

Sustainable Water Network (SWAN) Job Description

Job Title: Network, Administration & Policy Support Officer

Responsible To: Sustainable Water Network (SWAN) Coordinator: Sinead O'Brien

Job Location: SWAN offices, 9 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2

Introduction to SWAN:

The Sustainable Water Network (SWAN) is an umbrella network of twenty five of Ireland's leading environmental groups working together to protect Ireland's waters by participating in the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and other water-related legislation. SWAN comprises both national and local groups, representing a vast range of specialist and local knowledge and expertise in all areas of Ireland's aquatic environment. The aim of SWAN is to protect and enhance the quality of Ireland's waters and to promote the ecologically sustainable management of all Ireland's aquatic resources through the active involvement of environmental non-governmental organisations (eNGOs) in the full implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The formation of this network is a significant milestone on the path to real protection for our rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal and ground waters.

Role of SWAN Office:

The role of the SWAN office is to co-ordinate and support the activities of our member organisations in meeting the aims of SWAN and also to act as a liaison point between the environmental NGO sector (SWAN member organisations) and public authorities, including the EPA, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Local Authorities and River Basin District Project Offices. The office is also a contact point between the Network and European NGO partners (primarily the European Environment Bureau (EEB)) and the European Commission.

Role of Network, Administrative & Policy Support Officer

The role of the Network, Administration & Policy Officer is to assist the SWAN Coordinator in ensuring the smooth running of the SWAN office; to provide support to our member organisations; to facilitate smooth and effective communication amongst member organisations and between member organisations and other bodies; to assist with the delivery of advocacy plans and to administer and assist with policy research projects. It will be necessary to work closely with and share tasks with the current part-time Network & Administrative Support Officer. This is by nature a very varied role, which requires a high level of versatility and the ability to multi-task and prioritise a heavy workload. Good knowledge of the ENGO sector and Water policy in Ireland is an advantage. Activities will include, but are not limited to:

Network Support and Policy

- SWAN member co-ordination and support by responding to email and telephone enquiries from member organisations
- Maintaining and updating a database of SWAN member organisations and developing a database of other relevant organisations and contacts
- Assisting with the development of policy material
- Coordinating and providing the secretariat for SWAN's advocacy/policy research activities
- Notation, recording and distribution of meeting minutes.

Meeting and Conference Organisation

- Liaising with SWAN members and the SWAN facilitator regarding availability for attendance
- Supporting SWAN members with individual requests
- Liaising with venues; confirmation of final numbers, booking meals/tea/coffee/specialist
- Equipment hire etc.

IT/Communications

- Acting as the point of contact for suppliers for all IT and communication issues
- Carrying out general IT tasks within the office
- Ensuring that telephone, email and web communication systems are functioning correctly
- Updating the SWAN website regularly and moderating the online SWAN discussion forum

Facilities

- Maintaining office stationary and other supplies
- Coordinating services (maintenance visits, dealing with suppliers)
- Ensuring the office and facilities are tidy, clean and in working order

General

- First point of contact within the office and incoming calls and reception
- Responding to email queries
- Liaising with the SWAN Network and Administrative Support officer in relation to maintaining a record of ongoing expenditure
- Writing and recording of cheques and filing of invoices
- Report writing
- Management of post
- Photocopying, collation and distribution of documents
- Assisting in the collating of information and desk research
- General administrative support for the SWAN Coordinator
- Any other duty that is reasonably requested by the SWAN Coordinator and/or the Board

Personal Specification

Skills/Attributes and Experience

- Previous experience in an administrative role (essential)
- Experience of working in the not for profit / NGO sector (desirable)
- Knowledge and/or experience in policy analysis and advocacy
- Demonstrable understanding of water policy issues and challenges facing Ireland.
- Excellent spoken and written English
- Diplomacy, tact and excellent team working.
- Computer literate including Microsoft Office suite. Experience with basic web software (basic training will be given).
- Ability to manage databases and familiarity with GIS (desirable)
- Ability to work on own initiative
- Ability to adapt and respond to diverse needs for member organisations (essential)
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills (essential)
- Excellent organisational skills and the ability to prioritise work effectively in an environment that can sometime be pressurised (essential)
- Empathy with the work and aims of SWAN
- Commitment to environmental protection

Education/Qualifications

- Third level qualification in environmental science, sustainable development, geography, biology or other relevant area or
- Third level qualification in political /social science or public/business administration or
- Equivalent experience

Duration

This post is offered on an initial 6 month contract, 3 days per week, subject to satisfactory references and completion of a three-month probationary period, contingent on funding. There is the possibility of an additional day and/or contract extension again contingent on funding.

Opportunities

The varied nature of this role makes it an excellent starting point for anyone wishing to gain experience in the environmental NGO sector and in Irish environmental policy, in particular in the area of water policy.

Salary

The salary will be negotiable, depending on experience.

Holiday Entitlement

The holiday entitlement is 20 days per year, pro rata, plus 9 bank holidays and Good Friday

Working Arrangements

Your working week will be 9.30am- 5.30pm Monday, Thursday and Friday. One hour is allocated for lunch of which the company pays for 30 minutes. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required for which time in lieu will be given. The timing of this will be at the discretion of the Coordinator. Some flexibility regarding the 3 allocated working days may also be required occasionally.

Applications

If you are interested in applying for this post please contact Sinead O'Brien, Coordinator at sobrien@swanireland.ie to request an application form and return this completed, accompanied by your C.V., to sobrien@swanireland.ie.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 5.00 p.m. on Friday 20th January 2012.

SWAN is a network of non government organisations, with many of its associated members working on a voluntary basis. It is the ethos of SWAN that this voluntary commitment to the environment is highly valued and that, for paid staff, a harmonious work/life balance is achieved and personal and professional development is encouraged and supported.

We value the commitment and support from employees in helping us to embrace this ethos.