

Information Pack

Research Assistant
(Clean Seas Team – Chemicals)

£21,000 to £24,000 per annum

Hybrid/Flexible working
35 hours per week



Our values

We work to protect our ocean, and all that depend on it, the wildlife, the people, and now, our planet. We are looking for people who demonstrate our values, but who also contribute their own perspectives and experiences to add to our knowledge and our culture.

- We are brave
- We have integrity
- We are a community
- We are credible
- We are positive
- We are solutions focused

The opportunity

We are looking for someone who has an interest in working with the Clean Seas team, to deliver its aims to reduce pollution at source and move towards a zero emissions target for pollutants.

You will be mostly working day to day with our chemical specialist and therefore candidates should have a strong background in ecotoxicology or chemistry with a strong environmental slant. An excellent foundation in undergraduate chemistry (or equivalent relevant experience) is an absolute must for this post, and therefore candidates without this will not be considered.

Chemical regulation in the UK is currently at a crossroads and we must ensure that the marine environment is better protected from the impacts of harmful chemicals. Your role will involve conducting research to support work around consultations for the UK Chemicals Strategy and regulatory options around specific chemicals of emerging concern, like the highly persistent group of chemicals, PFAS..

What you'll do

- Undertake research which you'll analyse and interpret – particularly research on chemical pollution.
- Present your research findings and information to support the aims of the Clean Seas programmes.
- Assist with Clean Seas policy work, drafting reports and information to our Communications team to further the aims of the programme– particularly with regards to chemical pollution
- Liaise and collaborate with relevant stakeholders, for research purposes and to increase profile, enhance conservation, policy and political impact

What you'll need to show us

- Proven ability to undertake research and present a critical analysis of ecotoxicology and chemical pollution e.g. analysing datasets, desktop research, reports.
- Extensive understanding of the ecotoxicology and/or chemical pollution through previous roles or education.
- Evidence of your communication skills that you'll use for promoting our messages in plain English to a wide audience through written materials and presentations.
- Strong organisational skills, including negotiation skills, time management, attention to detail and ability to manage a diverse workload that will come from a variety of sources
- Experienced/intermediate level skills working with Microsoft Office, Word, Excel and PowerPoint (including Microsoft 365/Teams/SharePoint/OneDrive).

What it's like to join our team:

Our team are passionate advocates for our ocean and how it can support our climate. Our watercooler chats are like no other. We find that inspiring, but we've also got other ways to value your contribution:

- Annual leave that starts at 25 days a year, plus Bank Holidays, increasing with service We also close between Christmas and New Year as extra time off
- 6% contribution to our stakeholder pension scheme
- Sick pay at full-pay for 8 weeks, then 8 more weeks at half-pay (after probation ends)
- Great work life balance through flexible working, and you can work remotely in the UK if that fits with your role
- Support for your health and wellbeing with a programme of activities and an employee assistance programme for you and the people who live with you

We also value who you are, and what you bring that makes you able to do your very best work. We work to our values, but welcome diversity of thought, of experience, and background. Equity, diversity and inclusion are part of everything that we do.

We welcome applications from all sections of the community, particularly those that are under-represented in environmental and charity sectors.

Ready to dive in?

We understand that the application process can be difficult if you have a condition or disability that you live with. We want to make it as easy as possible for you to shine during your application process, so please let us know what we can do to accommodate you.

Read on further through this pack – there's some important information on how to make your application to us.

The closing date for applications is noon on Tuesday 28 June 2022



Research Assistant – Chemicals Specialist

To provide support to the Clean Seas team with research requirements, with a strong emphasis on ecotoxicology necessary for the development of coherent marine conservation and inform on policy.

To provide conservation support for the Clean Seas across all their work streams.

To assist with relations with stakeholders and influence on marine policy and legislation to deliver the goals of the MCS Strategy.

Research, analyse, interpret, disseminate and present data and evidence to support the aims of clean seas Programme.

- Collate and research any aspect of conservation work as directed by the Head of Clean Seas.
- Source, analyse, interpret and present data and information in support of clean seas particularly with regards to chemical pollution.
- Draft reports and other outputs.
- Support and manage projects.

Assist with Clean Seas policy work, to further the aims of programme.

- Collate and research any aspect of policy work as directed by the Head of Clean Seas.
- Source, analyse, interpret and present research findings and information in support of clean seas.
- Draft briefings, reports and other outputs.

Liaise and collaborate with relevant stakeholders, for research purposes and to increase profile, enhance MCS conservation, policy and political impact

- Liaise with external relevant stakeholders for the purpose of research and advocacy, including project partners and funders.
- Liaise with MCS teams, in particular, Campaigns and Communications teams to provide information for media outputs and campaigns.
- Liaise with teams, in particular programmes, to ensure all teams are fully aware of messaging.
- Build and maintain relationships with data providers (or those we provide data to).
- Engage with members of the public, NGOs, Government bodies, businesses or other stakeholders as required.

