

Job specification

Role	Head of Operations & Commercial
Reporting to	Executive Director
Salary & benefits	£42,000–£50,000 (based on experience) 25 days per annum paid leave plus statutory holidays 6% employer pension contribution
Hours	Full time – 35 hours per week Part time arrangements can be considered on a discretionary basis for the right candidate. While the role will be generally undertaken during normal office hours, occasional evening and weekend working will be required, together with flexibility around fieldwork and events. FNLRT operates a flexible working policy, with Time Off In-Lieu (TOIL) provided for approved additional hours worked outside the normal working day.
Term	Fixed term for 12 months, with intention to extend subject to funding. Includes a six-month probationary period.
Place of work	The role will be based at the Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Rivers Trust office, Logie Steading, Dunphail, Moray, IV36 2QN, with a hybrid, flexible working approach. Due to the nature of the role the successful candidate must be based in or close to the River Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie catchment areas. Unfortunately, we are unable to support relocation costs.

About the role

We are seeking an experienced, motivated, and proactive individual to take up the newly established role of Head of Operations & Commercial for the Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Rivers Trust.

This role combines operational leadership with commercial responsibility, including taking leading the development and growth of Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Rivers Consulting Ltd – our newly established trading subsidiary.

This is an exciting moment to join FNLRT. We are a small organisation with big ambitions: expanding our catchment approach across the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie, launching a new trading subsidiary, and developing our next five-year strategy. The person who takes this role will have genuine scope to shape how the consultancy grows and to contribute to an organisation that is at the forefront of landscape-scale nature recovery in Scotland.

The postholder will be responsible for translating organisational priorities into effective delivery, managing staff, resources, and key stakeholder relationships, and ensuring that the Trust's work is delivered safely, efficiently, and to a high standard.

The consultancy is currently at an early stage of development, primarily focused on providing environmental consultancy and advisory services. Core structures are in place and there is an existing pipeline of secured and prospective work, primarily undertaking freshwater habitat and species surveys for infrastructure developments. There is ambition for the scope of the consultancy to expand to provide services such as supporting planning compliance and strategic off-site biodiversity enhancement opportunities, and the provision of corporate volunteering opportunities.

The successful candidate will take ownership of delivering live projects while completing the establishment of the consultancy's systems, processes, and client management approach.

About the Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Rivers Trust

The Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Rivers Trust (FNLRT) is a charity and place-based nature restoration organisation, uniquely positioned to play a key role in improving local resilience in the face of the nature and climate emergencies.

We work at a catchment-scale, and in partnership with landowners and land managers, our local communities and businesses, blending sources of funding and delivering action to protect and restore our rivers, their watersheds, and the wildlife which inhabits them.

The aims of the FNLRT are:

- To restore resilient habitats and biodiversity in our rivers and their watersheds
- To foster pro-nature behaviour changes amongst the people who live and work in our catchment areas
- To ensure the River Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie watersheds serve as climate and biodiversity strongholds for generations to come

FNLRT has been undergoing an evolution as an organisation since publishing its [2021-26 Management Plan](#). Building on our reputation as a trusted local conservation

organisation and the success of the [‘SISI’ invasive non-native species control project](#), in 2022 FNLRT launched the [Findhorn Watershed Initiative](#) – a multi-generational vision and landscape-scale partnership to restore a mosaic of nature rich habitats, grow a local culture of nature connection and enable a thriving nature-based economy for the people and places of the Findhorn watershed, inspired by the global Bioregioning movement. During 2026 FNLRT will be expanding the partnership approach to instigate Nairn and Lossie Watershed Initiatives.

FNLRT’s offices are based at Logie Steading, a short walk from the wooded gorge and beautiful middle reaches of the River Findhorn, and offer a welcoming, collaborative and well-equipped working environment.

Key liaisons

Internally, the role will work closely with FNLRT Executive Director, Office Manager and Ecologist to guide and streamline operations and contract delivery. The role will also be responsible for management and supervision of fieldwork staff.

Externally, the role will involve liaison with the District Salmon Fisheries Boards of each river within FNLRT’s stewardship, other fishery interests, developers, contractors, and local stakeholders including the angling community.

Key responsibilities

The postholder will have delegated authority for operational decision-making, resource allocation, and the day-to-day management of consultancy and field activities.

The role operates within the strategic direction set by the Executive Director and Board of Trustees, translating organisational priorities into effective delivery.

The success of this role will be demonstrated through:

- effective delivery of operational programmes
- development of a financially sustainable consultancy
- establishment of strong client and stakeholder relationships

The role spans three main areas of responsibility:

1. Operations

- Lead and support the management and development of field staff, including performance, wellbeing, and capacity building
- Support organisational risk management and ensure compliance with relevant regulatory, legal, and governance requirements

- Oversee fieldwork health and safety systems and planning, including preparation and maintenance of risk assessments and method statements
- Maintain effective relationships with key partners and stakeholders, including local and national organisations such as FMS and SEPA
- Support the development and consistent application of staff management processes, including recruitment, onboarding, and performance systems, in collaboration with the Executive Director
- Support the development of organisational performance monitoring and reporting systems to inform decision-making and demonstrate impact
- Contribute to funding and project development, including preparation of funding applications and support for tender processes relating to restoration works

