

# Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland (ERCS) Policy and Advocacy Officer (full-time or part-time)

## Job Description

<b>Job title:</b>	Policy and Advocacy Officer
<b>Salary:</b>	£28,500 - £30,000 (pro rata)
<b>Hours:</b>	24 hours – 35 hours per week
<b>Annual leave:</b>	25 days annual leave plus 10 days statutory holiday (pro rata)
<b>Contract type:</b>	Permanent
<b>Location:</b>	Initially home working and thereafter hybrid working arrangements with office space in Edinburgh
<b>Reports to:</b>	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:

- 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 Policy and Advocacy Officer for the Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland (ERCS), your role is to develop and deliver ERCS's advocacy strategy to secure concrete progress on environmental rights in Scotland and reduce barriers to access to justice on the environment.

This includes shaping how the human right to a healthy environment is incorporated in the Human Rights (Scotland) Bill; advocating for full compliance with the Aarhus Convention on access to justice in environmental matters and a specialist environmental court; and lobbying to ensure robust environmental standards and protections.

More broadly, the Policy and Advocacy Officer will keep abreast of key political developments in relation to environmental rights, work across ERCS's programmes to develop policy positions and help communicate these to various audiences. They will build relationships within civil society and act as a point of access for Scottish Government, MSPs, decision-makers and other key stakeholders.



## Key responsibilities

### Advocacy in policy and law reform

***ERCS is recognised as the knowledge hub and expert in public interest environmental law – being a point of access for Scottish Government, Members of Scottish Parliament, decision-makers and other stakeholders.***

- Lead on ERCS's policy and advocacy strategy to develop and deliver on the organisation's strategic objectives.
- Work in collaboration with the environmental NGO (eNGO) sector to secure broad political support for the incorporation of the human right to a healthy environment in the Human Rights (Scotland) Bill, shape how the right is established and support its effective implementation.
- Develop and communicate ERCS's position on substantive and procedural environmental rights: producing briefings, website content and presenting to various audiences as appropriate.
- Identify risks and opportunities to advocate for policy and law reform in relation to environmental rights, particularly arising from the COVID-19 recovery, and relating to compliance with the Aarhus Convention and the potential for a specialist environmental court.
- Maintain a thorough grasp of political and policy developments in relation to the environment and environmental law in Scotland and an overview of relevant environmental legislation and case law developments.



- Contribute to Scottish Environment LINK's work on environmental governance and its advocacy strategy.
- Analyse and critically respond to policy consultations, parliamentary inquiries and other legal issues by working collaboratively with colleagues and the Advocacy Working Group.

## External relations

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

- Represent ERCS in external forums as appropriate to advance advocacy aims with audiences including officials, special advisors, researchers, media and other sectors.
- Work with LINK, its members and the wider eNGO sector to develop a shared understanding of environmental rights and promote ERCS's advocacy objectives.
- Support the development of ERCS's relationship and profile with Scotland's policy and decision-making community including MSPs, Scottish Government and political parties.
- Support the development of ERCS's connections within Scotland's environmental, human rights and legal communities, including NGOs, academia and duty-bearers to establish strong working relationships.
- Lead on the communication strategy for securing the advocacy objectives.

## 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 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

### 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.
- Working knowledge of Scottish and/or UK government and parliamentary institutions and structures.
- Demonstrable understanding of, and commitment to, environmental rights and justice.

### Experience

- Strong, practical experience of developing advocacy positions and strategy, and planning and delivering advocacy or campaigns projects.
- Experience of communications work, ideally including briefing journalists and developing content for online, social and traditional media.
- Experience of building effective professional relationships and working collaboratively, including within coalitions and informal alliances.
- Development and management of monitoring and evaluation systems.

### Skills

- Good analytical and research skills, with practical experience of these in relation to policy development, ideally in environmental policy and law.
- An effective communicator capable of delivering complex messages in an accessible and persuasive manner to diverse audiences, including oral presentation skills.
- Excellent writing skills, with experience of report writing and writing for diverse audiences.
- Ability to manage and prioritise within a large, diverse, and unpredictable workload and to maintain standards under pressure.
- Competent IT skills for this role 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 permanent contract, subject to a six-month probation. The hours for this contract can be between 24 and 35 per week and will be agreed on appointment. The salary will be between £28,500 and £30,000 pro rata per annum, depending on skills and experience.

The pro rata leave quota is based on 25 days annual leave and 10 public holidays per annum. There is flexibility over how the appointee will work their hours over five days. Flexibility for some evening or weekend work is important in this role, for which time off in lieu will be granted. All approved expenses will be reimbursed.

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.

