



Job Description

Marine Policy and Advocacy Officer

Job Title: Marine Policy and Advocacy Officer

Vacancy Type: Full time, 1-year, Fixed Term Contract with a three-month probationary period. Possibility of contract renewal subject to funding.

Place of Work: To be discussed. Possibility of working remotely and/or at BirdWatch Ireland offices.

Salary: €35,800 per annum

Contract Term : From start date for one year but with possibility of contract renewal subject to funding.

Hours: 35-hour week.

Reports to : Head of Advocacy

Closing date for applications: Monday August 7th at 5pm with interviews to be held soon after.

Start date: As soon as possible

About BirdWatch Ireland:

BirdWatch Ireland is Ireland's leading non-governmental organisation focused on the conservation of wild birds and other biodiversity. Through survey and monitoring, active on the ground conservation, advocacy and education and awareness raising, we are working to secure the futures of our Ireland's birds and the habitats they need to thrive. We work in partnership with a range of organisations to achieve our goals. Our advocacy team ensures that its messaging to politicians, government officials and the public is evidence-based and grounded in science and we work with our species and land management and monitoring teams to underpin this approach.

The Role

This role will allow the right person to engage deeply and significantly in campaigns to protect and restore our marine environment and ensure that it is healthy for seabirds in particular. We are offering a super opportunity to someone to work on three exciting marine focused projects as part of this one-year, full time contract (with the possibility of extension subject to funding). These projects all have both a national and international focus and will require collaboration, advocacy and campaigning with national and EU based non-governmental organisations.

The first project is advocacy and campaigning on the [Fair Seas campaign](#). BirdWatch Ireland is a founding member of this campaign to secure a well-protected, ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas (MPAs) in Ireland. The second is advocacy and campaigning with BirdLife Europe on wider national and European marine issues and the third is working with BirdLife International on advocacy and campaigning on the [NACES MPA campaign](#). NACES is an MPA in the North Atlantic which is hugely important for marine life and needs long term safeguards.

The person we are looking for

You will be passionate about nature and the protection and restoration of our marine environment in particular. You will have the ability to work with a wide range of partners and stakeholders and across different projects. You use initiative, think creatively, and are able to work independently and as part of a team. You are an excellent communicator and can present the evidence underpinning key messages. You have excellent time management and prioritisation skills as well as a high level of written and oral communications skills. The ability to respond appropriately and quickly to external events and demands, from media and the political system, while maintaining organisational priorities and goals will be all part of the post. Can travel nationally and internationally.

Responsibilities and Accountabilities

A detailed programme of work will be agreed with the successful candidate at the outset. Key tasks are

- Working closely with project partners, lead on the delivery of the contracted requirements of the marine advocacy and campaigning projects for BirdWatch Ireland.
- Communicate and advocate key messages and positions with a range of stakeholders including BirdWatch Ireland members, the public, decision makers (e.g. public political representatives at local, national and at European level), government officials, sectoral stakeholders using a range of communication methods, and building alliances where appropriate.
- Organise and deliver campaign activities and events including workshops and briefings
- Represent BirdWatch Ireland at relevant government consultative committees
- Using research skills and scientific assessment abilities, collate evidence and scientific information to develop policy positions and submission on a range of marine topics and communicate those.
- Engage with and integrate the expertise of others into the development of policy especially the BirdWatch Ireland conservation and surveys and monitoring teams.
- Keep close track of campaign activities, ensuring that deliverables are met on time according to milestones and report back to line manager, project partners, funders, the wider BirdWatch Ireland team and others.
- Writing reports, news items and articles to funders, members of BirdWatch Ireland and wider stakeholders.
- Monitor developments in the fast-moving marine governance space and stay on top of issues of importance to the projects and to BirdWatch Ireland.
- Participate in wider BirdWatch Ireland organisational activities and requirements.
- Active engagement on social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Any other tasks as requested by the line manager and as projects progress.

Person Specification - Essential Criteria

1. Relevant qualifications and experience

Applicants should have a relevant degree (e.g in the marine or a related environmental subject or political science). Work experience in environmental policy, advocacy, campaigning is also required and applicants should have at least 3 years' experience. We invite applicants to demonstrate specific achievements over this period of time.

Also desirable: More than 5 years' working experience.

2. Sound knowledge of marine environmental issues in Ireland.

Applicants should demonstrate sound knowledge and experience of the issues facing marine ecosystems and the wildlife they support including within an Irish context. In addition, demonstrable knowledge and application of knowledge in at least two of the following topics is required: marine policy and legislative framework, environmental assessment, climate change, offshore renewables, protected areas, fisheries.

Also desirable: Knowledge of birds especially seabirds and the ability to understand and explain relevant data.

3. Excellent communication skills and expertise in communicating with a range of audiences.

Applicants must be able to communicate well both in writing and verbally to a range of audiences and assess the success of these. Applicants will have experience of engaging with a range of stakeholders including the general public, sectoral interests, politicians, agency and departmental staff and through different media including social media. Experience with organising events including workshops is also relevant.

Also desirable: Experience of developing positive working relationships with other sectors and stakeholders. Experience with using and developing a range of campaigning software tools (eg Canva).

4. Experience of initiating, managing and delivering evidence-based policy work.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate the ability to research key issues underpinned by the science and to inform policy objectives and advocacy messages including written submissions to public consultations, policy positions.

Also desirable: Demonstration that previous policy research has resulted in desired outcomes.

5. Excellent project management skills

Applicants must be able to show experience as an excellent project manager, meeting deadlines and ensuring deliverables are met on time and to the required standard to our funders. Tracking of deliverables and good report writing will be required. Excellent time management skills are critical in this regard.

Also desirable: Experience with writing successful funding proposals.

6. Self-starter but with excellent team working abilities and who works well with stakeholders.

Applicants must be self-motivated, able to work independently but critically must also be able to demonstrate ability to work well, collegiately and constructively within diverse teams and with stakeholders.

How to apply

1. Please complete the application form linked here. *Do not send a CV as only the official application form will be assessed.*
2. Please also write a cover letter saying why you are the most suitable person for the job.
3. Please put your 'first name, last name, marine officer' in the title of the application form **AND** cover letter.
4. Completed application forms and letters should be sent by email with subject line **Marine Officer Vacancy** to Linda Lennon CEO of BirdWatch Ireland, llennon@birdwatchireland.ie

Closing date for applications: Monday August 7th 2023 at 5pm