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**Candidate Information Booklet**

**DTOTrack (Digital Twin of the Ocean: Animal Tracking)**

**SCIENTIFIC OFFICER (Field Telemetry)**

**Grade: Executive Officer (EO)**

**TEMPORARY**

**2 years (Subject to funding and with a possible extension)**

**If you have a disability that makes reading difficult, this application form can be obtained in other formats.**

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**ABOUT LOUGHS AGENCY**

Loughs Agency is an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC), established as one of the North South Implementation Bodies under the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, constituted under the North South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and the British Irish Agreement Acts 1999 and 2002.

The Board of Loughs Agency reports to the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and its government Sponsor Departments – the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in the North, and the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) in the South. The Agency is funded on a 50:50 basis by DAERA in Northern Ireland and DECC in Ireland.

Our Headquarters are based in Derry~Londonderry, with a Regional Office in Carlingford, Co Louth and an operational depot in Omagh.

The Agency’s Vision is *“Through partnership and science, protecting and developing our fisheries and natural resources”.*

Our Mission is to *“Sustainably manage, promote and develop the fisheries and resources of the Foyle and Carlingford areas”.*

The Agency has responsibility for 4,070km² of catchment in the Foyle area and 480km² in Carlingford, with responsibility for the 2 sea loughs and an area extending 12 miles out to sea from Lough Foyle, which stretches to Downhill in Northern Ireland and Malin Head in Donegal. Loughs Agency has been delivering transboundary fisheries management in these waters since the establishment of its predecessor in 1952, the Foyle Fisheries Commission, with the remit of overseeing the management and protection of the Atlantic salmon and the inland fisheries of the Foyle catchment.

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Loughs Agency aims to provide sustainable social, economic and environmental benefits through the effective conservation, management, promotion and development of the fisheries and marine resources of the Foyle and Carlingford Areas. The Agency’s statutory functions are as follows:

* Promotion of development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters.
* Management, conservation, protection, improvement and development of the inland fisheries of the Foyle and Carlingford Areas.
* Development and licensing of Aquaculture and Shellfisheries.
* Development of Marine Tourism.

The high level Strategic Priorities identified in our [Strategic Direction for a New Decade 2020-30](https://issuu.com/loughsagency/docs/loughs-agency-strategic-direction-f_1e8fcc44072295) enabling Loughs Agency to fulfil its statutory remit are:

* Our Remit: Raising the Standards.
* Making Connections.
* Just Transition.
* Organisational Excellence.

**LOUGHS AGENCY STRUCTURE**

Loughs Agency has 4 Directorates and a Science Section with responsibility for delivery of a wide and varied range of activities and functions.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Directorate has responsibility for the effective and efficient delivery of financial services, human resources, information and communication technology, fleet and asset management and all other support functions, to facilitate the achievement of strategic business goals. The Directorate ensures financial and budget management systems are implemented, appropriate controls and monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure maximum efficiency, accountability and compliance with North South Accounting Guidelines. The Directorate ensures that the Agency is compliant with governance arrangements and is responsible for the development of Strategic, Corporate and Business Plans, ensuring that resources are in place to deliver business objectives.

Conservation and Protection Directorate

The Conservation and Protection Directorate is the largest team in the Agency, with a wide and varied remit. The Directorate’s primary focus is on the conservation, development, improvement and protection of the fisheries of Foyle and Carlingford. The Directorate is also responsible for the development of fisheries legislation. Regulation is delivered through the enforcement of the Foyle Fisheries Acts and a series of adaptable secondary regulations and provisions, stemming from EU Directives and legislation on pollution and water quality. The work of the Directorate includes an annual programme of freshwater monitoring, habitat protection and river restoration developments to conserve and improve the environments essential for sustainable populations of Atlantic salmon and other native fish.

Development

The Development Directorate works across the Agency, identifying and supporting projects and opportunities to develop and promote the statutory functions of the Agency. The main focus of this Directorate includes the development of marine tourism, environmental education and outreach.

Aquaculture and Shellfisheries

The Aquaculture and Shellfisheries Directorate is responsible for the management, development and conservation of the native oyster population in Lough Foyle. This population is actively managed in real time to ensure the fishery is sustainable. The Directorate is also responsible for the management of the angling and fisheries improvement work programmes which includes the delivery of fisheries improvement projects to support nature restoration and climate adaptation.  Additionally, primary legislation is in place to transfer the responsibility for licensing of aquaculture in marine and freshwater environments in both catchments to the Agency. However, this responsibility has yet to commence.

