

OAK

FOUNDATION

Wildlife Conservation & Trade – Programme Officer Environment Programme

Description

About the Oak Foundation

The Oak Foundation commits its resources to address issues of global social and environmental concern, particularly those that have a major impact on the lives of the disadvantaged. Through our grant-making, we support others to make the world a safer, fairer, and more sustainable place to live. With offices in Europe, Africa, and North America, Oak Foundation makes grants to organisations located in approximately 40 countries worldwide.

About the Environment Programme:

The Environment Programme's five-year strategy (2021-2026) focuses on safeguarding our future by restoring our connection to nature and changing the ways we feed and fuel our worlds. The strategy focuses on three systems that present the greatest transformative opportunities: Energy, Natural Security, and Food. In all three focus areas, they place people and communities at the heart of their work by supporting solutions and people on the frontlines.

In the Wildlife Conservation & Trade (Natural Security) Sub-programme, they support the rich biodiversity of "living landscapes" in Southern Africa and Southeast Asia. Living landscapes is the term they use to describe a conservation approach that supports productive, resilient rural networks of people who can stop over-exploitation by safeguarding wildlife and wild places. Their work in living landscapes also considers nature's borders, such as river basins, and supports symbiotic relationships whereby community development, employment, and livelihoods can thrive alongside biodiversity.

Specifically, they aim to support local and regional projects that put people at the heart of conservation — especially women, youth, farmers, and herders, and traditional leaders. They do so by strengthening rural collectives and improving equitable distribution of benefits from natural wealth (e.g., nature-based tourism and sustainable harvesting of wild species). They connect networks that share socioecological and conservation aims, and promote this holistic approach among funders and decision-makers. They place emphasis on inclusive conservation projects that do not isolate wildlife and wild places from the people who live in and around them. They support organisations, networks, and communities to build effective land and wildlife management programmes. Their aim is to support economic opportunities that align economic incentives that neither industrialise or overexploit the landscape, nor lead to the loss of social, cultural, or natural value. Their work also continues to contribute to reducing illegal wildlife trade by helping to establish regional response networks with enhanced capabilities and better resilience.

Please read about Oak Foundation's strategy on its [website](#).

Purpose of the Role

This is a great opportunity to join a diverse, international team within Oak Foundation's Wildlife Conservation & Trade (Natural Security) Sub-Programme. This solutions-focused role seeks to help tackle the global imbalance of the world's wild supply chains. This will be achieved by addressing the negative social, ecological, and economic impacts of natural resource abuses while protecting the rights of those most dependent on natural resources. The programme officer will oversee a grant portfolio designed to foster community-based conservation efforts. The grant portfolio complements Oak's work across the Environment Programme's sub-programmes, particularly in regard to regenerating landscapes and transforming food systems. The position is strongly rooted in principles of spatial justice and draws on adaptive and flexible learning approaches.

The ideal candidate is someone with lived and work experience in community-based natural resource management in more than one of the following countries: Angola, Botswana, DRC, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The candidate must have a strong entrepreneurial, interdisciplinary, and collaborative spirit with a background in social sciences, conservation, natural resource management law and policy, human rights, and accountability frameworks. The candidate must be able to work independently and as a part of a remote team.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Maintain primary responsibility for the management of Oak's community-based conservation grant portfolio from the point of initial inquiry to assessment and final recommendation to the President/Trustees/Board;
- Identify high-impact, innovative, and entrepreneurial grant-making opportunities to further strengthen Oak's leadership role across conservation

philanthropy and in line with the strategic directions of the natural security system team;

- Contribute to the people-centered strategic direction of the overall Environment programme with a special focus on shaping the community conservation components goals, including through the co-drafting of various submissions and reports to the Board;
- Review budgets submitted by applicant organisations as part of the due diligence process;
- Conduct the monitoring and evaluation of grants, including through the conduct of site visits;
- Work with Oak Foundation administrative and programme management staff to ensure efficient progress in grant-making, monitoring, and reporting, as well as other administrative activities related to the programme;
- Represent Oak Foundation at external meetings and contribute to internal and key constituent communications on the natural security system portfolio;
- Maintain a strong network of relationships with key players in the conservation sector (NGOs, scientific, philanthropic, government, private sector);
- Stay up to date on key scientific, legislative, and regulatory developments internationally and within key regions where Oak has active grantmaking.

Skills and Experience

- University degree in political ecology or environmental, natural, or social sciences. A Master's degree is preferred.
- At least seven years of relevant professional experience and a track record of significant achievement in a discipline related to community conservation, natural resource management, and rights-based approaches in Southern Africa
- With a right of abode and right to work in one of the Southern African countries
- Strong personal and professional networks in conservation, natural resources, social movements, and civil society organisations;
- Understanding of non-profit and/or governmental financial reporting and budgeting;
- Proven research and analytical skills; outstanding organisational abilities and a commitment to efficiency and meeting tight deadlines;
- Excellent interpersonal skills; desire and ability to work in a collaborative team environment;
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills; comfort expressing opinions in a setting that encourages a vibrant exchange of ideas;
- A strongly developed sense of integrity, humility, and discretion; poise, maturity, and a good sense of humour;
- Available for international travel, up to 40 days a year, sometimes for extended periods;
- Excellent written and spoken English is required. Portuguese desired.
- A commitment to Oak's [organisational values](#)

Meta Fields