



Job Description Volunteering & Engagement Officer



Responsible for Developing and delivering a volunteer and community outreach programme to help people connect with their local river.

Location Hybrid work at home and in the office based in Leatherhead with travel across the South East, particularly South London, Surrey and Kent. Minimum twice monthly office attendance in addition to site visits and attendance at external meetings.

The role

SERT's ambition is to reach as many people as possible in the South East, to teach and show them the importance of rivers in the environment, and how everyone can play a part in restoring them. We also want to be more reflective of the diverse communities who live in the South East, and build partnerships within these communities to reach a broader audience.

This role will lead the development and delivery of volunteering and community outreach activities that connect people with their local rivers. Activities will include practical volunteering such as river clean-ups, planting days, and invasive species control, as well as citizen science, guided walks, and community workshops.

A key focus of the role is supporting the Chalk Streams in the City project—a major initiative to restore London's rare urban chalk streams through community involvement. The postholder will help shape and deliver a programme of inclusive and engaging opportunities that inspire people to care for these unique and threatened habitats.

This project is made possible with funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, with thanks to National Lottery players.

Key duties & responsibilities

Volunteer management and community outreach

- Design and deliver an annual programme of volunteering opportunities—including citizen science and practical river events—aligned with existing initiatives and in collaboration with partner organisations where appropriate.
- Coordinate the Trust's citizen science schemes: recruiting, training, and supporting volunteers to ensure high-quality data collection and engagement.
- Plan and run community outreach activities that connect people with rivers and raise awareness of their value, such as guided walks, talks, and hands-on workshops.
- Work with colleagues to co-ordinate corporate volunteering events, including responding to enquiries, planning logistics, and delivering high-quality experiences.
- Monitor and evaluate all volunteering and outreach activity, producing quarterly and ad hoc reports to meet internal needs and funder requirements.
- Gather and act on feedback from volunteers and participants to inform and improve the Trust's volunteering and outreach strategies.
- Uphold the health, safety, and wellbeing of all volunteers, following the Trust's Health & Safety policies and ensuring appropriate equipment and PPE are available and maintained.
- Support the Head of Department in reviewing and updating policies and procedures to ensure consistently high standards in volunteering and community outreach.
- Provide guidance and mentoring to Assistant Volunteer & Engagement Officers and other staff members where relevant.

Grow the Trust's volunteering and community outreach

- Collaborate closely with SERT's teams to identify opportunities and design high-quality, sustainable volunteering activities that support project goals and help achieve the Trust's targets.
- Proactively identify barriers to participation, especially among under-represented groups, and develop innovative, accessible volunteering opportunities to engage diverse new audiences.
- Champion the Trust's volunteering and event initiatives by promoting opportunities and relevant work through compelling articles, e-newsletters, media and social media outreach, public talks, and by representing or supporting Trust staff at various events.

Other

- Research and apply for grants and other funding for the Trust to support the continuation and expansion of its community engagement programme.
- Manage or support the management of projects at the Trust that involve volunteering and community outreach outputs, including budget management, project reporting and meetings.
- Other duties as may be appropriate for the position.

Person specification

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
Training & Experience		
Experience developing and delivering volunteering and community outreach programmes, working with diverse communities and leading public events.	✓	
Experience of delivering citizen science schemes.	✓	
Experience managing volunteers, including overseeing practical, outdoor work.	✓	
Proven experience in project management, including reporting, evaluation, budgets, and partnership working.		✓
Experience developing projects and applying for grant funding.		✓
Relevant qualifications for fieldwork and volunteer supervision (e.g. First Aid, water safety, brush cutting).		✓
Knowledge & Understanding		
Working knowledge of rivers and freshwater habitats.	✓	
Understanding of health & safety, safeguarding, and risk management in a volunteer/outdoor setting.	✓	
Awareness of engagement barriers for under-represented groups and approaches to widening participation.	✓	
Understanding of corporate engagement motivations.		✓
Familiarity with rivers in the South East.		✓
Skills & Personal Attributes		
Excellent communication, interpersonal and public engagement skills.	✓	
Strong organisational, planning and IT skills (including MS Office; Canva desirable).	✓	
Ability to inspire and support volunteers from a range of backgrounds.	✓	
Friendly, diplomatic, and confident engaging the public on environmental issues.	✓	
Miscellaneous		
Willingness to work some evenings and weekends, particularly April–September, with time off in lieu.	✓	
Full UK driving licence and a car suitable for work and willing to drive a van.	✓	
Suitable home working environment.	✓	