



Invitation to Tender: WWT Internal Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Audit

Deadline for proposals: **26 July 2024**

Please send applications to: julia.newth@wwt.org.uk

Invitation to tender

WWT is seeking an experienced EDI consultant to undertake an EDI audit of WWT's workplace processes and culture and subsequently create an EDI action plan for the organisation. Further details on the organisation, project scope and desired outputs are outlined in the sections below.

1. Background

We are WWT. The Charity for Wetlands and Wildlife.

Our natural world is in trouble. But at WWT, we know there's a wondrous solution. You'll find it wherever water meets land.

Wetlands are super-powered ecosystems. They teem with wildlife, buffer us from floods, purify our water, lift our mood and sink carbon. But we are losing them at a staggering rate.

That's why we're on a mission to restore wetlands and unlock their power, and empower everyone to do the same. From getting muddy outdoors and pioneering research, to creating unprecedented partnerships and rallying governments worldwide, we're leading the way. We're sharing the wonders of wetlands and building a global community of nature lovers who will champion wetlands and help wildlife bounce back.

WWT is a charity that is actively restoring wetlands in the UK and globally. But we can't do it alone. Every action we take together, large or small, will help wetlands burst with life once more. Because when wetlands flourish, all life will flourish.

Our vision is a world where healthy wetland nature thrives and enriches lives.

As part of our 2030 strategy, we have three ambitions

1. To create and restore over 100,000 hectares of wetlands in the UK.
2. To inspire one million people to take action for wetlands where they live and work.
3. To thrive as an organisation by prioritising financial and environmental sustainability, strengthening partnerships, and building a more diverse workplace.

As an organisation, we recognise that we can only achieve these aims by engaging with all sectors of society. Our current lack of diverse representation within the organisation limits the breadth and depth of our combined socio-cultural knowledge and experience, which is critical in connecting with people from the full spectrum of society. This reduces our ability to serve communities which have been historically marginalised and under-represented.

We also lack diverse ways of thinking across our workforce, which risks missing organisational innovation at a critical time.

We want to change this, and our first step is to create a workplace that nurtures diversity and enables all of our current and future people, staff and volunteers, to be supported to reach their full potential, especially those from least-represented groups. As an organisation, we are committed to creating the conditions for a diverse workplace where all staff and volunteers feel valued and able to reach their full potential in the workplace. EDI is therefore a key component of WWT's 2030 strategy, and this audit represents an important first step in achieving this goal.

See [here](#) for more information on WWT's history for context.

EDI context

WWT has 972 volunteers, 513 employees and 352 casual workers working across its ten UK sites and two international programmes offices in Cambodia and Madagascar.

In response to a growing internal concern about the lack of diverse representation, WWT established the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) working group in 2021 which was tasked with identifying actions to address this problem. The group contains staff from all directorates in the organisation and is currently chaired by WWT's Chief Executive. The group is working on four key elements of EDI across our organisation: continuing to improve accessibility for all to engage with WWT and visit our sites; engaging with young people to make our sites and conservation work more welcoming and relevant to them; engaging with diverse communities in our wider conservation work, and improving EDI in our workplace.

Work on improving EDI in our workplace to date includes:

- Knowledge sharing: discussions with EDI professionals from other wildlife conservation charities and community organisations to share their EDI journeys (actions, barriers, opportunities etc).
- Desk-based research on EDI initiatives implemented in other organisations, helping us benchmark WWT's current progress on EDI, inform where we want to be and understand best practice in the sector.
- A report summarising key findings of the working groups' efforts to date, culminating in key recommendations (including an EDI audit) which was presented to and approved by WWT's Executive Leadership Team.

Ongoing actions within the People team include implementing paid year-long student placements, creating a Health and Wellbeing work group and Mental Health First Aider roles, as well as putting in place positive ways of working (for example flexible working and hybrid working). In addition, actions have been taken to successfully reduce the Gender Pay Gap in the last 2 years.

We know we have more to do and are looking at how we can welcome future wetland conservationists and transform into a more inclusive and diverse employer that better represents contemporary society.

2. Scope

The focus of this EDI audit is WWT's organisational processes and workplace culture. Consultants will be asked to identify internal barriers to inclusivity for staff, volunteers, student placements and apprentices, and prospective appointees, especially those who belong to least-represented and/or marginalised groups.

Consultants will also be asked to identify opportunities and priority actions for creating a more inclusive and diverse workplace at WWT. Both WWT's UK and International Programmes offices (Madagascar and Cambodia) will be included in the audit.

Themes of audit

- **Culture, belonging, values and behaviours**

The extent to which staff, volunteers and students feel valued, supported and a sense of belonging at WWT, especially those from marginalised/least-represented groups.

- What are people's personal experiences in the workplace?
- How do people across WWT understand and value EDI (at an individual and organisational level)?
- How integral is EDI to the culture of WWT?
- Are the correct resources in place for support?

- **Leadership and accountability**

The extent to which there is clear and demonstrable leadership, senior accountability (including at Trustee level) and a future vision and direction for EDI at WWT. Including:

- Diversity in leadership
- Trust in leadership commitment

- **Diverse representation**

The extent to which there is diverse representation throughout WWT and in its decision-making and governance.

- **Company ‘infrastructure’**

Whether WWT’s processes, procedures, policies, guidance and strategy ensure equitable and inclusive treatment and support across the organisation. How effective are current processes and procedures at addressing instances of oppression or discrimination? Including:

- Reporting and handling incidents (including bullying, harassment, micro-aggressions)
- Fair and equal treatment
- Staff and volunteer networks

- **Monitoring and evaluation**

Whether effective systems are in place to assess EDI progress at WWT.

