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**EDGE of Existence Conservation Scientist (Social or Interdisciplinary)**

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| **Job grade** | **4** | **Reports to** | **EDGE of Existence Programme Manager** |
| **Directorate** | **Conservation and Policy** | **Function** | **Conservation Scientist (social or interdisciplinary)** |
| **Contract**  | **Permanent** | **Location** | **Regent’s Park / Homeworker** |

**Responsibility for resources**

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| **Direct line reports** | **NA** | **Responsibility for other resources** | **NA** |
| **Financial resources** | **NA** |

**Our vision and mission**

The Zoological Society of London (ZSL) is an international conservation charity, driven by science, working to restore wildlife in the UK and around the world. Our vision is a world where wildlife thrives and every role, every person in every corner of ZSL has one thing in common – we are all conservationists, and passionate about restoring wildlife.

The EDGE of Existence Programme at ZSL was the first global conservation initiative to focus specifically on threatened species representing a significant amount of unique evolutionary history. Our vision is a world where the most unique and extraordinary species thrive, supported by a global network of diverse conservation leaders spearheading sustainable conservation that delivers equity and justice. One of the most effective ways in which we work to secure this vision is by strengthening, supporting, and diversifying conservation leadership through the EDGE Fellowship.

**Purpose of the role**

The EDGE of Existence Conservation Scientist will have an interdisciplinary or social sciences background and an excellent understanding of past and current conservation models worldwide. The role aims to bridge the social and natural sciences gap and incorporate social science perspectives into every aspect of the EDGE of Existence Programme. This position is critical for guiding community engagement and integrating social (and decolonial) research methodologies and perspectives into the heart of conservation activities that target the most unique, extraordinary, and overlooked species and regions on Earth.

The post holder will work closely with the programme’s Regional Project Managers in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, as well as a range of technical experts at ZSL. A vital aspect of the role will be supporting, strengthening, and diversifying conservation leadership globally. The post holder will simultaneously work with approximately 30-40 EDGE Fellows, supporting them in implementing conservation projects for EDGE species in their home countries.

**Key responsibilities**

* Lead the development and delivery of online and face-to-face conservation social science training for early- and mid-career conservationists.
* Mentor and coach EDGE Fellows and other programme affiliates, providing expertise on the social dimensions of conservation. This will include supporting them on all aspects of their work related to people, including but not limited to stakeholder engagement and analysis; working with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities; project planning and study design; sampling strategies; data collection, analysis, and interpretation; and overseeing the development and dissemination of social science research outputs.
* Lead the monitoring and evaluation of the programme's strategic goal of supporting, strengthening, and diversifying conservation leadership.
* Ensure projects under the EDGE programme adhere to ethical standards, provide training and guidance to EDGE Fellows and programme affiliates, and ensure all projects implement ZSL’s FAIRER Framework.
* Support and sometimes lead fundraising efforts and maintain relationships with donors and sponsors, including grant writing and reporting to secure programme funding.
* Collaborate with the programme’s external partners to innovate and expand the programme's involvement in social science and conservation initiatives, ensuring ongoing relevance and impact.
* Facilitate project reviews and approvals on the ZSL human ethics committee and potentially take a position on ZSL’s FAIRER Advisory Group.
* Participate in the selection process of EDGE Fellows. In particular, assess the social aspects of applications.
* Enhance the programme's reach and effectiveness, build and maintain relationships with external experts, educational institutions, and other relevant social science professionals.
* Represent the programme and ZSL in scientific, conservation, and public forums, providing expertise and promoting the programme's achievements through various media and professional channels.
* Provide support to ZSL’s other conservation programmes as required.

**Person Specification**

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| Experience |
| Essential | * Proven experience in social or interdisciplinary research on conservation issues in lower- and/or middle-income countries.
* Previous experience mentoring and/or coaching.
* Previous experience or demonstrable ability to develop, manage, and deliver innovative and engaging social science training.
* Experience working in culturally diverse and interdisciplinary teams.
* A postgraduate degree in a relevant discipline or extensive proven experience.
* Experience working with species focused conservation in a lower- and/or middle-income country.
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| Desirable  | * A PhD on a relevant topic.
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| Knowledge and skills |
| Essential | * Advanced knowledge of conservation. In particular, aspects related to people (e.g. resource use, governance structures, rural livelihoods, conflict, community-based conservation).
* Advanced knowledge of quantitative, qualitative, and participatory social science methods and analysis.
* Ability to work with, train, mentor, and coach people with different experience levels and from diverse cultures and backgrounds worldwide while upholding the highest levels of understanding, respect, and collegiality.
* Knowledge of the social and political dimensions of past and present conservation models.
* Excellent communication skills with an ability to convey complicated theory and research from the social sciences in understandable, engaging, and culturally appropriate ways.
* Ability to write in multiple styles to a high standard (e.g. for academic, fundraising, reporting, public engagement purposes).
* Able to manage own time and effectively prioritise tasks.
* Advanced knowledge of Logical Frameworks and Theories of Change.
* Excellent attention to detail.
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| Desirable | * Knowledge of and passion for pedagogy.
* A research specialism in a particular field of social or interdisciplinary conservation science.
* Knowledge of decolonial methodologies.
* Proficiency in languages other than English.
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| Additional requirements |
| Essential | * This post is a blended role for office and home working; some travel to ZSL’s offices will be required.
* This post requires occasional work during evenings and/or and weekends.
* This role requires frequent overseas travel worldwide (sometimes in remote areas) and is expected to travel up to 45 days per year.
* Strong commitment to creating a culture that lives ZSL values and commitment to safeguarding, equality and diversity (collaborative, inspiring, inclusive, innovative, impactful and ethical).
* To comply with and promote Health and Safety policies and procedures.
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