good organisational skills and attention to detail, with the ability to adhere to project milestones and survey protocols.
- Good people and communication skills, and the ability to build relationships with project stakeholders and co-workers.
- A full UK driving licence and the use of own vehicle for business purposes.
- The legal right to work in the UK

DESIRABLE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Experience of seagrass restoration and propagation
- Experience of managing projects and budgets.
- Experience of working with volunteers and citizen science groups
- A postgraduate degree in a relevant subject
- IT skills and experience
- Knowledge and experience of GIS and mapping
- Outdoor first aid qualification.