

Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland (ERCS) Rights Officer (part-time)

Job Description

Job title: Rights Officer
Salary: £28,500 (pro rata)
Hours: 28 hours per week (0.8 FTE)
Annual leave: 25 days annual leave plus 10 days statutory holiday (pro rata)
Contract type: Fixed term to October 2024 (subject to funding)
Location: Initially home working and thereafter hybrid working arrangements with office space in Edinburgh
Reports to: Chief Officer

Background on ERCS

The [Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland](#) (ERCS) was initiated by Scottish Environment LINK (LINK) and was registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC050257) in July 2020. ERCS's vision is of a Scotland where every person's right to live in a healthy environment is fully realised. Our mission is to assist members of the public and civil society to understand and exercise their rights in environmental law and to protect the environment. We have four work programmes to achieve this:

- public education to increase awareness of legal rights and remedies in environmental matters;
- advice, assistance and representation to improve public participation in environmental decision-making;
- advocacy in policy and law reform to improve environmental law and access to justice on the environment; and
- strategic public interest litigation to enforce progress on key environmental issues and tackle systemic environmental problems.

Our operating values and principles are to be:

- open, accessible and approachable in how we offer our services;
- respectful, collaborative and enabling in how we deliver our services;
- evidence-based and assertive in how we advocate for policy and law reform; and
- trusted and authoritative in how we pursue environmental rights and litigation.





Job Purpose

As the Rights Officer for the Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland (ERCS) your role is to lead our work to advance the human right to a healthy environment for equality groups through engagement, education and advice. This project is funded by the Scottish Government's Equality and Human Rights Fund and is expected to deliver on specific outcomes.

The aims are to:

- increase awareness of equality groups on the human right to a healthy environment;
- build people's capacity to exercise their rights in relation to the environment; and
- inform the policy and practice of public bodies to advance environmental justice.

You will have a passion for supporting less often heard voices in decisions that affect them, and an understanding of and commitment to reducing the structural barriers to access to justice on the environment.

To achieve the aims of this project, you will outreach and collaborate with organisations who represent or support equality groups, particularly disabled people's organisations, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, Gypsy/Travellers, women and young people with protected characteristics.

Working collaboratively and using accessible methods you will deliver deliberative workshops, 'how to' guides, videos and podcasts to increase understanding and access to information on environmental rights. This will be in a way that is practical, meaningful and easily understood.

You will be friendly, approachable and professional. Through your one-to-one engagement with different communities of interest and place, you will also be able to support people to identify specific environmental concerns that can be referred to our In-house Solicitor for free legal advice. You will also lead on the development of an online forum to provide peer support, share learning and tips and tricks for better outcomes for people and the environment.

More broadly, you will contribute to the development and implementation of ERCS's overall organisational strategy and its advocacy to improve access to justice on the environment.





- Working with equality groups, identify common issues and barriers to exercising their environmental human rights and how to improve the policy and practice of public bodies.
- Contribute to the development of equality and human rights impact assessments in relation to the environment to improve the policy and practice of duty bearers.

External relations

ERCS works in partnership with statutory and non-statutory organisations to promote access to environmental justice in line with ERCS's mission and values

- Establish strong working relationships with organisations who represent or support equality groups to develop a shared understanding of environmental rights, build the capacity of rights holders to exercise their rights and encourage membership of ERCS to inform our work.
- Promote ERCS's Advice Service to networks and organisations who represent or support equality groups.
- Contribute to the development of ERCS's networks with allies across the public sector, human rights, and academic fields to embed environmental human rights across legislation, policy and practice.
- Represent ERCS in external forums as appropriate including participating and/or speaking at meetings, events, and conferences.
- Support the development of ERCS's website and social media presence to further ERCS's communications reach.

Governance and operations

ERCS delivers on its strategic and operational objectives

- Work collaboratively with colleagues and with the Board of Trustees to deliver ERCS's strategic plan and objectives.
- Support the Board of Trustees to perform its governance role by providing such information and advice as they may reasonably require, including statistical information and written reports.
- Ensure quality standards and monitoring and evaluation systems are maintained, managed and used for reflection and reporting, including to funders.
- Contribute to regular briefings to inform the public and civil society on developments in environmental law and ERCS's work.
- Attend team meetings and events as required.
- Contribute to the support and training of ERCS student placements/interns and volunteers.
- Carry out other duties consistent with the job purpose and as ERCS may reasonably require.



Person Specification

Essential

Knowledge including necessary qualifications

- Degree or degree-level experience in a relevant discipline and at least three years' work experience in a relevant role and organisation.
- A good understanding of the policy and legal landscape in relation to human rights and environmental law.
- Understanding of and commitment to reducing the structural barriers to access to justice on the environment.

Experience

- Working collaboratively with community organisations and the third sector representing or supporting one or more equality groups.
- Development and delivery of training, workshops and events for one or more equality groups in a related policy environment.
- Writing and publishing project reports, training tools and resources.
- Building effective professional relationships and working collaboratively with people and organisations across a wide variety of backgrounds.
- Facilitating work with people from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- Development and management of monitoring and evaluation systems.

Skills

- Ability and confidence to create and present dynamic and engaging public education and training materials.
- Excellent group work and facilitator skills.
- An effective communicator capable of delivering complex messages in an accessible manner to diverse audiences.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with experience of report writing, resource development and experience of engaging with a range of professionals.
- Ability to manage, prioritise and complete tasks and to maintain standards under pressure.
- Excellent IT skills including Microsoft Office 365, Power point and online meeting software such as Zoom and Teams.
- Excellent team-working skills and an understanding of disciplines including confidentiality, mutual briefing, and acting within limits of authority.
- Ability and enthusiasm to work creatively and independently with an appropriate amount of supervision.



Terms and conditions

This is a fixed term, part-time contract, subject to a six-month probation. Salary is £28,500 pro rata per annum. ERCS operates an auto-enrolment workplace pension scheme with the Nest Pension where ERCS makes an employer contribution to employee personal pensions of up to a maximum of 8% of basic salary, complementing employee contributions. If you are eligible to join, you will be auto enrolled from the start of your contract, you may still join if you are not eligible but would need to actively opt-in, full details are provided in the staff handbook. The pro rata leave quota is based on 25 days annual leave and 10 public holidays per annum. The appointee may work the 28 hours over five days. On occasion it may be necessary to work evenings or parts of weekends, for which time off in lieu will be granted. All approved expenses will be reimbursed.