



Job Opportunities

ACRES – Donegal Co-operation Project

Recruitment of Project Officers (agri-environmental)

Introduction

Inishowen Farm Innovations in partnership with Inishowen Development Partnership have been contracted by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine to operate one of the eight Co-operation Projects that are being established as part of Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan. Due to the unprecedented interest and large volume of farmers accepted into the ACRES scheme we are now expanding our team and are currently recruiting a number of project officers to work as part of the project team across all areas of Donegal. Project officers will play a key role in delivering this new results-based agri-environmental scheme where farmers will be rewarded and incentivised to provide positive environmental outcomes throughout the high nature value landscapes of Donegal (see map below).

Background

ACRES (Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme) is the new national agri-environment climate measure (AECM) that is available to over 46,000 farmers throughout Ireland currently. Using a habitats-based approach, delivered through a mix of results-based and prescriptive actions, ACRES aims to achieve improved biodiversity, climate, air and water quality outcomes. Through a hybrid payment model farmers will be rewarded and incentivised to maintain and enhance the environmental condition of their farms. There are two approaches under the scheme:

- an ACRES General approach offering a range of measures for individual farmers (both targeted and general); and
- an ACRES Co-operation approach, available to farmers in eight high-priority geographical areas, who opt to undertake measures, as well as bespoke farm, and landscape actions.

Farmers participating in the Co-operation approach will have the assistance of a Local Co-operation Project (CP) Team, who will assist with the implementation of the scheme at the local level. Inishowen Farm Innovations in partnership with the Inishowen Development Partnership have been appointed to fulfil the roll of the local CP team for Donegal, referred to as the Donegal Co-operation Project.



Job Description

The primary role of the Project Officer is to support farmers and farm advisors in Donegal throughout the delivery of the ACRES scheme. The role will involve actively engaging with farmers to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the opportunities available to them through the scheme and to encourage their active participation with a view to achieving better environmental outcomes that are most relevant and beneficial to the environmental targets of the local area. The job is an opportunity for somebody motivated to promote farming practices that maintain and enhance the environmental quality of Donegal's farming landscape.

Location

Project officers will be assigned to different local areas within the Donegal CP area which entails an area stretching from southwest Donegal to Inishowen. The role will be largely field based with a hybrid working arrangement between home and the local project office depending on project needs.