General administration tasks

- Plan, liaise and organise events, site visits and meetings
- Maintain data and filing systems
- Any other appropriate tasks in support of the team's work (eg proof reading)

General

The post will work from home with attendance at some meetings and events, our office locations and team meetings held in major cities.

All colleagues are required to act responsibly in terms of the health, safety and welfare of yourself and colleagues in accordance with our Health & Safety Policy and Procedures, and the policies as set out in the Employee Handbook.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders may be requested to undertake other reasonable duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and scope of the post as advised by their Line Manager.

Person specification

Proven experience and competencies



Proven ability to undertake research and present a critical analysis of ecotoxicology and chemical pollution e.g. analysing datasets, desktop research, report writing.

Proven and effective communication skills for promoting messages in plain English to a wide audience through written materials and presentations.

Proven ability to work with minimal supervision – track record of working on own initiative and practical problem-solving.

Excellent attention to detail.

Methodical, organised and applies critical thinking

Proven ability to work with multiple requests for work from a variety of sources.

Strong organisational skills, including negotiation skills, time management, and the ability to manage a diverse workload.



Proven ability to work well with volunteers and the general public.

Experienced in managing projects successfully, with the ability to plan, deliver and monitor results within set timescales and budgets.

Qualifications, training and knowledge



Extensive understanding of the ecotoxicology and/or chemical pollution through previous roles or education.

Knowledge of marine policy.

Experienced/intermediate level skills working with Microsoft Office, Word, Excel and PowerPoint (including Microsoft 365/Teams/SharePoint/OneDrive).

Working knowledge of data protection and its application to confidential information.



Understanding of legislation policy process

Personal Qualities



A personal style in line with our values and our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion:

We are brave	We have integrity
We are a community	We are credible
We are positive	We are solutions focused

An ability to positively interact and work closely with a wide variety of individuals and teams.

Flexible approach, capable of prioritising you own workload, and comfortable providing support across the Clean Seas team and beyond when needed.

Able to make positive working relationships with your team, and with our wider colleagues who have a wide range of experience and skills.

A passionate and committed interest in communicating marine conservation to varied audiences to achieve a positive and active response.

How to apply

We're doing things a little differently, so we'd like you to do two things for your application to us.

We'd like you to write a short document (less than one page) that gives a summary of any relevant experience or qualifications for the role, with a brief outline of any other information that would highlight your skills for the role.

For the next part of the application process we have set two short tasks that are directly related to the type of work you might do in this role.

Candidates must keep strictly to the specified word limit or audio time limit (video not accepted).

Task 1 - It's your first few days in this role, and you have been asked to provide either a blog or a podcast on how your role is going to help us reduce perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in everyday items.

We are providing you with the opportunity to make your response either as a written OR an audio piece. Please do not submit both. You can choose which formats best reflects your thoughts and personality, rather than your academic style.

If you choose to make an audio recording, limit it to 3 minutes and send it to us on email as an MP3 file or voice note.

If you'd prefer to write a blog, keep it to 450 words (equivalent to 3 minutes of audio).

Task 2 - You have been asked to attend a webinar on behalf of the Clean Seas Team and provide a summary afterwards for the team. We are not all chemical experts but have a good scientific understanding. Summarise the webinar and slides in 450 words (written only this time - no audio submission unless it's required as an adjustment for you). Remember we are a marine focused charity but stopping pollution at source is a key part of our message.

<https://videos.files.wordpress.com/M5hbMvaZ/chemical-pollution-webinar-25th-nov.mp4>

Slides from video: <https://chemtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Chemical-pollution-webinar-25th-Nov.pdf>

So that our shortlisting process is anonymous, please don't include personal information like a photograph, your contact information, name and age on any of your documents. In your email to us, include it there so that the HR team can get in touch with you easily.

Get in touch with us at hr@mcsuk.org if you have any questions about the tasks, or if you have problems sending an audio file.

The legal bit

If you're successful, all offers of employment are conditional, subject to the following:

- We are not licensed to issue work permits so candidates are required to provide proof of eligibility to work in the UK and will be required to present original documents if invited for interview. Information on what you'll need to show will be provided as part of the invitation to attend an interview but you can read more on the Home Office UK Border Agency website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>
- receipt of two references which are satisfactory to MCS
- your driving licence and insurance, if using a vehicle is an integral part of your role

Key dates

Closing date:

Noon, Tuesday 28 June 2022

Interviews:

Friday 8 July 2022

Registered Charity No: 1004005 (England & Wales) SC037480 (Scotland) Registered Office: Overross House, Ross Park, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7US