Science

The Science Function at Loughs Agency is centred on using outcomes-focused approaches to deliver robust scientific evidence to conserve and manage the fisheries and natural resources of the Foyle and Carlingford Areas from an ecosystem-based perspective. The scientific work delivered by the Agency is highly diverse and multidisciplinary covering a wide range of freshwater and marine habitats and species. The Science Function is cross-cutting across all Directorates and provides a mechanism to underpin and inform all of the Agency’s enforcement and management decisions through creation of effective evidence bases.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title: Scientific Officer (Field Telemetry)**

**Project: DTOTrack (Digital Twin of the Ocean: Animal Tracking)**

**Contract Type: Temporary – 2 years (subject to funding and with a possible extension)**

**Organisation: Loughs Agency of Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission.**

**Location: Co Donegal. Loughs Agency has a blended working policy in place.**

**Grade/Salary: EO / €36,044 – €58,834 per annum (starting salary for successful candidate will be the minimum of the scale).**

**Responsible to: DTOTrack Project Manager**

**Hours: The normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours (excluding meal breaks Monday to Friday).**

**PURPOSE OF THE ROLE**

A unique and exciting opportunity in a pan-European and multi-institutional setting; we are seeking a candidate to work on a multi-species marine telemetry project (DTOTrack) combining studies on migratory and marine fish species, cetaceans and seals in the seas around Ireland, Northern Ireland and Europe. As part of this ambitious project the Scientific Officer (SO) - Field Telemetry will establish a series of marine acoustic telemetry arrays and take a leading role in delivering a number of marine telemetry studies. Working closely with DTOTrack Project Partners and other members of the Loughs Agency team, the post holder will be part of a team that will coordinate the installation of an acoustic receiver network and fish tagging programme across the target area. The role will also require the post holder to work with other project staff as necessary to ensure agreed project targets and outputs are met. The post holder will also be required to disseminate results to a variety of stakeholders in the form of reports, policy briefings and presentations as necessary.

**ABOUT THE PROJECT**

The ocean is a notoriously challenging area to conduct scientific research. Marine fish evolve in an environment that is not readily accessible to researchers, leading to fragmented and sometimes non-existent knowledge of species distribution, behaviour and ecology. The concept of generating digital twins of the ocean is borne from the necessity of having tools and methodologies available to support research and management activities on Europe’s seas.

In the [DTOTrack Project](https://europeantrackingnetwork.org/en/dtotrack), seven North Sea Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden) and two periphery states (Ireland and Canada) will collaborate to deploy regional infrastructure (transmitters and receivers) and leverage existing physical (STRAITS and NorTrack arrays) and digital infrastructure (LifeWatch, European Tracking Network database) to develop a digital twin of the North Sea’s fauna. The main objectives of DTOTrack are:

* Coordinate tracking efforts for highly mobile and migratory species to understand drivers of inter-basin movements in the North Sea;
* Map the movements of species and ocean developments (e.g., oil rigs, wind farms, fish farms) in the North Sea;
* Develop tools and methods to operationalise animal movement in the North Sea as a digital twin.

As the Lead Partner and the only Irish partner in the consortium, Loughs Agency will support the consortium through its project management and animal tracking programme in the Foyle and Carlingford catchments as well as “Europe’s largest fish counter” in the North Channel.

The project is funded through the EU’s Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP) Programme with national funding from Marine Institute (MI) Ireland.

**MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY INCLUDE:**

* At the direction of the Project Manager (PM), manage the delivery of the Agency’s scientific elements, research and outputs for the DTOTrack Project.
* Working in collaboration with the Agency’s Telemetry Team of Scientists, co-ordinate the installation and maintenance of Loughs Agency’s acoustic receiver network.
* Working in collaboration with the Agency’s Telemetry Team of Scientists, manage Loughs Agency’s fish tagging elements of the DTOTrack Project.
* In collaboration with the PM and project partners, oversee scientific progress towards project goals (as stated in DTOTrack) work plan. Work alongside relevant institutional leads to adjust scientific programmes to meet project outcomes.
* Ensure scientific output and data quality from the field elements of the work are in line with project outcomes for the target species.
* Work alongside DTOTrack partners in the publication of results in peer-reviewed scientific journals (i.e., manuscript preparation, statistical analyses).
* Assist PM and other staff with the procurement and maintenance of all scientific equipment and materials required to deliver Loughs Agency project targets, ensuring compliance with all Loughs Agency, SBEP and MI financial and governance policies.
* Occasional travel to regional and inter-regional meetings on the island of Ireland and Europe for the purposes of field work and collaboration with project partners as agreed in the project work plan.
* Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of scientific literature in relevant areas and demonstrate personal development in all relevant areas of managing research projects and resources.
* Complete any necessary training required to successfully undertake the duties of the post.
* Prepare reports as required to ensure effective data transfer of relevant results, and meet the contractual requirements of research projects.
* The post holder will be required to fulfil any other duties and responsibilities as determined by Loughs Agency that fall within the organisation’s policies. The job description is not intended to be rigid and inflexible. Rather, it should be regarded as working guidelines within which the post holder will work.

**CORE COMPETENCIES**

This recruitment and selection process is based on the Irish Civil Service Competency Framework which sets out how the successful candidate should work. It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the Competency Framework.