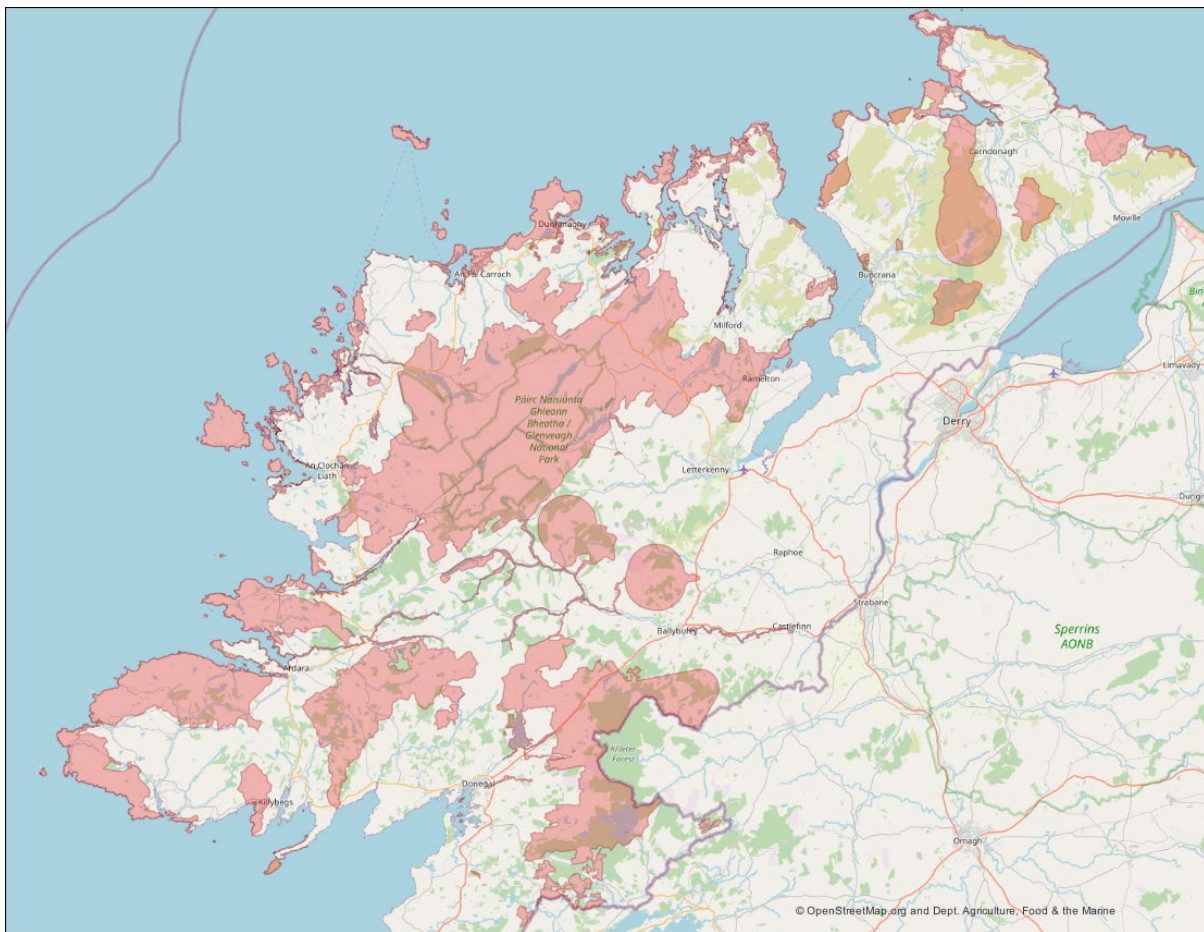


Figure 1: Map showing the local areas within the ACRES Donegal Co-operation Project.

Duties and responsibilities

- Main point of contact between farmers and the project team.
- Continual liaison with the farming community in the respective local area.
- Undertake results-based habitat scoring of farmland habitats.



- Screening farm actions proposed by farm advisors (includes non-productive investments and landscape actions).
- Provide agri-environmental advice and support to participant farmers.
- Liaise with and provide support to farm advisors.
- Coordinate and deliver training events to farmers and farm advisors.
- Creation of Farm Sustainability Plans for participant farmers on commonages.
- Carrying out mapping of habitats for baseline data if required.
- Undertake farm visits to monitor farm implementation and success of actions.
- Organise and partake in community outreach events (e.g. school visits community groups etc)
- Preparation of reports, training materials, and presentations as required.
- Liaise with local and regional stakeholders and interested parties on the project.
- Work closely with the wider project team.
- Any other duties as assigned by the Project Manager.

The Ideal Candidate

This role would be ideally suited to someone who wishes to develop a career in the growing agri-environmental sector. The ideal candidate should enjoy working outdoors, have excellent communication and organisational skills, and a keen interest in the environment and agriculture.

Qualifications and Experience - Minimum Requirements

- A degree in agriculture, ecology or related discipline is desirable however other non-degree qualifications may be considered for experienced candidates.
- A full clean driver's licence.
- Applicants should have a minimum of two years relevant work experience in the agriculture / ecology / agri-environmental sectors (those with <2 yrs experience may apply but will only be considered for more junior roles on the project which will be filled over the coming year).
- Knowledge of farmland and upland habitats (peatland & grassland) and their indicator species.

Qualifications and Experience - Desirable

- Post-graduate qualification.
- DAFM FAS Approval.
- Knowledge and experience relevant to biodiversity and wildlife legislation in Ireland.
- Understanding of the implications of conservation objectives for Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and the role farmers play regarding these.
- Knowledge and experience relevant to agriculture policy in Ireland.
- Experience in the preparation and monitoring of farm plans.
- Knowledge and awareness of agri-environmental schemes such as REPS, GLAS, REAP, Inishowen Uplands EIP, Curlew EIP etc.
- Experience of providing agri-environmental advice and support to farmers.
- Experience of using ESRI ArcGIS, QGIS, Survey 123 and database management software would be an advantage.
- An ability to communicate in spoken Irish.

Skills and Characteristics

The successful candidate must demonstrate the following skills and characteristics

- Excellent communication skills.
- Self-motivated and have a proven ability to work under their own initiative.



- Have a positive, enthusiastic, pragmatic, solution driven, and flexible approach to work.
- A willingness to actively participate as part of a wider multidisciplinary team.
- An ability to manage their own workload, ensuring that work is carried out safely, on schedule, and to a high standard.
- Willingness to work in remote locations, sometimes lone working and in poor weather conditions.
- Ability to consider health and safety issues when working in the field and take appropriate action as necessary.
- Good computer skills, particularly in the use of Microsoft Office software.

