



Science and Conservation Director

October 2024



About Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT)

Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) is one of the most successful and impactful local conservation organizations based at UNESCO World Heritage Site Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (<https://www.lewa.org/>). NRT is a membership organization owned and led by 45 community conservancies in Northern and Coastal Kenya, which together comprise 12% of Kenyan land area. NRT was established as a shared resource to help build and develop community conservancies, to enhance people's lives, build peace, and conserve the natural environment.

NRT was established in 2004 as a shared resource to help build and develop local community conservancies. The institutions are run by indigenous people - they not only give people a voice but provide a platform for developing sustainable enterprise and livelihoods related to conservation. NRT helps communities build resilience and businesses (e.g., BeadWorks) and has set up the first large-scale grasslands soil carbon project.

NRT's Long Term Vision

NRT's Mission is to develop resilient community conservancies that transform lives, secure peace, and conserve natural resources. While its vision is 'Thriving Communities and Ecosystems' this is further detailed and summarized as follows.

- NRT operates in a complex ecosystem that has historically underperformed on national development indicators.

- Complexity will only increase as long-term trends put more pressure on NRT regions (e.g., climate change, population growth, urbanization, outside-in investments)
- This will negatively impact livelihoods of local communities (e.g., pastoralism become more challenging), protection of natural resources and peace and security if the ecosystem does not adapt
- A successful NRT ecosystem of the future is defined by 20 priority topics clustered in 7 key themes: *community-led institutions, peace and security, sustainable local economies, education, natural resources, health, and reliable energy*
- To deliver on these priority topics, NRT takes on three complementary roles:
 - Center of Expertise, where NRT drives and advances the topic at HQ/region level
 - Trusted Coalition, where NRT supports CCYs to take the lead on a topic
 - Convening Platform, where NRT is involved in a topic through partners/government
- The long-term delivery model will look different from today: NRT will move from being a Center of Expertise on most topics to enabling others and acting as a Coalition/Platform





The Role

Role:
Science and Conservation Director

Location:
Nanyuki, Kenya

Job Type:
Full-Time (Initial contract up to 3 years renewable depending on funding and performance)

Reporting:
Reports to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Salary:
Competitive

Benefits:
The benefits include; Pension, Medical Insurance, AMREF air evacuation cover, Group Life Cover, GPA/ WIBA Cover among others

Direct Reports:
GIS Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation & Learning, Manager, Wildlife Monitoring Manager, Earth Ranger Digitisation Officer

Job Summary

As the Science & Conservation Director, the office holder will lead the organization’s evidence-based monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning (including applied research). The office holder’s scientific expertise (in environmental science, ecology, biology, conservation, climate and/or social sciences) will be instrumental in fostering partnerships and developing organisational research and learning strategies, and overseeing critical areas such as GIS, grant project and program Monitoring, Evaluation & learning (MEAL), data management and

analysis of wildlife, governance and social change. Through this leadership, we aim to advance our understanding of conservation and development challenges and implement effective strategies for community-led conservation.

This is also an extension of the previous advertisement for the same role advertised directly by NRT and for which Oxford HR will review the applications received, as well as manage relevant communication for the process.

Key Responsibilities

The Science and Conservation Director's main role is to develop, implement and oversee an overarching monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning strategy to provide robust business intelligence to inform and guide NRT operations.

This includes:

- Oversee all aspects of a highly significant Conservation program area encompassing complex project areas across the country.
- Provide strategic leadership and support for conservation planning work and establish overall conservation priorities for NRT.
- Serves as the principle contact to government agencies, other conservation organizations, foundations, and academic community.
- Rationalization of all datasets and flows across the NRT network to establish annual impact reports and analysis.
- Play a leading role in donor identification, cultivation, and stewardship for the program.
- Disseminate best practices, provides training and analyses to best implement organizational measures of success, and develops key partnerships.
- Establish NRT as a major conservation partner and define conservation priorities.
- Play a leading role in public and private fundraising programs
- Build strategic, scientific, and technical capacity in the field, develop key partnerships with public & private organizations to identify and resolve technical issues and to widely communicate solutions and best practices,
- Develop innovative scientific methods, analyses, tools, and frameworks to address the natural system needs.
- Engage local community support for local conservation efforts, negotiate complex and innovative solutions with government agencies and landowners to conserve and protect natural communities.
- Develop and implement cutting edge conservation strategies across NRT geographies.
- Ensure that methods, tools, learning, and cutting-edge science are coordinated and dispersed throughout the organization.
- Serve as a primary contact for science within the organization.
- Ensures dissemination of best practices throughout the organization.
- Ensure that appropriate training and analysis on thematic issues is also provided as appropriate.
- Work to integrate Science activities with organization wide priorities and field programs.
- Lead and manage a team which supports and improves conservation efforts.
- Provide oversight for GIS, MEAL, data management, and wildlife, governance and social monitoring functions to ensure accurate and effective data collection and analysis.
- Oversee implementation of EarthRanger software and roll out of the digital data collection for Wildlife Comms, Veg Comms, Governance Comms, Social Comms and Marine Comms across all regions
- Develop an overarching applied research strategy for the organization, identifying key research areas and partners aligned with our mission and goals. This includes overseeing the schedule and quality assuring all baseline midline and final evaluations.
- Support efforts to publish research outcomes and findings in reputable scientific journals and present at conferences to contribute to the broader scientific community and drive evidence based community led conservation efforts.
- Establish and nurture strategic partnerships and consortiums with research institutes, governmental agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders to collaborate with and share data in the landscape. This includes maintaining a strong relationship with Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and strengthen joint research, monitoring and other scientific efforts.
- Mentor and guide junior scientists and MEAL officers within the organization, and design training programs for staff and community conservancies to enhance their MEAL and scientific skills and knowledge.
- Oversee implementation and execution of species management plans, the endangered species programme, and robust monitoring and evaluation protocols.
- Develop annual budgets for the department and provide any support required in the development of fundraising proposals and grant reports.
- Provide daily management, coaching and mentorship, and career development and training opportunities to all direct reporting staff.



