

Application pack for the role of  
**Operations Lead**



The Operations Lead makes everything work behind the scenes, so that we can support our members to do amazing work across the country (Image: Permaculture Convergence at Hill End, 2019)

Are you an experienced organiser, looking to bring your skills to a passionate network committed to positive change? Do you want to work with an ambitious, creative and dynamic team? Are you comfortable working online? Are you confident in coordinating a variety of systems and projects and working with the full life-cycle of recruitment and staff support? Are you looking for a flexible working pattern in an organisation committed to good People Care?

If so, read on!

ethics • principles • design • action

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BCM Permaculture Association, London WC1N 3XX - Company no. 05908919 Charity no. 1116699 SCO41695

14 October 2021

Dear applicant,

## Operations Lead

Thank you for your interest in this post. Please find enclosed some background information to help you decide whether to apply for the position.

As an inclusive employer and membership organisation, we want our staff to better reflect the communities in which we live and work. We really encourage applications from all sections of the community. We're committed to creating an organisation that recognises and truly values individual differences and identities.

Applicants will be assessed on their ability to meet the criteria listed in the Person Specification. Please do not send a CV. Use the application form to show how you meet the criteria.

\* Please address all points in the person specification, or we cannot invite you to interview.\*

Enclosures:

- Background information on the post and the Permaculture Association
- Job description and person specification
- Application form
- Equal opportunities monitoring form

If you would like to apply, please note that the **closing date for receipt of applications is Sunday 14th November, 11.59pm**. All applications must be received by email saved as either a .docx or .pdf file.

We will shortlist candidates in the week commencing the 15th November, and shortlisted candidates will be contacted by phone, so please ensure that you provide us with a phone number on which we can reach you during this week.

**Initial interviews will be held online via zoom in the week commencing Monday 22nd November.** We will follow up detailed references after this stage. A final interview round for selected candidates may take place soon after if required. Interview candidates will need to have access to Zoom and an internet connection that supports video.

Please note we would like the successful applicant to start as soon as possible.

If you wish to have an informal discussion about the post, please contact me at [andyg@permaculture.org.uk](mailto:andyg@permaculture.org.uk).

Yours faithfully

Andy Goldring  
Chief Executive

## About permaculture

Permaculture is a design approach based on understanding how nature works. At its heart it has three ethics: Earth Care, People Care and Fair Shares. This makes permaculture a unique toolkit that is used to design regenerative systems at all scales - from homes and gardens to community projects, farms and bioregions - all around the world.

The word permaculture is derived from 'perma-nent agri-culture,' and 'perma-nent culture'. With permaculture, people are learning how to tread lightly on our planet, in harmony with nature. We are taking care of people and fellow creatures and designing our human systems so that they can be sustained for many generations to come. Culture change not climate change!

## About the Permaculture Association

The Permaculture Association is the national charity that supports people to learn about and use permaculture. The Association has nearly 2000 members, with many hundreds of projects across England, Scotland and Wales. The Permaculture Association was established in 1983, and has supported and promoted a wide range of sustainability innovations, many of which have now been widely adopted.

### Our vision

A healthy and peaceful world, where we care for each other, the earth and future generations, share resources wisely and continue to heal and regenerate communities and ecosystems.

### Our Aims

1. Make permaculture accessible
2. Accelerate learning about permaculture
3. Grow permaculture networks
4. Share and develop permaculture practice
5. Work with others to tackle key challenges
6. Build a smart, effective, socially responsible and sustainable organisation.

See <https://permaculture.org.uk/our-work> for more and to read our strategy.

We offer a wide range of activities and services that support individuals and groups:

- The membership scheme works to inform, support and network between practitioners and groups in Britain.
- Our print journal Permaculture Works, published once a year, shares stories and designs from the network and updates on projects.
- We run an annual convergence, a national diploma gathering, Annual General Meeting and other events. In September 2015, we hosted the 12th International Permaculture Convergence and Conference, which engaged 1200 people from 70 countries. The 2020 online convergence had over 900 people registered.
- We support the development of permaculture education and training.

