

## THE ROLE

<b>Title</b>	Operations Manager / Interim Director
<b>Employed by</b>	Sustainable Northern Ireland
<b>Reporting to</b>	Board of Directors through its Chair
<b>Job Purpose</b>	Responsibility for the operational activities of the organisation and delivery of high-quality services in line with the organisation's strategy, purpose and values.
<b>Posts Responsible to Position</b>	2 x Sustainability Advisors
<b>Location</b>	Belfast Offices / Home Working in line with current policy
<b>Salary</b>	Grade Equivalent to NJC PO4 (£41,496 - £44,539)
<b>Hours</b>	35 hours per week (flexible working considered)
<b>Contract</b>	12 months - maternity cover (Possibility of extension subject to funding. Secondments may be considered.)

## JOB SUMMARY

The Operations Manager / Interim Director oversees the operational activities of the organisation and is responsible for the delivery of high-quality services in line with organisation's strategy, purpose and values<sup>1</sup>. This includes hiring and training employees, managing quality assurance programmes, and developing process improvements to ensure everyone completes their tasks on schedule.

The Operations Manager / Interim Director will be committed to the values of Sustainable Northern Ireland (SNI), working with both funders and external stakeholders to promote and drive the organisation's mission and objectives through effective representation, lobbying and campaigning.

The Operations Manager / Interim Director will role model effective communication and ensure that resources are grown and developed, building momentum around the vision, purpose, values, and services of the organisation and maintaining the organisation's reputation as a source of high-quality independent advice, guidance and information on sustainability.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sustainableni.org/sites/default/files/11350%20-%20SNI%20Brochure%203.pdf>

## **MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

### **Policy and Performance**

- To be accountable to the Board of Directors, for the efficient and effective performance of the organisation to ensure that services provided meet the needs and aspirations of SNI funders and other stakeholders.
- Review and update all operating procedures for the organisation, including staff handbooks, Health & Safety policy and GDPR.
- Champion and articulate the vision, values, and services of SNI to partners, funders, staff, the public and the media, to influence legislation, policy, practice and public awareness and, ensuring SNI is an effective voice for sustainable policy and practice in Northern Ireland. Maintain an elevated level of awareness of the external environment which impacts on the work of SNI and ensure that key stakeholders are well informed and comprehensively briefed through the collection and dissemination of appropriate information.
- Scan for developments externally to identify and pursue appropriate opportunities for new and innovative projects and services in line with SNI's strategic direction and core purpose.

### **Providing Leadership**

- Promote a high-performance culture, acting as strategic lead for the operational planning process, ensuring the overall performance of the organisation is monitored in line with agreed performance targets and quality standards without compromising employee wellbeing.
- Build a strong and mutually supportive culture of team working in which individual roles are clearly defined and where a sense of collective responsibility for key decisions and policies is fostered.
- Provide leadership on the formulation of policy positions, advising the Board on relevant public and political developments with the potential to impact on the work of SNI and its funders.
- Act as the key contact and primary Media Spokesperson, seizing opportunities to build the public profile and reputation of SNI and always ensuring the promotion of a positive and professional image of the organisation which advocates the organisation's mission, vision, and values.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

- Build collaborative and effective relationships with SNI's strategic partners, e.g., legislators, central and local government, universities and the business community in Northern Ireland and beyond, to ensure that the organisation's role, policy positions and services are well understood and valued.
- Engage in strategic networks and work proactively with others including public and private bodies, legislators and political parties, voluntary and community organisations and the media to develop understanding, connectivity and to influence policy and service developments of SNI.
- Proactively seek to grow new partnerships which will allow for further innovation in the development of the services that SNI provides.

### **Compliance and Governance**

- Enable the Board to fulfil its governance functions by providing input, advice and guidance on all aspects of the organisation ensuring that its constitutional and legal obligations are discharged appropriately.
- Ensure that the role of Company Secretary is fulfilled supporting the effective governance of the organisation in line with the Code of Good Governance.

- Ensure that a robust system of governance and risk management is operating effectively in association with the Management Team to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and best practice.
- Build an ethos of continuous improvement and work to identify lessons of good practice and prioritise potential service improvements and developments.
- Assist the Chair in the development and effective participation of each Board member, identifying the skills and experience that will be required by the Board to reflect stakeholder and client interests and societal challenges.

### **Financial and Resource Management**

- Responsible for the effective oversight of SNI's finances, providing assurance to the Treasurer and Board of financial sustainability with overall accountability for organisation performance.
- Ensure that SNI complies with good practice around all statutory financial requirements including the preparation of all required financial statements and that the financial accountancy practices of the organisation are robust and transparent.
- Provide strategic oversight for the development of an annual budget within SNI which is aligned with the Operational Plan and ensure the Board is kept fully informed on opportunities and threats which will impact the financial sustainability of SNI.
- Investigate and develop new and innovative funding options for the organisation, ensuring that SNI is fulfilling needs of current members and expanding the membership as appropriate.
- Take a proactive and strategic approach to the development of Digital Technology Approaches understanding how they can be used to support both the delivery of the Strategy and of the Operational Plan.

