Nature North Director – Job Description

Role Title: Director, Nature North

Location: Remote, North of England, with an expectation of travel across and beyond the region as appropriate.

Salary: 0.8 FTE £60,000-£70,000 per annum, dependent on experience.

Contract type: 2 year-fixed term

Nature North is hosted by Cumbria Wildlife Trust. We are open to considering a range of hosting arrangements for this role, including employment through Cumbria Wildlife Trust, secondment opportunities, or other suitable arrangements by mutual agreement.

About Nature North

Nature North is a cross sector, pan-regional partnership of businesses and agencies working to drive climate resilience and green growth through nature recovery.

The partnership has the ambition through collaboration and leadership to create a nature positive regional economy. A prosperous and thriving North, where nature's recovery attracts investment and is integral to economic growth, resilient communities, improved health and better places to live.

Nature North has developed over the last 5 years, supported by a small core team and wider partnership network, to build the relationships, advocacy, evidence and expertise to deliver on this ambition. Nature North is working across sectors and is driving forward ambitious programmes of work with local and national government, eNGO's, farmers and land managers, and private sector partners. Nature North is embarking on the next phase of development, and the Director role will be at the heart of this.

Nature North's 'Investing in Nature for the North, A Strategic Plan for a Nature Positive Regional Economy' sets out a clear strategic plan to scale up green investment across the region. The North offers the ambition, leadership and autonomy to create the conditions, drive further collaboration and change, to deliver the benefits for our local communities, protect and restore our Northern landscapes, and build resilience for the region.

Role Summary

The Director provides strategic, operational, and partnership leadership for Nature North. This role is responsible for driving an ambitious regional agenda for nature recovery, securing investment, influencing policy, strengthening collaboration, and ensuring the successful delivery of Nature North's programmes and strategic objectives. The Director acts as the primary ambassador for Nature North and for the pivotal role of Nature North in shaping the region's response to the biodiversity and climate crises. The Director is lead officer for Nature North, responsible for managing staff and resources and providing expert advice to the Board and wider Nature North Partnership in the development and delivery of Nature North priorities as set out in the Strategic Investment Plan, and business plan.

The Nature North Director will be a forward-looking, collaborative, and politically astute leader who can bring together diverse interests, steer complex programmes, and ensure delivery through strong influencing, governance, and partnership structures.

Role Purpose

The Director will:

- Provide visible leadership, ensuring that Nature North develops a strong reputation as a trusted, authoritative leader and partner on nature recovery.
- Drive organisational development, leading change, and building capability and capacity as needed
- Build and support sound governance structures which drive Nature North's strategic direction, ensuring a coherent regional approach that accelerates nature recovery while enabling social, economic, and climate benefits.
- Build strong, inclusive partnerships to deliver cohesive joint action, influence, and cross-government engagement
- Shape, secure, and oversee delivery of major regional programmes, investments, and multi-partner delivery arrangements for nature recovery.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic Leadership & Vision

- Develop and lead the long-term strategy for Nature North, ensuring alignment with national nature recovery, climate adaptation, and environmental policy frameworks.
- Work closely with the Partnership Board, supporting effective decision-making and strategic oversight.
- Drive a clear, compelling vision that positions the North of England at the forefront of nature recovery and green economic transformation.
- Provide leadership across multi-partner programmes, ensuring strong governance, accountability, reputation and impact.

Partnerships, Influence & External Engagement

- Build and maintain high-level relationships with Northern leaders and Mayors, local and national government, Defra bodies, eNGOs, business, and communities.
- Represent Nature North at regional and national forums, acting as a credible and influential voice for nature recovery.
- Convene and chair strategic partnerships, steering groups, and collaborative programmes.

Advocacy & Communications

- Act as the public face of Nature North, inspiring confidence among stakeholders, funders, and communities.
- Champion nature recovery as an essential contributor to economic development, public wellbeing, and climate resilience.
- Lead strategic communications to raise awareness of Nature North's programmes, achievements, and impact.
- Foster relationships and learn from others outside of Nature North including academia, public and private sector.
- Act as lead with other emerging Regional Nature Partnerships, to advocate, share best practice and foster collective learning.

