

Saving Marion Island's Seabirds

The Mouse-Free Marion Project



VACANCY ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE OFFICER THE MOUSE-FREE MARION PROJECT

A. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Marion Island is the larger of the two Prince Edward Islands in the south-western Indian Ocean. The islands are globally important breeding sites for seabirds and other wildlife and were afforded Special Nature Reserve status by South Africa in 1995. House Mice, inadvertently introduced by sealers in the early 19th century, are having a devastating impact on the seabirds and ecology of the island.

Informed by the outcomes of a feasibility study and internationally agreed best practice, the South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) and BirdLife South Africa are collaborating on a project to eradicate House Mice from Marion Island – the Mouse-Free Marion (MFM) Project. BirdLife South Africa has established a special entity, the Mouse-Free Marion Non-Profit Company (MFM NPC), to help facilitate the implementation of the Project.

In 2021, the MFM NPC appointed a Project Manager (PM), an Operations Manager (OM), a Communications Officer/Project Assistant (COPA) and a Chief Philanthropy Officer (CPO) to progress the planning for the MFM Project. We are now intensifying efforts to raise the necessary funds and advance our planning for the eradication operation, currently envisaged for the winter of 2025.

To help support these efforts, we are seeking expressions of interest for a qualified, dedicated and dynamic Administration and Finance Officer. In the immediate term, a large component of this work will comprise clerical support for the project's fund-raising activities.

B. JOB DESCRIPTION

The MFM Administration and Finance Officer will support the MFM Project Team and work closely with the Finance Team at BirdLife South Africa across a range of administrative and bookkeeping tasks. This new role is intended to provide highly flexible and efficient administrative support across all areas of the MFM Project.

The ideal candidate will have strong administrative, bookkeeping and customer relations skills and experience, ideally with knowledge of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database software, such as Salesforce, as well as experience in using bookkeeping software, preferably Pastel/Sage.

C. SCOPE OF WORK

The primary responsibilities of the Administration and Finance Officer will include, but not be limited to:

1. Supporting the MFM Project Team, and working closely with the BirdLife South Africa Finance Team, in the meticulous management of the project's administrative, philanthropic donation, bookkeeping, and finance activities.
2. Organising and maintaining records and files, including continuous maintenance of accurate databases.
3. Accurately entering information regarding grants, gifts and donations, and contacts into the MFM Project's CRM donor database and providing timely and courteous acknowledgement to all donors. This is likely to comprise approximately 50% of the time in the initial period.
4. Preparing donor acknowledgement letters and certificates.
5. Undertaking the administrative requirements for procurement, recruitment, logistics, travel support, record-keeping, financial monitoring, Salesforce donor database other data management, and office and meeting support.
6. Assist the BirdLife South Africa Finance Team with bringing transactions to book in Pastel.
7. In conjunction with the BirdLife South Africa Finance Team, preparing project documentation for annual statutory audit and any additional information, as required.
8. Assisting in the preparation of information for meetings and presentations.
9. Helping recruit, supervise and work with additional capacity that may be needed in the period leading up to the team's departure for the island, in order to manage the increased workload that increasing procurement and staff/contractor arrangements will entail.

D. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

1. Strong administrative and financial support experience, preferably at least 5 years' experience in general bookkeeping.
2. Experience in a customer or supporter service environment.
3. Experience with Microsoft Office software, especially Excel and Word, data entry and management ideally using CRM databases such as Salesforce, or similar.
4. Experience with bookkeeping software, preferably Pastel/Sage.
5. Excellent organisational skills, with thorough attention to detail and the ability to prioritise and organise your own work, follow agreed work-plans and meet deadlines without compromising on quality.
6. Excellent written and verbal communication skills that include sensitivity to donor information.
7. Ability to work independently, multi-task, problem solve, prioritise and take initiative while working collaboratively as part of a team.
8. A genuine interest and enthusiasm for environmental issues and the objectives of the MFM Project and a passion for sharing this with our supporters.
9. A formal bookkeeping/accounting qualification will be beneficial.

E. REPORTING LINES AND PLACE OF WORK

1. The Administration and Finance Officer will report to the Project Manager.
2. It is intended that this position will be located at Isdell House, BirdLife South Africa's head office in Johannesburg, to facilitate efficient linkages with the BirdLife South Africa Finance and Administrative teams and mechanisms..

F. TERMS OF ASSOCIATION AND COMPENSATION

1. The contract period will be for an initial period of two years, with a possible extension depending on the project completion date and subject to mutual agreement. The contract will include a 3-month probation period.
2. Due to the international nature of the project, with some staff being based in the USA and New Zealand, the MFM Administration and Finance Officer must be willing to work flexible hours.

3. The actual eradication operation of the Mouse-Free Marion project is scheduled to take place in the winter of 2025, with planning work for the project having already commenced.
4. Should planning or funding requirements not be met, the eradication operation may be postponed by a year.
5. The contractor will be expected to attend online meetings of the various project structures.
6. The salary will be negotiated. Any operational, travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses in fulfilling the role will be covered, according to certain specifications.

G. 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.

Please note:

1. Closing date for applications: 17 February 2023.
2. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.
3. Applicants will be required to attend an interview (possibly on-line) and be subjected to a verification process, which may include a relevant assignment.
4. The Mouse-Free Marion NPC Board reserves the obtain independent references.
5. The Mouse-Free Marion NPC Board reserves the right not to make an appointment.
6. Communication will be limited to shortlisted candidates only. You may assume that your application was unsuccessful if you were not contacted within six weeks of the closing date for applications.
7. The Mouse-Free Marion NPC Board subscribes to and applies the directions of the Protection of Personal Information Act.
8. The Mouse-Free Marion NPC Board subscribes to and applies the principles prescribed by the Employment Equity Act. Preference will be given to candidates from designated groups, in accordance with the principles of the aforementioned act and the employee profile.

Assumption of contract: We hope to make the appointment from March/April 2023.
Closing date for applications: 17 February 2023.

Please email your application to Dr Isabel Human, at isabel.human@birdlife.org.za, with the subject title **MOUSE-FREE MARION ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE OFFICER**.

For further information, contact Dr Anton Wolfaardt, MFM Project Manager, on anton.wolfaardt@birdlife.org.za