**Fern Finance Officer**

**Fern** is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) created in 1995. Our mission is to achieve greater environmental and social justice, focusing on forests and forest peoples’ rights in the policies and practices of the European Union. We do this by co-ordinating NGO networks and by working co-operatively with partners to achieve change.

We believe that to be effective it is essential to understand and address the social dimension of environmental conflicts; that strong coalitions are more likely to achieve lasting change; and that presenting ways forward is often more effective than highlighting problems.

We have no director, and strive to make decisions by consensus.

Details of our current campaign areas can be found at [www.fern.org/campaignareas.html](http://www.fern.org/campaignareas.html)

We currently have 14 staff working from two offices, in Brussels (Belgium) and Moreton in Marsh (UK).

We are looking for a new Finance Officer to provide strong and professional support to the organisation. The post will be 4 days per week, but there is flexibility about how these 4 days are worked. The post will be based in Brussels.

**A. Key areas of responsibility and associated tasks**

As a member of Fern’s Finance & Administration team, the Fern Finance Officer (FFO) works with colleagues to ensure that Fern’s campaigns are properly supported to achieve their aims, by providing sound financial and administrative systems, procedures and structures for the organisation.

The FFO is responsible for the key day-to-day accounting functions of Fern. Keeping accounts for both countries (according to Belgian standards), the FFO ensures that all expenses are processed according to Fern’s policies, paid and booked on time. The FFO follows all payments and receipts, ensuring they are properly documented, and that Fern has up to date financial information available at all times.

The FFO takes a lead on Belgian administrative issues of the Brussels office including working with the landlord and dealing with health & safety, insurance and Human Resources.

Specific tasks include:

**Purchase invoices, expenses & payments**
- Ensuring all payments are properly authorised, coded and documented, and making payment
- Booking payments into Venice & filing paper documents
- Liaising with suppliers, staff and others to resolve queries

**General accounting & cash/bank management**
- Obtaining bank statements / petty cash accounts, booking onto Venice & filing

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• Reconciling control & suspense accounts and taking corrective action where needed
• Including suppliers, salary, tax, social security, pensions, lunch voucher accounts
• Processing partners’ reports and booking into the accounting software
• Preparing reports & downloading data from the accounting software; supporting colleagues to understand and interpret the information and responding to their queries
• Monitoring the short-term cash situation and ensuring money is in the correct bank account when needed
• Applying the correct exchange rates to accounting entries
• Managing the relationship with Fern’s banks

Salaries & Belgian HR

• Administering HR information, including collecting and submitting it to Fern’s social partner, (currently Securex), overseeing salaries and managing the relationship with the social partner
• Acting as focal point for staff queries re human resources and researching answers where necessary
• Collating, distributing & filing salary & other human resource documentation, contracts, lunch vouchers and similar
• Posting adverts, sifting applications, coordinating staff input & following up on recruitment processes
• Dealing with new staff and leaving staff with regards to contracts, dismissals & resignations
• Booking UK & Belgium payroll data into Fern’s software, including payslips, net pay, pensions, tax (UK & Belgium)
• Supporting staff to prepare timesheets, allocating salary costs per timesheet, and booking salary cost allocations into the accounting software

Belgian Office Management

• Establishing & updating Belgium insurance requirements, approving invoices, coordinating claims, managing contracts and filing documentation
• Ensuring a safe & healthy working environment in Brussels, including management of the landlord relationship and attending Office Management meetings
• Maintenance of Fern’s legal registration, including publishing information in the Belgian Gazette, filing accounts & tax returns

Finance & Administration Team (FAT) management:
(Jointly with finance & administration team colleagues)
• Participating in quarterly FAT meetings
• Establishing FAT objectives and drafting quarterly FAT work plans
• Regularly reviewing and updating Fern’s House Rules and Procedures
• Developing FAT job descriptions and participating in recruitment of colleagues into the FAT

B. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

• Travel. As is an international organisation with offices in UK and Belgium, some travel will be required between the offices and possibly further afield
• **Management of the organisation.** The finance officer shares responsibility with all colleagues for contributing to the managing of the organisation by attending and inputting to the monthly CCS meetings, held in each office. Participate with all staff in the annual strategy meeting and annual board meeting.

• **Flexibility.** FERN is a small campaigning organisation, and some flexibility will be required with regards to working hours, for example in the case of preparing urgent funding proposals, budgets etc.

**C. PERSON SPECIFICATION**

We are looking for someone who is organised, open, efficient, flexible, personable, and can work effectively in a small team. The successful candidate would have to be a good team worker, be able to take initiative, be a good planner, pay attention to detail, and be equally supportive and assertive.

Essential:
• At least three years’ experience of relevant financial and administrative management
• Understanding of accounting software and double entry book-keeping
• Ability to communicate well in French and English
• Excellent computer skills (Word, Excel, Internet)
• Ability to handle multiple tasks and competing demands
• Support minded
• An interest in environmental and social issues.

Desirable:
• Experience of working for an NGO
• Able to communicate in Dutch.

**Indicative salary & working conditions**

From €2,417 to €3,467 gross monthly salary Full Time Equivalent (Pro-rata for time worked). Lunch vouchers, contribution to travel costs from home to office, and legal holidays money (double-pécule de vacances) equivalent to, approximately one month net salary are also included.

**D. HOW TO APPLY**

Applications should be submitted in English and comprise a short covering letter and a CV detailing all relevant work experience. The covering letter should explain why you are interested in this job; what attracts you to Fern; and what you could bring to Fern. Applications without a properly prepared cover letter will not be considered. **Only selected candidates will be contacted.**

**Deadline for applications:** 9am Brussels time, 1st June 2015

**Interviews:**
1st interviews will be in Brussels on Wednesday 10th June
2nd interviews will be in Moreton-in-Marsh, UK on Wednesday 17th June

Send applications to: julie@fern.org