Salary and Employment Details

Project Officers will be employed on a full-time fixed term contract basis. The contract period is expected to run until 2027, and may be extended annually there-after, subject to continuing funding and needs of the project. Opportunities for continued professional development and training are envisaged. Start date will be dependent on qualifications and experience.

Starting salary:	Dependent upon experience
Expenses:	Travel and subsistence expenses will be paid on a monthly basis. Project Officers will be required to have their own transport.
Other details:	I.T/field equipment will be provided. Employer pension contribution.
Annual leave:	20 days per annum.

How to Apply

Please find an application pack at www.acresdonegal.ie/careers

Email CV and application form and contact details of two referees by 12th April 2024 to:

Personnel Manager
ACRES – Donegal Co-operation Project
E-mail: info@acresdonegal.ie

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An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



Funded by
the European Union



ACRES Donegal Co-Operation Programme
Drumfries, Clonmany, Co. Donegal, F93 N793
Tel: 087 338 1548 email: info@acresdonegal.ie visit: www.acresdonegal.ie



ACRES – Donegal Co-operation Project

Project Officer Application Form

Position: Project Officer

NB: Closing date for receipt of applications is 5pm on Fri 12th April 2024.

Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>	
Where did you see this post advertised?	<input type="text"/>	

Application Procedure

1. Complete the application form including every section (write “Not Applicable” where necessary) and return it to the Donegal ACRES Co-operation project, with a cover letter (single sheet of A4).
NB: You must be willing to sign a copy of it at interview, if selected.
2. You may include further details of employment, relevant expertise, etc. as separate sheets. However these should be as brief and as comprehensive as possible.
3. Please let us know if you do **not** wish us to retain your details on a database to be used for future employment opportunities with the Donegal CP Project team.
4. Completed application forms (MS Word document – please do not extend the size of the boxes) and covering letter can be sent via e-mail to info@acresdonegal.ie. Extra pages can be added at the end of the form. You may attach your c.v. if you wish.
5. **SAVE YOUR APPLICATION FORM IN THE FORMAT First Name_Last Name_Project Officer**

ACRES Donegal Co-operation Project Application Form

Please type or write clearly in block letters.

1. Personal Details

Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>	
Telephone	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>	
Nationality	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

NB: Non-EU nationals, please ensure that you have the appropriate work visa.

Do you have a full driving licence?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have access to your own vehicle?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, do you have any current endorsements?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, please give details below

Do you suffer from any illness or disability which could restrict duties?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please give details below:

2. Third Level Qualifications (Please start with the most recent).

Type of Qualification	Institution	Result	Date	Principal subjects, Project titles

3. Training Courses.

Give details of any specialised training or any relevant short courses attended, including computer training.

4. Most Recent Employment Details

Organisation Name and Address

Position Held

Dates From

Final or most recent salary

Period of Notice

Please outline main duties (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

Please outline your reasons for leaving/wanting to leave (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

5. Past Employment Details

Please include periods of voluntary work, fieldwork, etc and give reasons for any gaps other than those for education and training. (You may supply more details of relevant experience in the next section).

Dates		Employer's name and address	Position held & main duties	Reasons for leaving
From	To			

6. Relevant expertise and experience (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

Please outline here your relevant experience & expertise for this position(s), such as Agriculture, Ecology, Field Surveys, GIS etc. Details of the requirements for each position are listed in the job specifications (attached).

7. Why are you interested in applying for this position?

8. Hobbies and other interests (Expand briefly where relevant).

9. Publications (Please give details of any reports you have authored or published papers).

10. Additional relevant information (please mention any other field or desk-based skills)

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11. Referees

Please list two referees. Preferably, one should be the person to whom you are/were responsible in your current or most recent relevant employment.

Name	<input type="text"/>	Position	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>		
Phone/fax, e-mail	<input type="text"/>		

Name	<input type="text"/>	Position	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>		
Phone/fax, e-mail	<input type="text"/>		

12. Declaration

I confirm that all information given in this application is correct and true. I accept that any omissions or misrepresentations may result in any future contract being terminated.

Signed	Date
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In the event that your application is unsuccessful on this occasion, please tick here if you would like to be considered for possible future vacancies.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date Received:	<input type="text"/>	No. of Copies Required:	<input type="text"/>
		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>