

Job Description - Forest Resilience Programme Manager (PB3)

Job summary

Forestry England is an exemplar of forward-thinking, sustainable forest management. Guided by our Forest Resilience Strategy and Action Plan, we are committed to bold, ambitious and evidence-based action that will ensure the nation's forests thrive for decades to come. We have long experience of building forest resilience and adapting our forests to changing threats and disturbance. But we are at a turning point. Never before have there been so many confounding challenges, from climate change and biodiversity collapse to shifting societal demands and economic pressures.

The challenge is great, but the opportunity is greater. This role is central to the ongoing development and delivery of Forestry England's forest resilience ambitions. You will provide strategic leadership for our resilience approach, with wider programme management responsibilities. You will continue to shape and direct our forest resilience strategy, ensuring it remains innovative, ambitious and grounded in the latest science. And you will be a leading technical expert, providing guidance and support to colleagues across the organisation. You will manage a new multimillion-pound, Defra-funded programme that will significantly scale up our forest resilience work across the nation's forests.

This will require strategic prioritisation of funding and strong collaborative working with colleagues across the organisation to achieve the greatest impact. You will be responsible for ensuring the programme delivers clear, measurable outcomes and excellent value for money.

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to lead a programme that is helping to set the course for the future of UK forestry

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

- Deliver our Forest Resilience Strategy and Action Plan, ensuring the two-year targets and actions are achieved.
- Provide strategic leadership and programme management oversight for Forestry England's forest resilience approach, ensuring the organisation remains at the forefront of bold and innovative action in this field.
- Lead and manage a three-year, £6.5m programme, driving delivery across a portfolio of interdependent projects spanning multiple teams.
- You will hold primary accountability for achieving required outcomes, including supporting local delivery teams, leading organisational change, strategically distributing funding to maximise impact, setting targets, monitoring progress, and managing risks and issues.
- You will report progress to the Forest Resilience Steering Group and lead the strategy refresh in 2027.
- Oversee our bespoke forest resilience Service Level Agreement with Forest Research (~£200k/annum), commissioning and embedding applied research that strengthens our scientific understanding and effectiveness of our actions.
- Establish a Forestry England Research Forum to oversee our various research collaborations with Forest Research and other academic institutions, and disseminate findings to colleagues.
- Apply expert technical knowledge of forest resilience challenges and opportunities to shape organisational direction and decision making.
- Work closely with colleagues across Forestry England, supporting national and local teams to deliver forest resilience ambitions.
- Build strong, constructive relationships with key internal and external stakeholders, particularly within the Defra family and wider forestry sector. Represent Forestry England on relevant external working groups.

- Play a visible leadership role within the National Operations team, contributing to the team's shared vision and collective activities.
- Contribute to wider forest planning, forestry and land management, and nature recovery activities across Forestry England.
- Line manage staff within the national forest planning team, as appropriate.

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- Ability to lead complex programmes, with exceptional organisational and programme management skills.
- Excellent knowledge of forest resilience principles, challenges and opportunities.
- Comprehensive understanding of the UK forestry sector and management considerations.
- Strong communication and analytical skills, with the ability to interpret policy and evidence, and translate it into clear, actionable advice.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- Competence in GIS and data analysis.

Qualifications

Essential

- Forestry, environmental sciences or equivalent degree, or equivalent professional experience.

Desirable

- Member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters • Association of Project Management qualification or similar.