### **Other**

- Ability to work flexible hours and to travel throughout Northern Ireland and elsewhere at times as demanded by the job.
- Any other duties as determined by the Board relevant to the well-being and reputation of the organisation in line with or ancillary to the above tasks and responsibilities.
- This Job Description is a general outline of the post providing guidelines within which the post-holder works. It is subject to review and development considering changing circumstance.

# THE PERSON

## Essential Criteria:

### Either

- Degree level qualification in a relevant subject (or equivalent) plus two years' management\* experience that includes responsibility for a team with evidence of supporting that team to deliver effective outcomes and performance improvements.

### Or

- Five years' management\* experience that includes responsibility for a team with evidence of supporting that team to deliver effective outcomes and performance improvements.

For the purposes of shortlisting, candidates must demonstrate their relevant experience, for the number of years required, in at least three of the following areas:

- Strong knowledge of effective corporate governance and providing assurance on financial management, while effectively managing and mitigating risk.
- Managing delivery of high-quality services with overall responsibility for a team and resources.
- Strong knowledge and insight of current and emerging issues within the environment and energy sector.
- Representing an organisation (including in the media) to build constituencies of interest with a diverse range of stakeholders.

## Desirable Criteria:

- Additional relevant qualifications (MSc, PhD, MBA).
- Additional management experience above the essential minimum.
- Experience of identifying and securing new sources of funding for projects or programmes and working in partnership with external agencies to ensure timely delivery of outcomes and reporting.
- Experience of identifying and influencing the development of policy responses to environmental challenges.
- Experience in the development and implementation of sustainability strategies and plans.
- Experience of working with voluntary and/or public sector organisations.

*\*Management is defined as either running a small organisation or section head in a larger organisation – responsible for staff, budget, strategy development, monitoring, etc. Experience may be in a paid or voluntary capacity.*

# COMPETENCIES

## Strategic Direction

- Thinks strategically and translates strategy into specific plans to deliver results, anticipates change and considers long term strategic consequences of options and solutions.
- Seeks innovative ways to deliver or enhance services and encourages others to propose new ways of working that grow innovation.

## Providing Leadership

- Inspirational leader who accepts accountability, motivates others, is transparent, encourages trust and has high ethical standards.
- Displays drive, determination and resilience to make things happen, motivates and empowers others towards achievement of a future vision and better outcomes.

## Delivering at Pace

- Takes responsibility for delivering expected outcomes on time and to standard, addressing performance issues resolutely, fairly and promptly and giving credit to teams and individuals as appropriate.
- Plans ahead but reassess workloads and priorities if situations change or people are facing conflicting demands, keeping their own and the team's efforts focused on the goals that really matter.

## Compelling Communication

- Has the ability to communicate to people at all levels with confidence in challenging situations to represent effectively, to advocate, to resolve conflict and maintain good personal relationships and resolve conflict. Has the ability to listen and take on board different perspectives.
- Can compellingly debate and articulate in public forums including media and live broadcast, to strongly represent interests without alienating key stakeholders. Highly articulate, thoughtful and will constructively challenge in a way that wins broad support.

## Stakeholder Engagement

- Proven ability in networking across a wide range of stakeholders, developing and maintaining relevant networks with sensitivity and diplomacy.
- Is politically astute and understands the political environment in which the organisation operates with an understanding of the sector's relationship with local and central government, the context of devolution, relations with the EU and wider civic society.

## Decision Making and Judgement

- Applies sound judgement, taking a holistic view and can identify, assess and consider the interests of external and internal stakeholders when taking decisions, mindful that there will be competing and opposing views that need balanced in reaching a conclusion.
- Ability to oversee the effective management of organisational finance and risk identification that provides assurance of good governance and ensures a proportionate and measured approach.

# **BENEFITS**

SNI is recognised as a great place to work. The key benefits associated with this role include:

## **Salary**

- £41,496 - £44,539 per annum

## **Hours**

- 35 per week (flexible working available, including flexitime and TOIL)

## **Financial**

- Incremental pay bands in line with NJC pay scales including annual cost of living increases
- 7.5% employer pension contribution (in line with Ethical Pension Policy)

## **Leave**

- 25 days (rising to 30 days on completion of 5 years of service)
- 12 statutory holidays in addition to annual leave entitlement

SNI also offers a range of training and development opportunities to support employees.

# APPLICATION PROCESS

## Recruitment timeline

**Advertising from:** w/c 9 January 2023

**Closing date:** 27 January 2023

**Short-listing:** w/c 6 February 2023

**Interviews:** w/c 20 February 2023

## Selection Process

Application is via CV together with a cover letter (see candidate guidelines) and a short supplementary monitoring form. SNI will carry out an initial paper-based shortlist of candidate applications and will invite shortlisted candidates to attend a competency based interview with representatives from the SNI Board. The interview will assess skills and understanding that are vital to the role. Candidates will be advised of the structure of the interview and composition of the panel in advance. The outcome of the interview will be communicated to each candidate individually. Please note, feedback will not be provided to candidates not shortlisted for interview.