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**PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION**

**Scientific Officer (Field Telemetry)**

Essential Criteria

**Applicants *must* demonstrate that they possess the following criteria, by the closing date for applications. Each essential criteria will be applied.**

1. A degree in an environmental area AND minimum two years’ relevant research experience.
2. A minimum one year’s experience of managing resources and formal reporting in a scientific research project environment.
3. Evidence of the skills and experience of working in demanding field environments.
4. Excellent communication skills (oral and written), including public presentations and ability to communicate complex data / concepts clearly and concisely.

Desirable Criteria

**Some or all of the following criteria MAY be used in the event of a large number of suitably qualified applications.**

1. Postgraduate qualification in an environmental area.
2. Specific knowledge and demonstrable experience of the use of practical field telemetry for animal tracking.
3. Demonstrable experience setting up and using acoustic arrays in marine and/or freshwater environments.
4. Experience with surgical implantation of tags in marine organisms.

**SHORTLISTING INFORMATION**

The technical elements related to the duties and responsibilities of this job will be scored on a competency-based framework at shortlisting and interview. This means that ONLY those candidates who most closely match the requirements of the post are likely to be shortlisted.

Each applicant should consider carefully if they can demonstrate the required levels of skill and experience before they spend time completing an application form. It is not enough to state that you have an ‘awareness’ or ‘knowledge’ of the areas stated, candidates must demonstrate actual skills and experience that can be checked with previous employers where necessary.

Each candidate should take care to complete their application in a way that ensures that the shortlisting Panel fully understands both their academic success and the skills and experience they have gained.

Please do not complete any section unless you can demonstrate actual skills and experience that can be checked with previous employers where necessary. Please confine your answers to the spaces provided.

**GUIDANCE FOR MAKING YOUR APPLICATION**

**How to Apply**

Applications must be made by way of

•    A comprehensive CV.

•   A short cover letter outlining why you wish to be considered for the post and where you believe your skills, experience and values meet the requirements for the position via this portal no later than 3pm Tuesday 25th February 2025 (Irish time). Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

* Information in support of your CV will not be accepted after the closing date.
* CV’s will not be examined until after the closing date.
* Please do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your field of expertise or your job.
* Relevant or equivalent qualifications – if you believe your qualification is equivalent to one required, the onus is on you to provide the Panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.
* It is essential that all applicants demonstrate on their CV how and to what extent their experience and skills are relevant to this post, and the extent to which they satisfy each of the essential and desirable criterion specified. If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the criteria, the Selection Panel will reject your application.
* The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples that you provide may be discussed at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. **It is your unique role that the Panel are interested in, not that of your organisation, team or division.**
* Loughs Agency will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant’s post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.

**Application Submission**

* CV and Cover Letters can be uploaded via the portal online at jobs.consciatalent.com/conscia
* Any queries please contact gemma@consciatalent.com
* **Conscia will not accept incomplete CV’s or Cover Letters or CV’s received after the closing deadline.**

**Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**

Please note that the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it may result in disqualification.

**GUIDANCE FOR INTERVIEW**

At interview, the technical elements related to the duties and responsibilities of this job will be scored on a competency-based framework. The Selection Panel will assess candidates against the behavioural competences, qualifications and experience required for the post.

For professional and technical posts, questions may be framed in the context of professional elements of the post.

If this is your first experience of a competency-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

* Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
* Provide generalised information as to your background and experience;
* Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

A competency-based interview does however require you to:

* Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfil the competences required for the effective performance of this role;
* Provide specific and verifiable examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

**Order of Merit**

The Selection Panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The Selection Panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first.

The order of merit is valid for one year. Therefore, if this post becomes available again within one year, the next suitable candidate will be offered the post without further competition.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Disability Requirements**

Loughs Agency will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability disclosed are used for this purpose only and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability, are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact Siobhan McCarron, Human Resource Officer on 02871 342100.

**Vetting Procedures**

Prior to appointment the following will be required:

* Proof of qualifications.
* Copy of valid Driving Licence.
* Receipt of 2 satisfactory references (references will not be sought until after the final stage of the assessment process).
* Basic level security clearance which is managed by Access NI.

**Availability**

The post is based in the Donegal Area, however the successful applicant will also be required to travel within the Foyle and Carlingford Areas and outside both jurisdictions.

**Any Other Duties**

Appointees may be required to carry out any other duties that may (from time to time) arise and which are reasonably required within the general level of responsibility for the post.

**Salary**

Starting salary will normally be at the minimum of the scale. Consideration of a higher starting salary may be given to applicants with exceptional relevant experience and/or skills and only then if all ‘suitable candidates’ (those considered to be appointable by the Selection Panel) have refused the minimum salary offered.

**Closing Date**

Completed application forms must be returned to arrive not later than **1pm on Tuesday 25th of February 2025.**