- **Recruitment**

Evaluation of current recruitment processes to uncover potential biases or barriers that may affect the diversity of new hires, as well as considering routes to employment and volunteering which target least-represented groups.

- **Learning needs, progression and retention**

Whether all people working and volunteering at WWT have equal access to opportunities and are supported to develop and thrive, including:

- Equity in progression and training/development opportunities
- Encouragement to take up leadership positions

- **EDI vision for WWT**

This will be developed with the DIB working group, but the audit presents an opportunity to feed in views from employees and volunteers on key EDI questions such as:

- What should WWT aim to be?
- What’s realistic in the timeframe of this strategy period?
- What should we do first?
- How can we measure progress?

- **Recommendations**

Identifying priority EDI actions while considering where we can have the most impact with our resource.

NB: These themes are preliminary and provided to give a broad indication of priority areas identified by the DIB working group. We are eager to be led by the expertise of the consultant who can re-shape and re-focus the scope and themes of the audit in the way they believe necessary to achieve the greatest impact.

3. Methodology

Consultants are required to suggest an appropriate methodology to achieve the desired outputs of the audit. However, we envisage the consultants using a mixed-method approach which includes primary and secondary research. This could include:

- Semi-structured interviews with staff, volunteers and senior management, including trustees
- Focus groups
- Document and data reviews
- Online surveys

We would like to make every effort to include the voices of people from least-represented and marginalised groups in this process and giving every person in the organisation an opportunity to offer their opinions and experiences. Finally, we would like the results arising from this audit to be analysed through an inter-sectional lens.

4. Responsibilities

The key responsibilities currently anticipated from this audit are:

Working closely with WWT's DIB working group and other members of the organisation:

1. Lead and complete an audit of WWT's workplace processes and culture.
2. Create a report summarising the results of the audit in relation to each key theme and presenting key recommendations/priority actions.
3. Develop an action plan that will guide WWT's EDI strategy until 2030 (WWT's current strategy period), alongside an impact assessment methodology to monitor and evaluate EDI progress.

5. Competencies

Consultants are required to meet the following competency standards:

Knowledge of EDI principles and practices

- Understanding of EDI concepts, theories, principles and best practices.
- Knowledge of legal and regulatory compliance including laws and regulations related to equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and non-discrimination.

Strategic thinking and planning

- Uses creative thinking to develop long-term EDI strategies aligned with organisational goals.
- Strong problem-solving skills to address EDI related challenges leading to positive sustained change within an organisation.

Analytical and research skills

- Ability to design research, collect and analyse EDI data, identify patterns and make data-driven recommendations.
- Abreast of the latest developments and best practices in the field, including approaches, methods and analysis.
- Ability to handle sensitive information with discretion and confidentiality.

Interpersonal and communication skills

- Strong verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to build relationships, collaborate and engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Project development and management

- Ability to manage projects, set goals and achieve desired outcomes.

Training and facilitation

- Knowledge of relevant EDI training programs and opportunities.
- Skilled in facilitating discussions, workshops and meetings on EDI topics.

Cultural competency

- Deep understanding of various cultures and the ability to work effectively and inclusively across cultural differences.
- A cultural understanding of the key geographical locations WWT operates in (Cambodia and Madagascar) is desirable (though not essential).
- Ability to empathise with individuals from diverse backgrounds and understand their experiences.

Leadership and influence

- Skills in leading and managing organisational change to foster a more inclusive and diverse environment.
- Ability to advocate for EDI initiatives and influence organisational leaders and stakeholders.

6. Timeline and milestones

The work will commence in autumn 2024 and must be completed within 6-9 months (precise timings to be determined with consultant).

7. Budget and invoicing

A budget of £20,000 inclusive of VAT is available for the work.

8. Procurement schedule

Deadline for the submission of proposals	26 July
Notification of initial application outcome	31 July
Interview of shortlisted applicants (including presentation)	5 August

9. Application process

Applicants are asked to provide an expression of interest which details how they meet the competencies and what their plan for delivery might be.

Please include the following in your proposal:

- **Your relevant competencies** (500 words max).
- **Organisational background** (300 words max): Please explain if you are applying as an autonomous organisation or as a formal consortium. Please clearly explain the role of each participating team member.
- **Delivery proposal** (500 words max): Please explain how you intend to approach this commission and all activities that would be carried out.
- **Project management** (300 words max): Please provide a brief overview of the project costs and project plan, illustrating how you intend to meet the stated deadlines.
- **Past experiences** (500 words max): Please explain your organisation's past experiences by evidencing a maximum of three similar projects.

10. Assessment criteria

In selecting for interview, we will consider the following criteria:

- **Proposed content:** quality and appropriateness of the proposed approach and methodology.
- **Track record:** track record of the proposed team in delivering similar projects.
- **The competencies** set out above.

In selecting the preferred consultant, we will consider the following additional criteria:

- **Project management:** suggested timescale for the project delivery and process.
- **Cost:** overall value for money and appropriateness of the budget.
- **Presentation:** shortlisted candidates will be invited to do a presentation and take part in a Question-and-Answer session, at which you will have the opportunity to build upon your proposal.

11. Enquiries

Please direct all enquires to Julia Newth at julia.newth@wwt.org.uk