

BORDERS FOREST TRUST



Engagement Officer Job Description

Background

Borders Forest Trust (BFT) is a charity organisation established in 1996 that focusses on restoring native woodlands and woodland culture primarily in the south of Scotland. Its work includes a landscape scale 'Wild Heart' ecological restoration initiative in the Southern Uplands, supporting community woodland groups through the region and promoting sustainable woodland management, education and wellbeing. A key part of BFT's mission is to engage the wider community in woodland restoration and management, promote better access to it, and encourage the development of woodland culture.

BFT does not only engage the broader community to promote woodland culture but also relies on engagement to achieve its native woodland restoration aims. It has a growing and enthusiastic volunteer base that meaningfully contributes to BFT activities including tree planting, woodland management and biodiversity monitoring. There is also a strong interest from various institutions to visit and jointly collaborate on our sites, with a range of mutually beneficial purposes from education and research, skills development and wellbeing improvement. In addition we engage local communities, land owners, managers, users and various interested parties through our work.

The post of Engagement Officer will provide a rewarding and varied set of tasks. You will be part of a small and enthusiastic team and have the opportunity to contribute to restoring native woodlands and reviving woodland culture in some of the most beautiful 'wilderness' and woodland sites in the south of Scotland working with a broad range of people and organisations. The work will involve a balance between office and outdoor work, requiring someone with a mix of skills, on one hand exceptional communication (including IT and social media skills), coordination and interpersonal skills and on the other hand an aptitude and passion for 'hands on' outdoor conservation and woodland development work.

Principal Duties

Note the part-time post will initially focus on volunteer/education group coordination and support at the 'Wild Heart' sites, but depending on funding, will rapidly expand to encompass a broad and varied organisation-wide engagement strategy.

Specifically the initial duties will involve:

- To act as a central point to promote volunteer, education and community group engagement, build new and strengthen existing relationships through effective communication including social media.
- To coordinate engagement, in liaison with other BFT staff, developing a calendar of monthly activities, arranging logistics and ensuring all are suitably informed and coordinated.

- To be responsible for meeting health and safety requirements including carrying out risk assessments for all engagement visits and activities. To ensure all engagement adheres to insurance cover requirements and keep appropriate records.
- To lead practical volunteer, education and community group engagement with the site officer and/or other staff to meaningfully contribute to BFT aims whilst ensuring those engaging have a rewarding experience.
- To support the coordination, promotion and organisation of upcoming anniversary and publicity events at BFT sites as a means to promote broader community engagement.
- To work with BFT colleagues and Trustees to help build strong positive relationships with local communities, neighbours and users of BFT sites through regular contact.
- To support other BFT staff, especially the Site Officer, in hands on conservation and site management work as required.
- To ensure good photo-documentation of activities, contribute to BFT Facebook page, website, work updates and newsletters, plans, reports, proposals and budgets as required.

The expanded duties (dependent on funding) for a fuller time post will include.

- To develop tools such as blogs and E-newsletter to strengthen communication on BFT outreach and engagement activities.
- To contribute to the development of site access and facilities improvements, as well as offline and online interpretation and information materials for visitors.
- To support woodland skills development partnerships with local education institutions.
- To support BFT programmes that aim to improve wellbeing in the community.
- To support BFT's community engagement work in community woodlands.
- To develop along with other BFT staff innovative fund generation ideas and proposals based around engagement activities at BFT sites which are compatible with the aims of the organisation.
- To contribute to other BFT tasks related to communication and engagement, as required.

Requirements.

Essential

- A suitable qualification and/or strong commensurate track record in delivering practical outdoor education, volunteer or community group leading.
- A suitable qualification and/or practical experience in conservation, forestry or other related field experience.
- Strong interpersonal skills with outgoing positive attitude, a full range of face-to-face, phone and social media communication skills.

- Strong organisational and logistical skills, prioritising, time management and multi-tasking.
- Good written and oral communication and presentation skills
- Ability to work flexibly as required including evening and weekend work in different locations mainly throughout the south of Scotland.
- Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team.
- Ability to undertake physical activities in often challenging weather conditions.
- A passion for wild places and woodlands.

Desirable

- Good practical knowledge of trees, planting, care, management or other woodland skills.
- Event management skills.
- Team building skills/Counselling/life coaching skills.
- Experience of working with vulnerable adults.
- Relevant skills in activities that can diversify and enrich visitor engagement and experience at BFT sites.
- Good sense of humour a big plus!

Terms and Conditions

Accountability

The Engagement Officer will be responsible to the Chief Executive Officer.

Salary

£22k-£24k pro-rata depending on experience. This is a three-year, fixed term contract with possibility of rapid expansion of the post to a fuller time post based on performance and future funding.

Hours of work

Initially 15 hours (2 full days) per week including evenings and weekends (occasional Sundays). Core hours are flexible and time off in lieu (TOIL) system is in place. Overtime is not paid. Depending on funding and performance the post is expected to expand to substantively longer hours within the first 6 months of employment

Place of work

This post is both office- and site-based on BFT sites. Office space is at the BFT Office in Ancrum and the post-holder should consider this their base.

Travel

Clean driving license and own car required with agreed mileage expenses (in accordance with BFT's mileage policy) re-imbursed at a rate of 42p/mile. The Engagement Officer is responsible for recording mileage.

Disclosure

The successful applicant will be required to take part in the PVG process before taking up the post.

Applicability

All applicants must have the full right to live and work in the UK.

Application Process

By Email with the subject 'Application for Engagement Officer' to enquiries@bordersforesttrust.org

Please submit no later than 12.00 noon on Monday the 22nd of April, 2019.

Please submit;

1. A concise cover letter which explains your suitability for the position matched against the key duties and requirements.
2. A CV.
3. Two professional references.

Interviews will be held the week beginning the 29th of April.

The job will commence ideally in May or as soon as possible after that.