2. Consultancy

- Lead the development and growth of the consultancy, including identifying opportunities, preparing competitive tenders, and maintaining a strong pipeline of work and professional relationships
- Develop new service lines and income-generating opportunities that draw on FNLRT's expertise in catchment restoration, freshwater ecology, and nature-based solutions, ensuring commercial activity aligns with the Trust's mission and values
- Establish and refine consultancy systems and processes, including contracts, reporting templates, and internal procedures
- Lead and oversee delivery of consultancy projects, including management of field teams, subcontractors, and existing contracts
- Oversee consultancy finances and performance, including invoicing, income tracking, debt management, and financial reporting, ensuring alignment with Trust financial systems in coordination with our Office Manager
- Ensure high-quality technical delivery, including leading or overseeing ecological reporting, quality assurance, and (where relevant) undertaking specialist surveys
- Marketing and promotion of the consultancy, supporting its growth and reputation, in coordination with our Communications & Engagement Lead

3. District Salmon Fishery Board (DSFB) duties

In line with current service level agreements in place with the Findhorn and Lossie DSFBs, and working in close collaboration with FNLRT Ecologist

- Maintaining and distributing Conservation Code and biosecurity guidance
- Proportionate engagement with developers to support the protection of the fishery, including identification of relevant developments, coordination of responses, and oversight of works where appropriate
- Reporting to 3x annual Board meetings of each DSFB
- Preparation of Annual Report(s)
- Operational line management of Findhorn DSFB Water Bailiff employees

An indicative allocation of time across the three areas is projected to be as follows (subject to change based on operational needs):

1. Operations (approx. 25–30%)
2. Consultancy (approx. 50–60%)
3. DSFB duties (approx. 15–20%)

As with any small charitable organisation, team members are expected to be flexible and willing to contribute to tasks outside their core remit when required.

This role description is intentionally detailed, and we recognise that it spans a breadth of skills and experience that is unlikely to sit in equal measure in any single candidate. We are genuinely flexible about how the balance of this role takes shape, and we are particularly keen to hear from candidates who are strongest in the consultancy development aspect of the role, even if they are less experienced in – or less drawn to – the operational or DSFB elements. Equally, we would be interested in candidates who bring outstanding operational and ecological delivery experience and are eager to grow into the commercial and business development dimensions of the role. If you feel you match a significant part of this description and are excited by what FNLRT is building, we would strongly encourage you to apply and tell us, in your own words, what you would bring.

Person specification

Essential:

- Degree in Ecology, Environmental Science, Business Development or demonstratable relevant experience in environmental consultancy
- Strong project management experience, including financial oversight and reporting
- Understanding of environmental legislation, planning policy, and ecological best practice
- Competence in developing tenders, pricing work, and identifying new opportunities – with proven track record securing new business
- Excellent written, visual, and verbal communication skills, with experience building client relationships
- Highly organised, with strong attention to detail and ability to manage competing deadlines
- Commercially astute, with proactive, entrepreneurial approach to business development and innovation
- Commitment to ethical practice, transparency, and high professional standards
- Ability to lead, develop and support a team, including subcontractors, seasonal and junior staff
- A genuine passion for the natural world, with an understanding of nature restoration and commitment to place-based working
- Enthusiasm for contributing to a collaborative, innovative environmental charity

- Proficiency with Microsoft 365 software
- Full UK driving license

Desirable:

- Full membership (or eligibility for membership) of CIEEM
- Hold an up-to-date CSCS card
- Relevant ecological licenses and qualifications, including:
 - o Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW)
 - o Electro-fishing, ideally with SFCC team leader accreditation
 - o Freshwater Pearl Mussel surveying
 - o Freshwater/fish habitat surveying
 - o Freshwater Mammal surveying
 - o Bird surveys
 - o Herbivore Impact Assessment
- Experience coordinating and delivering ecological surveys
- Proven ability to produce, review, and quality-assure ecological reports and assessments
- Working knowledge of GIS data systems such as ArcGIS
- Experience of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) survey requirements such as UKHab
- Understanding of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) Act 2003
- Knowledge of fishery management, catchment restoration, in-shore marine and/or freshwater ecology

Last, but certainly not least, the ideal candidate should have a meaningful existing relationship with – or a strong desire to build deep, place-based knowledge of – the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie rivers and their wider catchment areas.

What we offer

- A chance to play a vital enabling role for a growing organisation at an important moment in its evolution
- Becoming part of a passionate, close-knit team committed to positive change
- Opportunities for learning and collaboration across wide regional and international networks
- Purpose-driven work, rooted in deep care and relationship with people and place
- Opportunity for salary review after 12 months, with consideration given to performance and the growth and financial sustainability of the consultancy function

To apply

Please submit your application by email to elle@fnlrt.org.uk, including your name and ‘*Head of Operations & Commercial*’ in the email subject line.

- A short CV (no longer than two sides of A4)
- A one-page letter or a two-minute video outlining what you would bring to the role and why you would be excited to work with us

Please note, applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and as such early submission is encouraged.

We will acknowledge receipt of all applications by email. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer feedback for candidates who do not reach the interview stage.

The Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Rivers Trust is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications from all sections of the community and make recruitment decisions by matching our organisation's needs with the skills, experience and potential of candidates.

We are committed to ensuring that no applicant is disadvantaged on the basis of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, or marriage or civil partnership.

If you require any reasonable adjustments to support you through the application or interview process, please let us know.