



Chief Operating Officer (COO) Newt Conservation Partnership Job Description

Contract Type: Permanent (six-month probation period)

Hours: Full-time or Part-time (0.8 FTE)

Location: Office or remote with some travel (Central England)

Salary: £40,000- £50,000

Reports to: NCP Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Dr Pascale Nicolet

Role

The Chief Operating Officer is an important new role for the Newt Conservation Partnership (NCP) to ensure we achieve our ambitions over the coming years by focusing on delivering high quality information, governance, and business and finance insights to the CEO and the Board to inform decision-making.

The organisation is going through another period of growth, and we need to ensure the organisational finance and operations are fit for purpose and continuously improved. The COO will play a key part in implementing the organisation's strategy, ensuring financial sustainability, and the efficient operation of all business functions. The post holder will need to work closely with the CEO, Board and external partners to fulfil NCP's mission. The COO will also be responsible for managing the NCP Operations Team, and providing support and leadership insight to Team Leads in the organisation.

The role is a secondment from Freshwater Habitats Trust to NCP, reporting to the NCP CEO, Dr Pascale Nicolet, who is also a Technical Director and member of Freshwater Habitats Trust's Senior Management Team.

Newt Conservation Partnership

Newt Conservation Partnership (NCP) is a community benefit society whose main purpose is creating and managing high quality habitat for great crested newts for the NatureSpace schemes, including District Licensing and organisational licences for large infrastructure organisations. The schemes are an alternative to traditional licensing to address the impacts of development on great crested newt populations via Natural England. The District Licensing scheme now operates in eleven counties, and we have a national remit for the Network Rail scheme.



NCP identifies compensation sites and works in collaboration with landowners so that ponds and terrestrial features can be securely managed and monitored for 25 years. The new habitat we create or restore also benefits other plants and animals, both terrestrial and aquatic.

NCP is also a Responsible Body for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as of November 2024, and we are developing a new work stream to deliver BNG units, again via NatureSpace, who act as brokers for developers.

NatureSpace provides funding from developer fees for the delivery and monitoring of all compensation sites in line with development impacts, and for BNG units. All the schemes NCP works on are regulated by Natural England.

We work closely with our key partners Amphibian and Reptile Conservation and Freshwater Habitats Trust.

Find out more about NCP: www.newtpartnership.org.uk

Our Partners

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) is the leading independent non-governmental organisation taking forward the conservation of amphibians and reptiles. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation believes that nature conservation and people are intrinsically linked and will inspire and encourage wide support and involvement. It does this through managing a suite of nature reserves, taking forward national recovery programmes and local projects, being active in advocacy and leading on monitoring and survey programmes. www.arc-trust.org

Freshwater Habitats Trust (FHT) is an ambitious national conservation charity, which works to protect freshwater wildlife through practical, evidence-based and innovative nature conservation projects. Our organisation is well respected nationally and internationally, working with a network of UK-based partners, the Wildlife and Countryside Link organisations, and the European Pond Conservation Network. www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk

NatureSpace Partnership (NSP)

Together ARC and FHT work to enable NCP to deliver compensation habitat creation, monitoring and management for NatureSpace great crested newt compensation schemes. Since 2018, hundreds of developers have been approved to use the local planning authorities' District Licences – meaning over £6.2 million has been put directly into creating or restoring hundreds of clean water ponds and terrestrial habitat. www.naturespaceuk.com



Key Responsibilities / Activities

Strategic Leadership & Planning

- Serve as a key member of the leadership team (Board members and CEO), actively contributing to the development of NCP's business and conservation strategy.
- Drive and implement the effective delivery of NCP's strategy.
- Develop and maintain organisational performance metrics to track progress against key objectives (financial and operational), inform strategic decision-making, and ensure a long-term forward-looking assessment of performance.
- Advise the Board and Leadership team on all matters relating to financial and operational performance, in terms of risk and compliance.

Financial Support

- Design and implement financial and operational plans, policies and procedures ensuring alignment with regulatory requirements, our mission and values, and best practice.
- Drive a culture of strong financial control and accountability, ensuring compliance with all relevant accounting standards and internal control procedures.
- Provide rigorous cost analysis and advise on ways in which we can achieve greater value for money through better procurement, more effective practices, better use of technology, and greater innovation.
- Oversee the financial translation of our overall strategy through the preparation of annual budgets, monthly management accounts and monthly forecasting.
- Lead the annual financial audit process, preparing the financial statements in line with SORPs, and ensuring timely and accurate reporting to stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, NatureSpace (our funder) and our external auditors.
- Manage NCP's investments and financial reserves ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the organisation, in line with agreed policies and principles.
- Provide financial guidance and support to the CEO and the Board, presenting financial information clearly and concisely.

