



FINDHORN,  
NAIRN AND LOSSIE  
RIVERS TRUST

## Job specification

<b>Role</b>	Ecologist
<b>Reporting to</b>	Executive Director
<b>Salary and benefits</b>	Circa £32,000-£35,000 p.a. dependent on experience 25 days per annum paid leave plus statutory holidays 6% employer pension contribution An appropriate vehicle for work use, laptop and smartphone will be provided.
<b>Hours and term</b>	Full time, 35 hours per week (0.8 FTE may be possible subject to negotiation) Fixed term until 31st March 2026, including a 3-month probationary period. Contract extension subject to funding. The role will involve occasional work on evenings and weekends.
<b>Place of work</b>	The role will be based at the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust office, Logie Steading, Dunphail, Moray, IV36 2QN, although we offer a hybrid, flexible working approach.  Due to the nature of the role the candidate must be based in or nearby to the River Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie catchment areas.
<b>Start date</b>	March 2025 – to be discussed with selected candidate.

### Background

The Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust (FNLRT) is a place-based nature restoration organisation, uniquely positioned to play a key role in improving local resilience in the face of the nature and climate emergencies.

We work at a catchment-scale, and in partnership with landowners and land managers, our local communities and businesses, blending sources of funding and delivering action to protect and restore our rivers, their watersheds, and the wildlife which inhabits them.

The aims of the FNLRT are:

- To restore resilient habitats and biodiversity in our rivers and their watersheds
- To foster pro-nature behaviour changes amongst the people who live and work in our catchment areas
- To ensure the River Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie watersheds serve as climate and biodiversity strongholds for generations to come

The Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust has been undergoing an evolution as an organisation since publishing its [2021-26 Management Plan](#). Building on our reputation as a trusted local conservation organisation and the success of the [‘SISI’ invasive non-native species control project](#), in 2022 FNLRT launched the [Findhorn Watershed Initiative](#) – a multi-generational vision and landscape-scale partnership to restore a mosaic of nature rich habitats, grow a local culture of nature connection and enable a thriving nature-based economy for the people and places of the Findhorn watershed, from the Monadhliath Mountains to the Moray Firth. The Initiative has quickly become appreciated as one of the most exciting and ambitious landscape restoration projects in Scotland.

With the retirement of FNLRT’s longstanding Director/Biologist in April, and the appointment of our new Executive Director, an exciting opportunity has arisen to establish a full time Ecologist role for the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust (FNLRT), who will operate across the catchments of the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers and their associated tributaries.

### **Purpose of this role**

The FNLRT are looking for an ambitious and innovative Ecologist to join our small but growing team, who will take the lead on delivering a range of habitat and species assessments throughout our three catchment areas, including fish and freshwater wildlife population and habitat surveys, environmental monitoring, non-native species monitoring, tree and plant surveys, bird surveys and wide range of other research activities as they arise.

The successful candidate will play a key role in facilitation of a range of highly ambitious, landscape-scale restoration schemes, through the provision of end-to-end ecological support to both our charitable programmes and our expanding portfolio of commercial based activities. The role will be varied, somewhat seasonal, and above all else, highly rewarding. The candidate will be actively using their expertise to support and drive forward multiple work streams across the organisation.

Experience in field data collection is essential and an ability to encourage and guide a team is also required. Some experience in river and fisheries monitoring is desirable but full training will be given.

To achieve its work, the FNLRT works closely with the District Salmon Fishery Boards (DSFBs) for each river, landowners, land managers, and other relevant organisations, and as such the role will also include interface with the DSFBs, and their staff, and other key stakeholders.

## **Responsibilities and Duties**

### **Ecological services**

- Undertake a range of seasonal habitat surveys, research and monitoring duties, including electrofishing, water quality, INNs management, freshwater invertebrate sampling, seedling surveys
- Provide specialist advice to aid decision making when delivering habitat creation and management schemes, collaborating with wider FNLRT team and relevant stakeholders to ensure we make the right decisions in the right places
- Prepare high quality, professional reports, and accompanying spatial maps
- Produce site appropriate habitat creation and management plans which consider the wider landscape, its pressures, and the opportunities available to build biodiverse, resilient catchments
- Design and implement robust and replicable monitoring programs to demonstrate the impact of our work
- Provide advice on fish populations, disease, and water quality
- Provide support and guidance on fish predator management, including; data collection and analysis, submission of annual license applications, and oversight on Acoustic Deterrent Device (ADD) measures

### **Project and team support**

- Prepare responses to proposed development applications and consultations, and oversee development works as required
- Prepare grant applications and competitive tenders for projects involving ecology workstreams, in collaboration with wider FNLRT team
- Support development of ecology content to feed into relevant communications materials
- Provide GIS mapping support for wider team
- Implement health and safety responsibilities and complete risk assessments as necessary

### **Stakeholder engagement**

- Proactively work to establish strong working relationships with our stakeholders, partners and clients, and help to establish FNLRT as the 'go-to' local conservation organisation
- Develop, coordinate and deliver ecology-related activities with members of the general public, volunteers, and school groups

- Represent FNLRT with key stakeholders such as with Fisheries Management Scotland and its membership, Scottish Government’s Marine Directorate, NatureScot, SEPA, local authorities, and local educational institutions
- Report to the Findhorn and Lossie District Salmon Fisheries Boards 3 times annually

### Person Specification

The post holder is required to have a minimum of a degree or equivalent in a biological or environmental science and preferably hold a post-graduate qualification. They must have a minimum of two years' experience of working in a similar field and demonstrate practical research skills. The post holder will be able to work alone and within a small team, often in remote locations and show evidence of self-motivation and have a positive proactive attitude.

