

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Request for ecological and facilitation services to support delivery of pilot Connecting Nature Scheme in Counties Cavan and Monaghan.

June 2022



This project is funded by the National Parks and Wildlife, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht through the Biodiversity National Action Plan fund for local authorities.

SUMMARY

Monaghan County Council and Cavan County Council seek the services of a small, suitably qualified and experienced ecological team to deliver an exciting initiative to help landowners and communities protect nature by restoring ecological corridors or nature networks.

The project will engage with farmers and communities to map habitat connectivity in pilot areas and to plan ways to restore broken nature networks. It will support the identification of on the ground action by providing materials to improve or restore natural connections and train the communities and the farmers on how to do the works.

The works may include, for example, creation of pocket woodlands, hedgerow planting or laying, collection of seed from venerable trees and establishment of small-scale local nurseries. Communities will map where they have undertaken restoration works and undertake to protect these areas for a number of years.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

This pilot project phase runs from August –November 2022 and will focus on engaging communities and landowners to participate and will undertake a small number of small practical projects to determine what is the most effective way of running such a scheme.

Landowners and communities will access the scheme by submitting expressions of interest applications. The first tranche of expressions of interest will be sought by the Monaghan and Cavan Heritage Offices in August 2022.

It is envisaged that the ecological team will work with six communities between August and November 2022.

Tasks for the team

The team will work with landowners and communities to:

- Organise talks/walks with farmers and communities to introduce farmers and communities to concepts and practical solutions that can be taken to address biodiversity loss.
- Meet landowners onsite and engage with them
- Draw up habitat connectivity maps for sites, showing areas of restoration potential such as hedgerow management changes, planting hedges in gaps, hedge-laying, pocket woodlands etc.

- Facilitate discussion and feedback during the project so that the elements that are most effective can be identified, and methodology agreed for way forward in subsequent years.
- The project will be facilitated by a relationship builder with knowledge of farming and environment and an ecologist to advise on the mapping, species choices, and works.
- Interpretation and promotion of the project will be undertaken by the ecologist in consultation with landowners and communities.
- Organise training for landowners and communities.
- Provide ecological supervision for restoration works.
- Communications are crucial to the wider peer networks, liaise with stakeholders and communicate with the public.
- Liaise with the NPWS, Cavan County Council and Monaghan County Council.
- Monitor the sites after restoration.
- Keep records of work and produce annual reports showing results of scheme.
- Actions will be costed as part of each restoration plan
- Collaboration and building partnerships will be a necessary part of the project, both with agencies, nature organisations and other projects that are active in this area.

Required Outputs

- Ecologist and relationship builder to meet with each of the communities and landowners to familiarise them with the project aim and objectives and identify project site;
- Ecologist to draw up habitat maps for six sites identified with local communities and landowners, showing areas of restoration potential such as hedgerow management changes, planting hedges in gaps, hedge-laying, pocket woodlands etc.
- Relationship builder with knowledge of farming and environment and an ecologist to advise on the mapping, species choices, and works;
- Training for landowners and communities specifically in relation to biodiversity and halting biodiversity loss;
- Interpretative material for six sites;
- Liaise with Cavan County Council and Monaghan County Council Heritage Officers and other relevant agencies;

HOW TO APPLY TO THIS CALL -

Applicants are asked to submit their CVs and a summary of three recent initiatives that are of relevance to the delivery of this contract along with a schedule of daily rates applicable to:

shclerkin@monaghancoco.ie by 29th July 2022 at 5pm.

Please write **Ecological services** in the subject line of the email.

Travel and subsistence will be paid within the county in line with local authority rates and policies.

The successful candidates can work remotely / from home.

The successful candidates will require their own transport.

Interviews may be held with short-listed applicants.

OTHER MATTERS

This contract will be awarded on the basis of a fixed price contract as such, all costs must be submitted as a fixed cost in Euro. No amount over and above the negotiated total contract price amount will be paid to the appointed contractor.

All invoices and supporting documentation must be submitted by email to shclerkin@monaghancoco.ie

The client reserves the right not to accept any of the submissions.

The management team will require a copy of the final draft of the written reports for comment and approval prior to completion.

Monaghan County Council operates under the Freedom of Information Act 1997, and all information held by the County Council may be subject to requests under this Act.

Monaghan County Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender, and no person making a submission will be remunerated for any trouble or expense incurred in preparing a submission.

CONTRACT EVALUATION AND MONITORING

The performance of the appointed service provider will be subject to continuous monitoring, management and review.