Nottingham Trent University

Research Assistant

School or Department: School of Science and Technology, Biosciences department

Grade & Salary: Grade E £28,063 - £30,185 per annum

Role Description:

The role will encompass all of the following, but the balance of duties and responsibilities will be determined in discussion with the post holder's line manager:

Subject Area

River Ecology

Project-specific information

Colleagues at Nottingham Trent University are collaborating with Freshwater Habitats Trust, Wessex Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency on this research project. We will assess the effects of restoration actions on the biodiversity and wider ecological quality of 'winterbourne' chalk streams, which shift between wet and dry conditions and thus support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The work is part of Headstart, an ambitious project that will drive nature recovery throughout river networks—by starting in the headwaters.

Our key goal is to assess the effectiveness of a restoration project underway in a Dorset winterbourne, in terms of benefits for both aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity and wider ecosystem quality. As such, our findings will provide evidence that informs the design of future restoration actions taken to support winterbourne biodiversity. As 'temporary' streams increase in extent due to global change, our research will also be relevant to ecologists.

As our Research Assistant, you will work alongside a Research Associate and our collaborators and under the supervision of Prof. Rachel Stubbington. You'll conduct a programme of fieldwork to survey river habitats and to sample aquatic and terrestrial invertebrate communities in a winterbourne stream. Your main role will be to process collected samples in the laboratory and to identify the invertebrates present. You will also have opportunities to contribute to the analysis and reporting of project results.

You will become part of our diverse research team, which includes professorial to undergraduate researchers who are investigating biodiversity responses to environmental variability in freshwater ecosystems.

The post involves trips to field sites in Dorset, England, with occasional overnight stays (travel, accommodation and subsistence costs will be covered). A full clean UK driving licence is desirable.

Other principal duties are on the next page.

Principal Duties

1) Assist with basic research on the 'Headstart' project investigating river restoration in 'winterbourne' chalk streams. This will involve risk-assessed fieldwork, laboratory work and other duties as detailed above.
2) Safely carry out research activity in line with defined research plan objectives, including recording results of own and team research where appropriate.
3) Demonstrate specific equipment/techniques if required.
4) Assist with the administration of any related research plans as necessary, ensuring records and files are kept up to date.
5) Identify and disseminate relevant information to the research team and communicate with internal and external contacts as appropriate.
6) Keep knowledge and skills up to date by engaging in internally and externally based core professional development.
7) Ensure all resources used are correctly recorded and documented, maintaining the integrity and accuracy of data collected in accordance with the project data management plan, and ensuring that any work areas are kept in good order. May be required to undertake testing and maintenance of equipment where relevant
8) Attend and contribute to meetings as appropriate.

N.B. The post-holder may be required to undertake any other duties which may reasonably be required as within the nature of the duties and responsibilities of the post as defined, subject to the proviso that normally any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the job description in specific terms.

Our Principles, Our Ways:

Our Ways represents a commitment to making a difference, taking bold steps, and maintaining moral standards. It's about proactively creating positive change while prioritising integrity and accountability in all our actions. We encourage colleagues to strive towards Our Ways with the following behaviours:

Our Ways		
We change lives.	**We are bold.**	**We do the right thing.**
Relationships with others	Adaptability	Planning and delivering work
Delivering through others	Problem solving	Accountability
	Developing yourself	

Personal Attributes:

Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge	An awareness of standard research techniques and methods within the subject area Thorough knowledge of relevant equipment & machinery for project work, including the ability to perform routine maintenance where appropriate Awareness of other equipment and machinery within the school where appropriate Expertise in relevant computer packages	An appreciation of the subject area in a Higher Education context
Skills	Bibliographic research skills (including use of electronic library resources) Ability to demonstrate specific equipment and techniques specifically related to the subject area if required Ability to collect and collate bibliographic and other information from academic staff and/or research students regarding their research and other related activities Ability to troubleshoot simple problems and escalate more complex problems which may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines	Systematic approach to managing information Ability to explain complex ideas clearly using simple language
Experience	Some experience of data collection, analysis and interpretation	Relevant work experience in an academic environment
Qualifications	A degree or relevant equivalent professional qualifications/work experience in relevant subject.	Relevant Postgraduate qualification/ equivalent work experience in the subject area or other relevant discipline Membership of relevant professional bodies