Funding & Investment

- Lead efforts to secure significant external funding from government, philanthropic sources, and private investors.
- Develop investment cases for major nature recovery programmes, working closely with partners to unlock long-term financing models.
- Oversee transparent financial management, budgeting, and reporting.

Programme Leadership & Delivery

- Oversee multiple complex programmes, ensuring clear delivery plans, risk management, governance, and accountability structures
- Ensure effective implementation of new funding mechanisms, nature recovery initiatives, and innovative interventions.

Organisational Leadership

- Build and manage a high-performing team capable of delivering Nature North's ambitions.
- Develop organisational systems, processes, and governance arrangements that enable accountability, transparency, scalability and resilience.
- Drive delivery improvement, ensuring teams and partners operate efficiently and collaboratively, consistent with strengthening delivery principles.
- Promote a culture of equity, inclusion, innovation, and continuous improvement across the partnership.
- Provide strategic leadership to senior managers and officers within Nature North's delivery and coordination structure.

Performance, Governance & Risk

- Ensure programmes achieve agreed KPIs, outcomes, and benefits for nature, communities, and the economy.
- Lead proactive management of reputational, delivery, financial, and partnership risks.
- Oversee budgets and financial management across multiple funding streams.

Knowledge, Skills & Experience

Essential

- Significant senior leadership experience in environment, conservation, public sector, or place-based transformation.
- Demonstrated ability to lead complex, multi-stakeholder partnerships or regional programmes.
- Strong understanding of UK environmental policy, nature recovery frameworks, and nature-based economic opportunities.
- Strategic thinker able to see the big picture, connect policy to delivery, and operate confidently at regional and national levels.
- Exceptional partnership-building and influencing skills, including navigating competing priorities and working across organisational boundaries.
- Experience leading complex, multi-stakeholder programmes, with strong performance and financial management skills.
- Excellent communication skills, with confidence in representing large partnerships publicly and politically.
- Proven track record in securing major funding and investment.

Desirable

- Experience in large-scale environmental programmes, regional economic development, or multi-partner investment frameworks.
- Experience working in or with public bodies, local authorities, eNGOs, or landscape partnerships.
- Knowledge of northern environmental, economic, and social challenges and opportunities.
- Experience in leading governance arrangement in partnership-based organisations.

Competencies

- Personal Effectiveness: Influencing, problem-solving, thought leadership
- Leading & Managing People: Inspiring others, performance management, leading through change

- Work Delivery: Managing complex programmes, navigating risk, aligning work to strategic priorities
- Putting People at the Heart of the Environment: Collaborative partnership working and community engagement
- Technical Skills & Knowledge: Understanding environmental policy, nature markets, nature recovery, and evidence-based decision making
- Strategic and analytical thinking with the ability to translate vision into actionable programmes.
- Strong financial acumen and programme management skills.
- Ability to navigate political environments with tact and credibility.

Personal Attributes

- Passionate about nature recovery and environmentally led regional development.
- Collaborative, inclusive, and confident working with diverse sectors.
- Innovative, future-focused, and comfortable leading change.
- Resilient, adaptable, and able to manage a high-performance workload.

Join us in creating a thriving North where nature recovery is integral to economic prosperity, resilient communities and healthier places to live.

How to apply

Apply via email to partnership@naturenorth.org.uk, and submit:

- Full career and experience history via CV
- A two page (maximum) supporting statement explaining your motivation for applying and justification of fit to the essential criteria
- A 750-word case study covering the following; Describe a time that you developed a productive partnership: how did you identify the opportunity, what did it achieve, why are you proud of it? What actions did you take, how did you manage the relationships, how did you address challenge, and what did you achieve.

Deadline for applications is 27th November 2026, 9am.

Recruitment Process

Applications will be shortlisted to progress to interview stage. Interviews will be held on **16th December in York** and will include a group assessment, presentation and a panel interview.

Contact details

If you have any questions about the position please contact: partnership@naturenorth.org.uk