Candidate Profile

Experience and Qualifications

- Ph.D. in a relevant field such as Environmental Science, Ecology, Biology, Conservation and/or relevant social science.
- Demonstrated 10 years' experience in managing research initiatives with strong analytical skills and proficiency in data analysis/statistical tools.
- Experience working with relevant International NGOs or Corporate organisations that align with the desired Initiatives of the role that would include strong communication, presentation and negotiation skills
- Experience designing, implementing, and directing complex or multiple projects of strategic importance, including managing finances, supervising multidisciplinary professionals and coordinating the work of various partners while meeting deadlines.
- Supervisory experience, including motivating, leading, setting objectives and managing performance.
- Experience publishing in peer reviewed scientific journals and working with current trends and practices in conservation science
- Experience working with methods and standards of biodiversity information systems and initiatives.
- Experience conceiving and implementing strategic and creative initiatives involving multiple countries.
- Experience communicating and teaching science to a wide range of audiences.
- Experience working in multicultural and interdisciplinary teams to address complex conservation and development challenges.

- Demonstrated leadership and visionary qualities and ability to work effectively with and through others in a decentralized and geographically dispersed organization.
- Experience with complex organization that required matrix management of technical teams across a vast landscape with a flexibility to work from any part of the landscape.
- Experience with data analysis and data modeling systems

Desired Competencies

- Must have excellent decision-making, multi-stakeholder management, and interpersonal capabilities.
- Must possess high energy, forward thinking, creativity with high ethical standards.
- Must possess strong communication, Interpersonal and engagement skills
- Passion for community development, engagement, and wildlife conservation.
- Knowledge of politics and society with respect to environmental affairs.
- Ability to establish and leverage strong relationships with diverse groups
- Knowledge of fundraising techniques and ability to identify, cultivate and solicit major donors.
- Willingness to work in hardship areas and with diverse cultures
- Must possess positive interpersonal, diplomatic and negotiation skills that can be applied to internal and external relationships.

How to Apply

All correspondence, at this stage, should be via Oxford HR. To apply for this post, click on the “Apply” button on the job advert page, complete our online application form, and submit your CV and cover letter as two different documents, which should be prepared before applying as they will be considered in the application process. The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit.

The document should be saved in PDF in the following format: Your First Name-Your Last Name-Document Name-Date (mmyy) e.g., Pat-Jones-CV-02024-NRT or Pat-Jones-CoverLetter-102024-NRT.

Timeline

Closing Date: 25th November 2024
First stage interviews: TBC
Final interviews: TBC

Selection Process

All candidates will receive an update regarding their application after the closing date. We advise candidates to add the role email to their safe senders list and regularly check their spam folder.

Equality Statement

Equality and diversity are at the core of NRT’s values. Staff are expected to work collectively and individually to promote a constructive and sensitive approach to others from a variety of backgrounds, where the work of others is valued and respected.

International applicants/expatriates as well as candidates from areas of NRT operation are highly encouraged to apply.

Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information, or would like to have an informal discussion, please email at rseremon@oxfordhr.com in the first instance.



About Oxford HR

Oxford HR is a B Corp certified leadership consultancy. Having worked within a diverse range of institutions, from not-for-profits and charities to governments and corporate environments, we've seen the powerful impact that the perfect team can have.

Finding innovative leaders can be a challenge; and yet their transition into leadership is vital to an organisation's mission and success. We work across the globe to search for a support remarkable leaders and teams, improve their board effectiveness and support on a range of leadership functions. Learn more at: oxfordhr.com





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