- The Projects and LAND network of demonstration sites engages people in all four UK countries and gives visitors hands-on experience of permaculture.
- We operate a popular set of websites, which have over 10,000 visitors each month.
- We run the Diploma in Applied Permaculture Design, a network of 500 apprentices and tutors that learn through an action learning approach of project development.
- We work closely with a wide range of organisations and networks.

## How we are structured

- We are managed by a Board of Trustees, who are all members of the Permaculture Association, elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- We currently employ 17 part-time staff. We are supported by regular volunteers and a large number of supporters across the UK who help in a multitude of ways.
- We are an evolving organisation with a culture of trying out and adopting successful tools and systems to best deliver our work.
- We are set up and confident with remote working - at least some of our staff have been working from home since 2014 and all have been working from home since March 2020. We use Slack, Zoom, Google Drive, Miro and other digital technology to collaborate and stay connected.
- The Chief Executive takes on day-to-day responsibility for the running of the charity.
- We have a number of working groups that focus on specific aspects of work.
- Our work is structured around a mix of charitable trading, grant funded projects and member-led work, all enabled by support services and good governance.

## About this post

The Operations Lead will maintain and develop the Permaculture Association's operations via the online working environment. The post-holder will lead on compliance and internal policy, identify opportunities to become more efficient and help the Charity to achieve its aims. The Operations Lead will also coordinate the Association's 'People Care' function (HR). This strategic role will be exciting, challenging and rewarding.

Responsibilities are outlined in the Job Description, below.

We are a small team and we really want someone who is conscientious and well organised, able to be flexible, responsive and positive, and prepared to work hard.

You will be working online with a distributed team who work across the UK and beyond. We offer a very flexible approach to working, with the ability to work the hours across the week and more generous holiday benefits than most employers.

Thank you for your interest.

# Job description

**Job title:** Operations Lead

**Salary:** £26,000 pro-rata (£10,540 gross per annum)

**Hours:** 15hrs per week (40% fraction of 37 hour week) to be worked on a flexible basis.

**Duration:** Permanent, after an initial trial period.

**Holiday entitlement:** 32 days including Bank Holidays pro rata.

**Sickness provision:** Association Sick Pay Scheme in addition to statutory requirements.

**Pension provision:** According to statutory provision. The Permaculture Association uses the government's NEST pension scheme.

**Job sharing:** This post is not suitable for job sharing.

**Place of work:** This post is suitable for home working. We have an office in Leeds which can be available for working as needed.

**Responsible to:** The Chief Executive Officer and Board of Trustees. Line managed by the Chief Executive.

**Working with:**

- All other members of the Permaculture Association staff and volunteer team.
- Permaculture Association Board of Trustees
- Permaculture Association members and the wider UK permaculture network.

**Job Purpose:**

- To work closely with the Chief Executive and the Management Team to implement the Permaculture Association's strategic vision and plans.
- To maintain and develop the internal processes that enable Permaculture Association staff to deliver the Charity's vision, mission and aims.
- To manage staff and volunteer recruitment, induction and support.

**Duties:** The following list is indicative and may not be fully comprehensive. Duties may be changed as the post progresses, and any changes will be discussed with the post-holder.

**Systems (approx. 7 hours per week)**

- Maintain oversight on and improve procedures, protocols and key documentation.
- Support staff to maintain a well-functioning and secure virtual office (GSuite, Zoom, Slack, Miro, password manager, etc.) and identify and support training needs.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers can access the online tools and platforms they need.
- Act as one of the signatories on bank accounts.

- Contribute towards the quarterly planning process, including raising awareness of Permaculture Association processes and using the meetings to identify needs and opportunities.
- Act as named person within the 'Executive Contingency Plan' to perform critical functions in case of CEO in emergency or extended leave.
- Maintain and manage the insurance cover.
- Facilitate member voting at the AGM
- Manage the complaints, feedback and mediation procedure for the Association.
- Respond to queries from members of the public on behalf of the Association (Operations Lead is not the main point of contact).

#### With the Chief Executive

- Ensure staff are in compliance with internal policies.
- Ensure Association policies are compliant with UK legislation and best practice.
- Develop organisational charts that enhance staff and volunteer understanding of how organisation works, and their ability to help make improvements.

