

Saving Marion Island's Seabirds

The Mouse-Free Marion Project



Call for Expressions of Interest

Operations Manager

Mouse-Free Marion Project

A. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Mouse-Free Marion Non-Profit Company seeks expressions of interest for a highly qualified, dedicated and dynamic Operations Manager to co-ordinate and implement the Mouse-Free Marion (MFM) project on Marion Island, a South African territory renowned for its rich abundance and diversity of seabirds. The project aims to eradicate invasive house mice (*Mus musculus*) from the island, which are decimating the island's seabirds, invertebrates and other species.

The South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) is responsible for the Prince Edward Islands, of which Marion Island forms a part. DFFE has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) to eradicate the house mice from Marion Island, following BLSA's commissioning of a feasibility study, and thereafter of a draft Operational Plan.

A Mouse-Free Marion Non-Profit Company (NPC) has been established to implement the project, with a Service Level Agreement with DFFE and BLSA. The NPC has established its Board, Management Committee and Scientific and Technical Advisory Group, and has appointed its Project Manager for the MFM project. It now seeks an Operations Manager, who will lead the actual eradication work on the island.

B. SCOPE OF WORK

The primary responsibility of the Operations Manager will be:

1. To develop, update and implement the Operational Plan for the eradication of mice on Marion Island.

Additional responsibilities include (but are not limited to) the following:

2. Engaging with the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) on the Operational Plan.
3. Determining and writing Terms of Reference for the personnel for the Operations Team.
4. Leading the selection of the personnel for the Operations Team.
5. Ensuring that all training requirements for the Operations Team are met.
6. Developing Health and Safety protocols and managing them on the island.
7. Leading on all operational decisions on the island.
8. Determining the requirements for the contract for bait.
9. Monitoring of the bait-manufacturing process.
10. Determining the requirements for the contract for the helicopters and helicopter pilots.
11. Monitoring of the preparation of the helicopters and pilots.

12. Determining the requirements for the contract for the supply ship.
13. Advising on Biosecurity protocols and implementation.
14. Supporting the Project Manager in managing all contractors to ensure the delivery of the project.
15. Supporting the Project Manager with all subsidiary plans of the Project Plan.
16. Supporting the Fund-raiser, as may be required.
17. Supporting the Project Manager in the writing of management reports and other documentation, where appropriate.
18. Providing a post-baiting (post-operational) de-briefing and report.
19. Guiding the requirements for a long-term monitoring plan for the island.
20. Attending of all required meetings.

C. QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS

1. Proven experience in managing a rodent-eradication project on an island using aerial-baiting techniques.
2. Knowledge of ecological and biological attributes of house mice, and their invasive behaviour.
3. Broad experience in the conservation field.
4. Understanding of the ecology of sub-polar islands.
5. Proven record of achieving of project goals.
6. Problem-solving experience and expertise.
7. Sound understanding of health and safety requirements, and management of risks.
8. Proven leadership skills.
9. Well-developed relationship-management skills, including conflict-resolution.
10. An ability to communicate effectively with people and organisations in a multi-stakeholder environment.
11. Track record of working collaboratively with diverse groups.
12. Ability to multi-task, prioritise and delegate effectively. Flexibility in adverse conditions.
13. Willingness to do what it takes to meet project goals and timelines.
14. Strong financial management experience.
15. Computer literacy and proficiency in Microsoft Office software.
16. Willingness and ability to travel nationally and internationally, as well as to spend extended periods on a remote island.

D. REPORTING LINES AND PLACE OF WORK

1. The Operations Manager will report to the Project Manager and through to the Management Committee.
2. S/He will nevertheless have management responsibility for the operation on the island.
3. The Operations Manager may be located wherever is convenient to her or him, but must be accessible for on-line meetings at times convenient to the project management. S/He is expected to be in Cape Town two months before sailing to Marion Island to implement the project.
4. This is a demanding project, which may involve extensive travel by air and sea.
5. It is expected that the Operations Manager will go on the take-over voyage to Marion Island in March/April 2022, to familiarize herself/himself with the island, and pre-baiting preparations that may be being undertaken on the island.

E. TERMS OF ASSOCIATION AND COMPENSATION

The intention is to implement to eradication of the mice on Marion Island in the winter of 2023. In order to do so, sufficient funds have to be raised. An Operational Plan is essential to determine what funding is necessary. The project cannot proceed until all the necessary funding is secured. Should the funding not be secured in time to make the necessary arrangements (e.g. staff, bait, helicopters, vessel time), the project will have to be postponed until the winter of 2024, or later.

The NPC is seeking an Operations Manager who will have three periods of engagement:

- a. Firstly, the time to develop the Operational Plan that details what is necessary. This is an immediate priority, given the need to allow enough time to secure the necessary funding. It is anticipated that this will be a full-time engagement, to be completed by 31 August July 2021.
- b. Secondly, there will be the period where all of the preparatory arrangements are made. This is primarily the responsibility of the Project Manager, but the Operations Manager must guide what is needed, and may need to refine the Operational Plan based on developments. The Operations Manager is also responsible for making all of the appointments of the Operational Team on the island. It is anticipated that this will be a part-time engagement, from September 2021 until January 2023. During this period, s/he will also be required to visit Marion Island during the DFFE take-over voyage in April 2022.
- c. Thirdly, the key period will be the implementation of the Operational Plan for the eradication of the mice on Marion Island in the short-term. This will run from January to October 2023.
- d. Should it be necessary to postpone the eradication work until 2024, then the second period of engagement (b) would be extended accordingly.

Remuneration, including S&T and associated expenses in fulfilling the role, will be structured according to the requirements stipulated above, and be negotiated with the successful candidate.

F. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants are to submit:

1. A detailed curriculum vitae with three contactable referees.
2. Copies of qualifications.
3. A copy of the applicant's identity/passport document.
4. A detailed motivation as to how the applicant sees her/his role in this post.
5. A portfolio detailing all eradication project in which s/he has been involved; her/his role, and the outcome. Other complex projects that s/he has managed should also be outlined.

Please note:

1. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.
2. Applicants submitting an expression of interest may be required to attend an interview (by Zoom) and be subjected to a verification process.
3. The Mouse-Free Marion Board reserves the right not to make an appointment.

Assumption of contract: We hope to make the appointment from 1 July 2021.

Closing date for applications: 07 May 2021.

To apply, please e-mail your expression of interest to Dr Isabel Human, at isabel.human@birdlife.org.za, with the subject title **MOUSE-FREE MARION OPERATIONS MANAGER**.

For further information, contact Mr Mark D. Anderson, MFM Management Committee Chairperson, on ceo@birdlife.org.za.