

Advert

We are Chester Zoo

Chester Zoo is the UK's favourite zoo as well as an international conservation charity. What began as a family run zoo in 1931 is now a globally renowned centre of excellence for conservation and scientific research, and one of the UK's biggest and most popular visitor attractions, with more than 2 million annual visitors. The zoo's 128-acre site in Chester, which is home to more than 37,000 animals and more than 500 species, is where this species-saving work is made possible. As a conservation powerhouse, Chester Zoo works around the world to ensure species not only survive but thrive. The zoo is a key part of 139 international conservation breeding programmes, working with 62 conservation partners in 19 countries to protect wildlife and people.

We now have an exciting opportunity to join our team as we recruit for an experienced and forward-thinking Animal and Plant Director. As part of the Director team and reporting into the Chief Conservation Officer/Deputy CEO (CCO), the Animal and Plant Director will lead the department to deliver the strategic direction of the zoo's animal and plant work and guide success of the zoo in line with the organisation's mission, values and unified strategy.

What you'll do

- **Leadership & Planning and Team development:** Lead and inspire circa 200 employees within the Animal & Plant Department and develop the Animal and Plant plan to ensure a comprehensive, strategic and purposeful approaches to the management and conservation of animals and plants within the zoo. Have a 'hands on' approach fostering an environment of empowerment and collaboration to develop a culture of excellence, growth and development.
- **Conservation and Animal & Plant Management:** Oversee the planning, acquisition, health, and wellbeing the one of the largest animal and plant collections in the UK and support the CCO in delivering our ambitious conservation plan targets, including those pertaining to species preservation and population restoration programs.
- **Collaboration:** Build strong partnerships with NGOs, governments, and other zoological and botanical institutions, and maintain strong relationships across all departments of the zoo to maximise conservation impact and ensure successful delivery of our organisational plan.
- **Operational and Financial Excellence:** Ensure compliance with zoo licenses, effectively manage facilities and exhibits for optimum animal welfare, and oversee

the design and upkeep of habitats and gardens, managing a budget of approximately £10 million per year.

What we're looking for

- You'll have significant expertise working at a similar level in zoology/botany/conservation fields including: population management, conservation techniques, in situ conservation/field work, taxonomy, animal husbandry, horticulture, welfare assessment and management.
- You'll have very strong leadership skills and the proven ability to lead in a complex and fast-moving environment.
- You'll have substantial people management experience and experience in bringing diverse teams together to work in collaboration and leading them effectively to achieve shared goals.
- You'll have experience of strategy development, planning and prioritising as well as budget management, within a similar environment.
- You'll be an excellent communicator, able to distil complex ideas to a variety of audiences in a clear and compelling way, and confident in media/public speaking.
- You'll be adept at building strong relationships and gaining trust and respect quickly through an authentic approach.
- You'll be an excellent team player, focused on building collaborative relationships and working through challenges with a proactive and solutions focused approach.
- You'll be qualified to postgraduate level (masters level or above, or equivalent) in a zoology related discipline.
- You'll be willing to travel both in the UK and Overseas as required.
- You'll be able to work on weekends as needed (and to fulfil the duty director 'on call' rota circa 5-7 weekends per year)

What makes Chester Zoo a great place to work?

We're a huge team of conservationists, scientists, educators, animal welfare experts, marketers, visitor experience professionals, environmental policy influencers; the list goes on. Each and every one of us is on a mission to make Chester Zoo the best in the world, and our planet a better place.

As the UK's biggest and best zoo, we have ambitious goals, exciting plans, and there's always lots going on here. We're an inclusive and diverse organisation, made up of nearly 700 permanent and 500 seasonal team members, and we know how important it is to invest in our colleagues to maximise their potential. We have ambitious goals, and we want you to be with us for the long term on our exciting journey.

Our working environment could not be more different from a typical office – where else can you see critically endangered orangutans from your office window, or stroll among endangered giraffes and tigers on your lunch break?

The Package

- Permanent contract
- 40 hours per week (5 out of 7 days)
- Circa £85,000 per annum
- 38 days annual leave (including bank holidays) plus the option to buy or sell up to 5 days additional leave
- Staff pass so you and your family can visit the zoo during your time off, plus multiple complimentary tickets for your friends and family
- Cycle to work scheme
- Healthcare plan and employee assistance programme
- Discounted gym membership
- Discounts on cinema tickets, restaurants, high street shops and more via Perks
- Pension scheme with generous employer contributions up to 9%