Qualifications, Skills and Experience	Essential	Desirable
Qualification to degree level or equivalent in a relevant biological or environmental discipline	✓	
Understanding of rivers and catchment issues	✓	
Demonstrated ability to understand, design, organise and instigate scientifically robust programmes of work, surveys etc	✓	
Demonstrated experience in scientific report writing	✓	
Excellent ability to engage with and disseminate scientific information to a non-technical audience	✓	
Exceptional listening, presenting and communication skills, with a proven ability to influence multiple stakeholders	✓	
Excellent interpersonal skills, and ability to build and maintain relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders	✓	
Excellent organisational, time management, and prioritisation skills, with the ability to take initiative and work to a high standard without close supervision where required towards tight deadlines	✓	
Ability to work well both individually and as part of our small team	✓	
Willingness to work outdoors in all weathers and remote locations	✓	
Positive, self-motivated, can do attitude, with willingness and flexibility to chip in as required amongst a small team	✓	
Working knowledge of Health & Safety at work and preparation of risk assessments	✓	
Experience using GIS mapping software (FNLRT uses ArcGIS)	✓	

Full, current and clean UK driving license	✓	
Experience with electrofishing surveys, fish monitoring, fish rescue (training can be provided if required)		✓
Habitat and/or species survey qualifications and experience (eg. Freshwater Mammals, Pearl Mussels and Invertebrates, Bird surveys, Seedling surveys and Habitat Impact Assessments (HIA))		✓
Experience with invasive non-native species management, such as treatment of Hogweed and Knotweed		✓
Interest or experience with coastal habitats such as Seagrass and Saltmarsh		✓
Working understanding of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)		✓
Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) qualification		✓

### Key Liaisons

The Ecologist will report to the Executive Director, who is answerable to the Board of the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust. They will also work closely with the Findhorn Watershed Initiative Project Officer and the SISI Project Officer.

In addition, the role will involve supporting and reporting to the Findhorn and Lossie District Salmon Fisheries Boards (DSFBs) and working alongside the DSFB Fisheries Officers.

The role will be responsible for managing seasonal and/or voluntary staff as and when required, as well as being involved in delivering workshops as part of our community engagement programme with local stakeholders.

Please note that as this position may involve working with children, any job offer will be subject to meeting the requirements of the Disclosure Scotland Act.

### Location

The FNLRT is based at [The Steading on Logie Estate](#), alongside a popular café, farm shop as well as other local organisations and businesses including the local Development Trust. Our offices are just a few minutes walk from a magnificent stretch of the lower River Findhorn.

All three of the catchments we work within encompass a range of inspiring landscapes; from the wild and beautiful rivers themselves, to the beaches and cliffs of the coastline, woodlands and forests of the lower catchments, and peatlands and hills of the uplands. We border with the Ness catchment to the west, and the Spey to the south and east, and are located right on the edge of the Cairngorms National

Park. If you enjoy outdoor pursuits and wild places, this part of the NE of Scotland is a really special area in which to live and to work.

Our offices are located about 45 minutes from the city of Inverness and the airport. It takes 1 hour to travel into the Cairngorms, and 2 hours to travel to west coast locations such as Ullapool or Torridon. We are 3.5 hours from Edinburgh and Glasgow.

### **To Apply**

Please submit a CV and covering letter detailing how you fit the role to [admin@fnlirt.org.uk](mailto:admin@fnlirt.org.uk), including your name in the email subject line.

- Your CV should be no longer than 2 sides of A4 paper and should present all your relevant work history, education and training.
- Your cover letter should be no longer than 2 sides of A4 paper and should summarise how your skills and experiences enable you to meet the requirements of this position, set out in the Role Responsibilities & Duties and Person Specification sections of this job specification.

Closing date for applications: **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 17:00**

Interviews: **Interviews will be held w/c 3<sup>rd</sup> February**, either in person at our offices at Logie Steading or online via Teams or Zoom, as appropriate.

We will respond to all applicants with an email to confirm receipt. Unfortunately, we cannot offer feedback for candidates who do not reach the interview stage.

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*The Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust is committed to equality of opportunity for all and we make recruitment decisions by matching our organisations needs with the skills and experience of candidates irrespective of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, and marriage or civil partnership.*