**Communications and Media Manager**

**Job description**

Contract: Full time. 3 years with potential for extension to permanent post

Salary: £30,000 - 40,000 p/a.

Location: Oxford office and/or homeworking

Responsible to: Freshwater Habitats Trust CEO

Responsible for: Delivery of FHT communications programme

Closing date: Tuesday 4th January 2022

Interviews: Wednesday 12th January 2022

**Background**

Freshwater Habitats Trust is a friendly and ambitious conservation charity which works to protect UK and European freshwater biodiversity through practical, evidence-based and innovative nature conservation projects. Our work is focused on the protection of freshwater wildlife, which is perhaps the most threatened part of the natural world. Protecting freshwater habitats has recently been identified as a strategic priority in the UK by the Climate Change Committee.

Our organisation is well-respected nationally and internationally, working with a network of UK-based partners in the public, private and NGO sectors, and internationally with the European Pond Conservation Network and others. We are launching a new strategy in spring 2022 which will provide a unique opportunity to make an impact in stopping and reversing the decline of freshwater wildlife, implementing an evidence-based programme that puts into practice some of the most effective and achievable solutions to the freshwater biodiversity crisis.

**Role**

The Communications and Media Manager will play a major role in promoting the evidence, experience and activities of Freshwater Habitats Trust to raise awareness of our work with key audiences, especially the media, legislators, policy makers, funders and our wide range of external partners.

The post-holder will be responsible for getting key messages from our work (e.g. importance of clean water, the critical and underplayed value of small waters, the need to focus on freshwater biodiversity through protection of Important Freshwater Areas) into national, regional and trade media.

You will also be in charge of our website and driving all our social media (in particular Twitter, Facebook and Instagram), stakeholder communications, including our newsletter, and creating branding collateral.

Overall, your work will be closely focused on delivering the main messages from our new Organisational Strategy, working closely with FHT’s CEO and senior FHT staff to implement the communications programme to achieve this outcome. A substantial part of the role (c 2 days/week) will also be specifically allocated to running the Communications programme of PONDERFUL, a current EU HORIZON 2020 project which continues until 2024. This ground-breaking project seeks to demonstrate the important role of ponds as Nature-based Solutions (NBS) for climate change adaptation.

As our organisation expands you will also be responsible for ensuring that internal communications adapts and develops to ensure that staff and trustees are well-informed about the wide range of technical, practical and policy work we are undertaking.

**Key responsibilities**

You will be responsible for development and delivery of our Communication programme. For this you will need to:

* Media:-
  + Generate coverage of our work in national, regional and trade media by building on our reputation for evidence-based work
  + Proactively establish and develop relationships with key journalists outlets (e.g. BBC, Guardian, Telegraph, Times, Springwatch and Countryfile) and provide relevant stories that get our key messages across
  + Prepare communications materials, including press releases, press packs, video, blog posts and social media to enable media outlets to easily take up FHT’s work
  + Support staff with preparation and interviews and help them to become more comfortable dealing with the media
  + Be first point of contact responding to media enquiries
* Stakeholders:-
  + Increase awareness of our work amongst key audiences, particularly focusing on legislators, policy makers, funders and our key stakeholders in the freshwater science community
  + Work with Pan-European partners to deliver the communications work package for PONDERFUL, an EU Horizon 2020 project
  + Support FHT staff in the creation and implementation of communication plans for individual projects
* Social media and online presence:-
  + Manage all FHT social media accounts and the FHT website, ensuring that all communications material aligns with our brand, including tracking analytics and reporting on successes and failures of communications campaigns
  + Work with our Administration support staff to manage our responses to the public who have a considerable interest in ponds but generally have quite low level questions (Why does my pond not have Common Frogs? Is it bad to fill my pond with tap water?)
* Internal comms:-
  + Develop our internal communications, particularly between staff and Trustees

**Additional general responsibilities for the post holder**

* Work closely and constructively with your line manager in all areas of your responsibility
* Undertake other duties as the senior management team may from time to time require
* Help to build a positive relationship between Freshwater Habitats Trust and its partners.
* Understand and follow Freshwater Habitats Trust’s internal procedures including Health and Safety, information management systems, site protocols etc.

**Competencies**

**Qualifications**

* Degree or equivalent in a relevant subject.

**Knowledge and experience**

We are interested in interviewing candidates with strong technical or scientific skills who wish to transition to a communications role OR candidates with a communication or journalism background who wish to develop a technical specialism in one of the highest profile areas of nature conservation. You should also have:

* Demonstrable experience of placing stories in the media, or membership of a team that has successfully placed national or major regional stories
* Experience of developing and implementing communications plans or strategies
* Proven ability to communicate effectively and persuasively, achieving substantial, evidenced, outreach to target audiences
* Understanding of communications and public relations best practices
* Strong analytical skills
* Excellent organisational skills
* Excellent writing skills and ability to compose engaging and accurate content
* Computer literate: Word, Excel, database use and management, and website management tools.

Candidates able to show evidence of substantial development of a social media profile for an organisation would be at an advantage, but this is not essential.

**Personal qualities**

* Ability to manage workload and meet internal deadlines through effective forward planning
* Team orientated and comfortable working with a wide range of partners
* Good verbal and written communication skills
* Good interpersonal skills - approachable, professional and courteous
* Attention to detail and able to deliver on time
* Ability to work independently and as part of a team.