**Project Officer ‘Dragons in the Hills’**

**Job description**

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| **Job title:** | Dragons in the Hills Project Officer (part time 3 days/week) |
| **Salary:** | £23,000 - £26,000 pa pro rata |
| **Fixed term contract:** | 20 months from 1 May 2021 to 31 December 2022 (subject to funding there may be an opportunity for a short extension) |
| **To be employed by:** | Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK) |
| **Location:** | Subject to COVID-19 restrictions you will be based at Crossmaglen Community Centre, O’Fiaich Square, Crossmaglen, BT35 9AA, and the post will work across the Council District of Newry Mourne and Down District Council. There will be a possibility of hot desking in the Mournes and Downpatrick. If offices are closed due to COVID-19 restrictions then the position would be home-based |
| **Reporting to:** | Coordinator, ARG UK, Ring of Gullion AONB Officer for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, |

Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK) are seeking an experienced outreach officer to champion community engagement in the Newry, Mourne and Down District, and develop a new volunteer training and participation programme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, ‘Dragons in the Hills’, which will be connecting communities with nature to conserve amphibians and reptiles.

You will work closely with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, The Herpetological Society of Ireland and local partners and stakeholders including The Mourne Heritage Trust, National Museums of Northern Ireland, National Trust, local partners, land managers and communities to involve and enthuse the public in amphibian and reptile conservation. You will need to enjoy working with people, have excellent communication, great organisation skills and experience of working with community groups, school groups or volunteers.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

To be responsible for successfully delivering relevant project aims, objectives and outcomes, detailed in the successful Dragons in the Hills funding application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Outcomes include: Development of scientific and artistic programme with schools, landowners and community groups and recruitment and training of volunteers.

The post holder is responsible for budgetary management, cash flow forecasts, collating monitoring information and keeping records of the project.

The post holder will promote an increased level of appreciation, ownership and involvement by local communities, schools and other key audiences identified in the application to connect with nature to conserve amphibians and reptiles heritage of the Newry Mourne and Down District area.

The post holder is responsible for the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and management of the National Lottery Heritage Fund funded ‘Dragons in the Hills’ project.

The post holder is responsible for liaising with the Dragons in the Hills Project Steering Group and external staff in partner organisations to deliver the outcomes defined in the National Lottery Heritage Fund Dragons in the Hills Letter of Offer.

The post holder will proactively engage with local communities, schools, landowners, voluntary and statutory organisations, the private sector and other key audiences identified in the Dragons in the Hills application to establish and maintain partnerships to deliver the aims, objectives and outcomes of the Dragons in the Hills project.

**The role will encompass the following activities:**

* Managing and monitoring all relevant project budgets and delivering them within the agreed timescales described in the Dragons in the Hills National Lottery Heritage Fund application and letter of offer. Keep records and produce reports for the Steering Group and funders as required. Presenting monthly expenses and payments to ARG UK Coordinator and Dragons in the Hills project steering group.
* Providing the ARG UK coordinator with monthly email updates, and quarterly reporting on activities undertaken by the project. Preparing agenda and reports for Dragons in the Hills Steering Group meetings.
* Developing educational resources for schools and groups – including downloadable online resources and schools’ packs. Produce regular content for website, social media and any other relevant publications for key audiences identified. Development of social media pages for amphibian and reptile related queries. Liaising with the local press to run media friendly campaigns.
* Presenting educational workshops and presentations relating to amphibians and reptiles to diverse community groups (schools, local interest groups, youth groups, tourists, public events).
* Responsible for procuring, managing and monitoring contractors, trainers, artists and other specialists engaged in the delivery of the Dragons in the Hills project.
* Organising creative workshops, working with local artists and the wider public to create striking and unusual art and sculpture, as well as written pieces and drama that will engage the public in a more innovative and appealing manner;
* Organising field trips and ‘amphibian and reptile rambles’ for local community, tourists and school groups to see amphibians and reptiles in their natural environment.
* Liaise with Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR), and relevant government and local authorities, private, voluntary and community sector bodies in the delivery of the Dragon in the Hills project.
* Collate monitoring and evaluation information for the Dragons in the Hills project. Keep records and produce reports for the Steering Group and funders as required.
* Recruit and manage volunteers. Manage all relevant paperwork, and comply with all health and safety requirements.
* Any other duties as directed concerned with the nature of the post.
* Carry out duties in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Order 1978 (as amended); Acts of Parliament; Statutory Instruments and Regulations and other legal requirements; and all ARG UK Policies and Procedures.
* This job description is not definitive or restrictive and may be modified to meet changing needs of ARG UK and the services it provides.

