

Conservation Scientist: Conservation Physiology & Reproduction

We are Chester Zoo

We're not just an amazing, award-winning visitor attraction that's home to 20,000 incredible animals inside 128 acres of stunning gardens. We're not just the UK's most popular zoo. We're a major wildlife charity that's committed to the recovery of endangered species, globally. And, as the world faces an extinction crisis, we're making a hugely significant contribution to conservation at a time when it's needed most. We are Chester Zoo, and we prevent extinction.

The Role

We have an exciting vacancy for a Conservation Scientist to join our Science Department on a 20-month fixed-term basis and work within our Conservation Physiology and Reproduction Research Programme, which focuses on wildlife reproduction, health and well-being. This role will have a particular focus on cryopreservation, responsible for the preservation of living cells, maintaining accurate biomaterial records, ensuring the safe and efficient operation of the cryopreservation facility, and supporting priority research initiatives.

The Conservation Scientist will be based within our International Centre for Zoo Science and will support the Lead Conservation Scientist on ensuring Chester Zoo maintains the highest external reputation and credibility as a world-leader in one of the zoo's specialised areas of scientific innovation and research excellence. They will support with delivering growth, coherence, and engagement with science stakeholders and ensure programme staff and students are engaged, high performing and focused on effectively translating scientific outputs to maximise conservation impact to achieve Chester Zoo's conservation strategies and mission.

Principle Accountabilities

Programme Support:

- Support the Lead Conservation Scientist on the delivery of the programme's annual tactical plan and stewardship of the programme's established partnerships including internal and external scientific and zoo bodies, such as universities, research institutes, government agencies, NGOs, professional bodies, global zoo associations and private sector organisations.
- With support from the Lead Conservation Scientist, lead the delivery of novel research projects which contribute to scientific capacity and reputation of the programme. Disseminate a portion of the programme's science outputs including publications and external engagement with the conservation and science community.
- Participate in the review process to ensure programme related research activities comply with Chester Zoo's research and ethical policies and follow the guidance from relevant bodies of authority to ensure legal compliance (e.g., IUCN, EAZA, BIAZA, CITES, DEFRA, Home Office licencing etc.).

Conservation Training:

- Support the Lead Conservation Scientist to deliver and/or co-deliver scientific training in one of the Zoo's areas of scientific expertise to support the delivery of the zoo's Conservation Training Academy, providing comprehensive and innovative learning and training for the conservationists of the future.

Scientific Dissemination, Reputation and Credibility:

- With guidance from the Lead Conservation Scientist, lead on prioritised research projects within one of the zoo's areas of expertise by working collaboratively both internally and externally to design and deliver novel research projects. Effectively problem-solve science challenges using expertise, industry knowledge and experience, and lead on project design and data analysis.
- Ensure scientific outputs and findings of own research are disseminated to key stakeholders (including both scientific and non-scientific peers) through various outlets including peer-reviewed and non-peer reviewed publications, public speaking, dissemination at suitable external meetings to influence and advise external professional committees/boards and marketed via Chester Zoo's communications teams.
- Ensure research projects support the wider programme and achieves conservation impact, which results in evidence-based decision making and implementation that enhances Chester Zoo's overall scientific credibility.

We're looking for someone who can:

- Contribute to the Conservation Physiology and Reproduction research programme using technically robust scientific methods, particularly related to cryopreservation and cell culture
- Perform laboratory tasks to ensure biological samples are handled with care and in compliance with best practices.
- Assist in the development and updating of detailed laboratory protocols and standard operating procedures.
- Contribute to sample management processes to help drive continuous improvement.
- Effectively prioritise their own time
- Work collaboratively across multiple departments to achieve common goals
- Contribute to relevant lectures and workshops
- Disseminate work to a wide variety of audiences (including peer-reviewed publications)

What makes Chester Zoo a great place to work?

Well, where do we start? Here goes...

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 500 permanent and 500 seasonal team members, and we know how important it is to invest in our colleagues to help boost their career development. 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 rare giraffes and tigers on your lunch break?

The Package

- Fixed-term, 20-month contract
- 40 hours per week
- Salary of £31,929.47 per annum
- 33 days annual leave (pro-rata) plus the option to buy or sell up to 5 days
- Opportunity for hybrid working
- Staff pass so you 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%

Our Requirements

- Master's degree or equivalent experience in a relevant field
- Relevant laboratory experience, including sterile techniques, cell culture and the safe use of cryogenic materials for processing and storage of samples, reagent preparation, procurement and inventory management.
- Demonstrated ability to innovate, lead, resource and deliver research projects on time and to a high standard
- Evidence with data analysis and statistical packages relevant to the field
- Ability to present information clearly and concisely in verbal presentations and written communications, including scientific writing and media communications to a variety of stakeholders
- Ability to maintain and influence partnerships and collaborations to enable project delivery
- Proven ability to effectively work in and contribute to a team environment
- Have knowledge of zoos and their conservation function
- Evidence of effective training and/or student supervision is desirable
- Evidence of peer-review publications is desirable

Please be aware that we reserve the right to close our vacancies earlier than the listed date if we have received a high level of applications. We would recommend that if you do wish to be considered that you complete the application as promptly as possible as interviews may take place whilst the advert is live.