



## Job Description - Policy Officer

**General Purpose:** Advocating for the conservation of birds, their habitats and wider biodiversity in Ireland is a very important part of the work of BirdWatch Ireland. The organisation is seeking a suitably experienced person to join the policy and advocacy team to further this work. **This position is for 3 days per week for 6 months with a view to extending the position following successful review and subject to funding. The salary will be attractive and commensurate with experience.**

**Reports to:** Head of Policy, Communications and People Engagement

**Line manages:** Contract staff and volunteers

**Team:** Working with all staff, branches and volunteers for BirdWatch Ireland, and specifically as part of the Policy, Communications and People Engagement Division.

### **Main responsibilities will include:**

1. Developing BirdWatch Ireland's position on environmental issues by working with BirdWatch Ireland staff and BirdLife International.
2. Inputting to national and EU policy development and implementation through casework, policy submissions and the work of BirdLife International.
3. Working with other NGOs to pursue joint policy objectives and developing partnerships with other sectors and institutions, as well as government agencies and departments in order to implement policy changes.
4. Implementing a programme of national advocacy that feeds into the wider advocacy programme of the team.
5. Delivering a range of projects that promote and progress BirdWatch Ireland's Policy objectives and work programmes and contribute to the delivery of its 2015-2020 Vision Strategy.
6. Communicating key elements of the policy work of BirdWatch Ireland through social media and media relations.
7. Working with a range of stakeholders to facilitate the delivery of conservation actions for bird conservation.

### **Key tasks of the post include:**

1. Work with staff to identify and advocate key messages relating to policy areas including agriculture, marine, forestry, water, the wider countryside, and landscape connectivity as required through the team's work programme
2. Take a lead role in the areas of biodiversity policy, land-use change, planning related policy and wetlands as well as funding for nature.
3. Influence national and EU policy at a practical level through development of a programme of advocacy activities, casework and policy submissions and through the development of projects that are evidence-based.

4. Work with existing networks to develop expertise and joint approaches to progressing environmental issues. Typically working with other NGOs, and the Environmental Pillar and playing a key role along with other BirdWatch Ireland staff in the work of BirdLife International.
5. Work with BirdWatch Ireland's staff, board, branches, volunteers and members in communicating our key messages through campaigns, and similar related activities, that progress the work of the organisation.
6. Line management of temporary staff or volunteers as required for delivering the work programme.
7. Progressing specific actions required to ensure the delivery of bird conservation measures, including proactively engaging with a range of sectors.
8. Any other activities as may be reasonably required within the remit of the operation of BirdWatch Ireland and agreed through line management and a pre-determined work programme for the duration of the position.

### Person Specification

BirdWatch Ireland seeks a suitably experienced person who is highly motivated and has a range of skills and attributes to bring to BirdWatch Ireland and progress our work in the area of policy and advocacy.

#### Essential criteria

**1. In-depth knowledge and experience of environmental issues in Ireland is critical.** Applicants should have a detailed knowledge of a range of environmental and wildlife conservation issues, showing specialist expertise in an Irish context. Applicants should also have the experience to determine the implications of policy choices and decisions in relation to biodiversity. Particular expertise in biodiversity policy and legislation, land use change, planning-related policy and habitats of importance for Irish birds and the effectiveness of the Irish policy and legislative framework is required.

**Also desirable:** Particular expertise; wider countryside protection of birds, connectivity, agriculture, marine, wetlands, climate change and land use change. Experience of working with Irish legislation and policy.

**2. Expert knowledge and a background in conservation/ecology.** Applicants should have a degree in a related environmental area along with at least 3 year's experience working in the area of biodiversity policy, and be able to demonstrate specific achievements over this period of time.

**Also desirable:** More than 5 year's experience.

**3. Excellent communication skills and expertise in communicating complex concepts to a range of audiences.** Applicants should be able to demonstrate a range of communication tools and assess the success of these. The range of stakeholders previously engaged should include land managers, the general public, politicians, agency and departmental staff.

**Also desirable:** Experience of developing positive working relationships with key stakeholders in other sectors.

**4. Experience in developing project proposals and funding applications.** Applicants should be able to demonstrate a track record of successful and profitable funding bids, targeting the achievement of specific policy objectives.

**Also desirable:** Success in drawing on a wide range of funding sources.

**5. A track record of initiating, managing and delivering evidence-based policy work.**

Applicants should be able to demonstrate the delivery of strategically planned policy research that informs policy objectives and advocacy messages.

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

**6. Ability to lead policy work and draw on the expertise of others.**

Applicants should be able to demonstrate the ability to integrate the expertise of others into the development of policy.

**Also desirable:** Experience of both internal policy development and external policy development.

**7. Good team working, working with volunteers and stakeholders.**

Applicants should be able to demonstrate ability to work within a team and identify specific results of having done so.

**Also desirable:** Management of contract staff and volunteers.

**8. Strong negotiation and communication skills.**

Applicants should be able to demonstrate at least 3 years' experience with specific examples of negotiation challenges and successes; and have experience in the area of media and outreach work including the use of social media.

**Also desirable:** Greater than 2 years' experience of communicating complex issues to a range of audiences.

**How to apply**

**Please complete the application form available on the BirdWatch Ireland website. Please do not send CVs.** Applications should be sent by email to [humanresources@birdwatchireland.ie](mailto:humanresources@birdwatchireland.ie) (please put "Policy Officer Application" in the subject box) or by post to BirdWatch Ireland, Unit 20 Block D, Bullford Business Campus, Kilcoole, Co Wicklow.

**Closing date for applications: 5pm Monday 23rd January 2017**

**Interviews are likely to take place in the first of February with a view to starting as soon as possible.**

Any further queries regarding this post should be directed to Oonagh Duggan, Acting Head of Policy, Communications & People Engagement: [oduggan@birdwatchireland.ie](mailto:oduggan@birdwatchireland.ie)