**Employee Specification: Project Officer ‘Dragons in the Hills’**

| **Factor** | **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessment** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.Education / qualifications** | Hold a relevant natural, built or cultural heritage to at least third level (e.g. NVQ Level 4, HNC/HND) or equivalent professional qualification, e.g. Countryside Management, Built Environment, Cultural Studies relevant to this area. | Yes |  | * Application form * Certificates | |
| **2. Professional experience in the sector** | Have at least at least 2 years of professional experience in a relevant working environment, for example natural heritage, community work. | Yes |  | * Application form * Interview | |
| **3. Professional experience – project management and partnership working** | Clearly demonstrate at least 1 year’s work experience and competence in all of the following areas:   1. Successfully managing and delivering a project and achieving results to meet outcomes; 2. Budgetary management, project administration, collating monitoring information, keeping records, and meeting project deadlines; 3. Development of successful working partnerships with a wide range of groups and individuals (e.g., landowners, government bodies, NGOs, academics, business and community groups). 4. Managing contractors/ agents/ advisers in relation to service delivery of a project. | Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes |  | * Application form * Interview | |
| **4.Technical skills and knowledge** | Be able to demonstrate competence in the application of Information Technology skills including use of the MS Office suite of applications comprising Word, PowerPoint and Excel, to have practised information security in a workplace environment and to be proficient in the use of email systems and managing mailing lists. | Yes |  | * Application form * Interview * Assessment | |
| **5. Logistics** | The post requires a full, current driving licence which enables you to drive in Northern Ireland and access to transport for business purposes which will enable the fulfilment of the requirements of the post. Note: Evening and weekend work may be required. | Yes |  | * Application form | |
| **6. Providing Leadership & Direction** | Be able to contribute to the development of a strategy and convey a clear vision by being innovative, ambitious and proactive’. Able to motivate others to achieve their objectives and organisational goals through involvement and providing feedback and support. | Yes |  | * Selection Interview |
| **7. Managing Ourselves** | Ability to plan, structure and prioritise own work to achieve optimum results. Looks for opportunities to learn and develop in order to deliver and add value to the own role. | Yes |  | * Selection Interview |
| **8. Partnership working** | Demonstrable experience in working with a range of stakeholders and community groups including delivering events for the public. | Yes |  | * Selection Interview |
| **9. Communication** | An ability to communicate effectively, both written and verbally – effective presentation skills, report writing skills and the ability to converse with a diverse range of people at all levels. | Yes |  | * Selection Interview |
| **10. Respect for Diversity and Equality** | Able to treat all individuals with respect, responding sensitively to differences and encouraging others to do likewise. Ensuring equality of opportunity for all. | Yes |  | * Selection Interview |
| **11. Problem solving ability** | Ability to find creative solutions to problems, to be influential and persuasive |  | Yes | * Selection Interview |
| **12.Experience of working in the third sector** | At least 2 years of experience working in voluntary/NGO sector – preferable in wildlife conservation |  | Yes | * Selection Interview |
| **13. Knowledge of the Northern Ireland landscape** | Applicants must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Northern Ireland countryside and landscape management |  | Yes | * Selection Interview |
| **14. Understanding of the issues facing NI Biodiversity** | Knowledge of the challenges and issues facing the biodiversity of NI, and a more specific understanding of the threats to amphibians and reptiles |  | Yes | * Selection Interview |

We are an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any person regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation or socioeconomic background who demonstrate that they meet the essential (i.e. minimum) criteria for a post.

\* In addition to initial assessment by way of application form, any of the means noted above may be implemented during selection

**About ARG UK**

Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK) is a registered charity (number 1165504) committed to the conservation of native amphibians and reptiles and their natural environment by supporting the development of a network of independent volunteer amphibian and reptile groups (ARGs).

**About Newry, Mourne and Down District Council**

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council/Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin (NMDDC) is a local authority in [Northern Ireland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Ireland) that was established on 1 April 2015.

**About The Herpetological Society of Ireland**

The Herpetological Society of Ireland is a voluntary organisation dedicated to advancement of herpetology in Ireland through education, outreach, and citizen science.