#### **People Care (HR) (approx. 7 hours per week)**

- Overall People Care systems maintenance and improvement.
- Provide People Care support and advice and deal with staff-related queries, issues and complaints.
- Manage staff leave (sick pay, parental, compassionate leave, etc).
- Coordinate with staff to support and enhance staff well-being.
- Coordinate the annual staff satisfaction survey and pay review process.
- Maintain current knowledge of employment legislation / ensure access to appropriate support from external agencies.
- Coordinate staff and volunteer recruitment and induction.
- Maintain oversight of contracts, timesheets and monthly pay (with Finance Coordinator).
- Ensure current processes and contracts comply with UK legislation.
- Provide working groups and event teams with appropriate guidance and support for managing volunteers.

#### With the Chief Executive

- Oversight of staff supervision and appraisals timetable and process.
- Coordinate and approve employment and contractor contracts.

#### **Management Team (90 mins a month)**

- Participate in monthly Management Team meetings
- Work with the Management Team on strategic development, including:
  - Assessment of Permaculture Association capacity, needs, synergies and other inputs and resources we need to operate well.
  - Embedding equity into the heart of the Association's systems and processes.
  - Design and implement strategies that enable us to have greater redundancy for key roles e.g. Finance Coordinator payroll function.

- With area coordinators, work to streamline processes and data management across platforms.
- With events teams, support systems for coordination and delivery of events

**Other Responsibilities** (occasional / monthly / quarterly / annual)

- Attend monthly Finance Audit and Risk Sub-committee meetings
- Attend office meetings, quarterly planning meetings, and other meetings as required.
- Prepare for and attend management and supervision sessions with the CEO.
- Assist the CEO to produce annual reviews, reports for funders and other materials as appropriate.
- Identify opportunities for resourcing this role and continuation projects.
- Assist with general duties and represent the Association at events as and when appropriate.

**General duties**

All staff are expected to:

- Work within and promote the aims and objectives of the Association, and present a positive image of the Association to members and the public.
- Work within the Equal Opportunities framework, and to promote good practice through their work, and abide by the Association's policies and ethos at all times
- Take responsibility for their own safety, and ensure that colleagues and visitors are not exposed to danger.

The job may involve some travel and unsocial hours. Overnight stays may be required for events. Training may be provided to enable the post-holder to better deliver the key tasks and to aid personal development.

## Person Specification

	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● GCSE Maths and English</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Permaculture Design Course Certificate</li> </ul>
Experience of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 5+ years in office/admin position with varied roles including operational responsibilities</li> <li>● "HR", including coordinating recruitment, contracts and leave</li> <li>● Charity operations management</li> <li>● Working towards strategic vision and goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Working in a diverse team on multiple projects across multiple locations</li> <li>● Working in a membership organisation</li> <li>● Conflict management and mediation</li> </ul>
Knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Excellent IT skills and able to learn new software quickly</li> <li>● Competent and comfortable working in an online environment (Google Drive, Slack, regular video conferencing and more)</li> <li>● Able to induct and lead team members into new processes</li> <li>● Excellent team-working, communication and listening skills</li> <li>● Excellent problem-solving skills</li> <li>● Relevant legal requirements (health and Safety, GDPR, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● G-Suite admin</li> <li>● Financial accounts</li> <li>● Charity law</li> <li>● Payment processors</li> <li>● Social impact measurement</li> </ul>
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Good Intra &amp; interpersonal skills</li> <li>● Discrete and ethical</li> <li>● Self-motivated, able to take initiative and meet deadlines</li> <li>● Highly organised, with good time management skills and the ability to prioritise well</li> <li>● Systematic approach</li> <li>● Interested in environmental and social issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enthusiastic about permaculture and sustainability</li> </ul>

Please note that the job will be subject to an initial trial period based on a review at 3 and 6 months.

Send your completed application form to [andyg@permaculture.org.uk](mailto:andyg@permaculture.org.uk) by the closing date, Sunday 14th November, 11.59pm.