Job offers are subject to references and that all information in the application is accurate and not misleading. The recruitment may be used to fill other similar positions in future.

## Candidate Guidelines

- Before writing your application, familiarise yourself with the Job Description, this will help you select examples of your experience that are relevant to the role.
- Explain how you meet the essential and, if applicable, desirable criteria. Outline your relevant experience, for the number of years required, in each of the criteria listed. Tie your explanations back into the job description and competencies. Explanations should be limited to 500 words per criterion.
- Insert dates to clearly show a timeline of your work experience. The panel will be looking for you to demonstrate a number of years' experience for each criterion, it should be clear that you have the correct length of experience, depending on your level of qualification.
- Experience should be demonstrated as opposed to just stated. For example, it is not considered sufficient to say: "I have experience in..." or "I have carried out these duties." You should outline how you carried out the relevant duties, outline your actions and the outcomes or the processes you followed to demonstrate your experience for each of criterion.
- Use examples of specific work/projects you have been involved in, highlighting the role that you played and how you contributed to its success.
- Don't assume the panel know what your current role involves. All applications are anonymised so the panel will not know who the application they are assessing belongs to.
- Take time to proofread your application to make sure you have provided enough information and also to review for spelling and grammar.
- Ensure you have sufficient time to prepare and submit a high quality application.
- Ensure you include your CV and equality monitoring form with your application.

### Further information / queries

Should you have any queries relating to any aspect of this appointment or the content of this document or wish to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact Nichola Hughes by telephone on 028 9590 2500.

Postal Address:

Sustainable Northern Ireland  
Innovation Factory  
385 Springfield Road  
Belfast  
BT12 7DG

Applications may be returned via email to [info@sustainableni.org](mailto:info@sustainableni.org), by post or hand delivered to our address above, but must arrive by close of business on **Friday 27 January 2023**. Late applications will not be accepted.

We reserve the right to close this vacancy early if we receive sufficient applications for the role. We also reserve the right to extend the closing date if the initial recruitment trawl is unsuccessful.



# ABOUT US

## Our Strategic Plan

Our strategy describes our vision and mission and the crucial role SNI plays in providing information and advice on sustainable development policy and practice in Northern Ireland. It highlights the role the organisation plays in providing authoritative guidance on strategy and policy development and informing and coordinating the sustainability activities of local authorities and public sector bodies, which has become increasingly more important given the political impasse at Stormont in recent years and the diminished leadership role of central government on sustainability issues in Northern Ireland.

[Download our Strategic Plan \(2019 – 2024\) here.](#)

Furthermore, the Manifesto for a Sustainable Future document, prepared by SNI ahead of the 2022 Assembly Elections was to serve as an initial discussion document identifying some of the key strategic priorities and opportunities for decision makers in supporting a green recovery, post-Covid,

The short document highlighted five key issues that must be addressed to put the economy on a more sustainable footing whilst simultaneously tackling the climate emergency.

[Manifesto for a Sustainable Future.](#)

## Our Operational Plan

Our strategy is supported by an annual operational plan which sets out the work plan in support of our key goals. Our annual plan is agile and responsive to the external environment, and we continually assess our work, its relevance and the need to develop new services as the demand and external environment dictates. It describes the activity we will undertake, the outputs we plan to deliver and how we will assess and measure the impact of our work.

## Our Goals

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Inform</b>    | Empower positive change through information, education and provision of stakeholder forums which support collaborative action on sustainability and climate action. We will do this by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disseminating sustainability information, resources and good practice through regular communications and events</li><li>• Providing the secretariat for the Sustainable Development Forum and All Party Group on Climate Action</li></ul> |
| <b>Reform</b>    | Advocate for green policies that support our vision through active political engagement, policy appraisal, and lobbying. We will do this by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocating strongly for ambitious green policies and legislation</li><li>• Providing our members with opportunities to engage with policymakers and influence policy</li></ul>   |
| <b>Transform</b> | Provide practical advice and support to help organisations achieve their sustainability goals. We will do this by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing high quality and diverse training opportunities</li></ul>  |

- Providing relevant information, guidance, advice, and resources
- Providing consultancy support

**Improve** Ensuring excellent standards and continuous improvement to provide the best service to our members and clients. We will do this by:

- Supporting excellent governance arrangements
- Supporting and developing a flexible and agile workforce
- Continuous development of digital systems and processes
- Sustaining resources and seeking opportunities to diversify our funding mix

## **Our Funding & Finances**

We aim to have a diverse funding mix, broadly in thirds:

- One third direct service delivery and subscriptions
- One third contracts and consultancy
- One third core grant funding

SNI is currently primarily supported by local authorities and the National Lottery Community Fund through its Dormant Accounts programme.

Our latest Impact Report can be found [here](#).