Operational management

- Provide leadership and direction through the line management of the operations team and foster a culture of collaboration, high performance, and continuous improvement.
- Oversee all aspects of NCP's day-to-day operations (Finance, Communications, HR, IT, Data, Administration, reporting to the regulator) ensuring efficiency, accuracy, effectiveness, and alignment with our strategic goals.
- Take responsibility for IT for the organisation, ensuring we optimise our resources and technology as effectively as possible.



- Develop and implement strong people management practices and policies, ensuring compliance with employment law, promoting a positive and supportive work environment.
- Oversee the management of all outsourced functions, including our HR, IT, and legal services, ensuring the delivery of high-quality, cost-effective support while achieving excellent value for money.
- Review and update business procedures and processes fostering a culture of continuous business improvement.
- Maintain ongoing liaison with our key partners to ensure good communication and partnership working (NatureSpace, FHT, ARC, Natural England).
- Provide the CEO with regular, written updates on the different COO work streams and progress.
- Represent NCP at partner meetings as and when required.

Governance

- Manage and coordinate the Board meetings.
- Prepare and present regular reports to the Board and the CEO on financial performance, operational efficiency, risk management, and compliance matters.
- Act as company secretary and ensure compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements human resources, Health & Safety, and data protection laws.
- Maintain and develop our risk management framework, identifying, assessing, and mitigating key internal and external risks.
- Maintain liaison with our funder, NatureSpace, and ensure legal compliance of NCP's activities with great crested newt organisational licence requirements.
- Report on and oversee cyber security.

General

- Ensure a good understanding of NCP's strategy and that you represent the views of the organisation in your work.
- Seek to improve your knowledge and understanding of best practice and evidence on relevant conservation issues.
- Be responsible for your own health and safety at work.
- Contribute positively at meetings and to the maintenance of a constructive working environment.
- Undertake other duties your line manager may from time to time require.



Person specifications

Essential experience/skills

- At least a degree in a relevant subject (at least 2:1 in business, management, environmental sciences, administration) or equivalent experience.
- Experience of operations and business management in a small-medium sized organisation, ideally in the NGO sector, or equivalent experience.
- Demonstrated experience of developing and implementing financial strategies, managing budgets, and overseeing financial reporting and audit processes.
- Experience leading and managing teams, fostering a culture of collaboration, high performance, and accountability.
- Organised, methodical and conscientious: able to juggle and prioritise multiple workstreams, challenges, and tasks.
- An ability to work as a friendly and constructive member of a team, working toward common goals to deliver high quality conservation projects.
- Excellent IT skills including MS Office suite.
- Full current driving licence.

Desirable experience/skills

- Experience of successfully introducing innovation to improve efficiency and productivity.
- Experience of designing and maintaining effective methods of capturing accurate performance data.
- Understanding of the UK environmental sector and the roles that government and non-government organisations play.
- Understanding of the regulatory procedures underpinning species conservation, and in particular how they apply to great crested newts.
- Interest in wildlife conservation and nature restoration.

Personal qualities

- Strong strategic thinking and planning skills, with the ability to translate organisational vision into operational plans.



- Strong people manager and team builder with a collaborative approach to management, enabling staff to grow and participate in the development of the organisation.
- Exceptional financial acumen, including knowledge of accounting principles, financial modelling techniques, and risk management best practices.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to build relationships, influence stakeholders, and present complex information clearly and concisely to diverse audiences.
- Ability to work and manage time independently.
- Team orientated and comfortable working with a wide range of partners.
- Attention to detail and able to deliver on time.

What we have to offer

We value employees' unique views and encourage them to develop their interests. Besides paying a competitive salary we also offer the following benefits:

- The option to work flexibly, hybrid or remote working
- 35-hour week
- 25 days of annual leave plus bank holidays
- Pension with 6% employer contribution
- Mobile phone allowance
- Working from home allowance
- Free eye tests
- Free Employee Assistance Program
- Mileage pay.