

## JOB DESCRIPTION – SENIOR AQUARIST

**Job Title:** Senior Aquarist

**Responsible to:** Head Keeper, Manager and Directors

**Contract:** Full-Time (Permanent)

**Salary:** £22,000pa

Free accommodation is provided a short distance away from the aquarium for a period of 3 months to the successful applicant.

### **Job Description:**

Our animal care team work hard to maintain and deliver Northern Ireland's 5-star aquarium and reptile attraction. The Senior Aquarist, reporting to the Head Keeper, provides suitable husbandry to the aquatic animals, including, but not limited to, daily observations of dietary and behavioural habits, cleaning and maintaining assigned exhibit and holding areas, tracking inventory, and keeping accurate and up to date records of assigned aquatic collections.

The Senior Aquarist will need to independently judge and use their initiative to problem solve when necessary, keeping animal welfare at the forefront of any decision.

The successful candidate will also be responsible for the daily oversight of the animal care team, ensuring that related projects are progressing, and leading the daily activities of Aquarists while serving as a role model.

### **Job Responsibilities:**

- Works in collaboration with the Husbandry Manager to establish and maintain best practices based on industry standards to fulfil these major job responsibilities.
- Responsible for the daily care and husbandry of aquatic collections which include marine and freshwater fish, invertebrates, mammals and reptiles from temperate and tropical ecosystems.
- Practices good judgment in decision-making as related to animal care, emergency situations, and projects, particularly in the Head Keeper's absence and with minimal interruptions to the public.
- Daily duties include but are not limited to: cleaning exhibits internally and externally, prepping and feeding food, treating any injured/diseased individuals as necessary, making observations and recognizing abnormal animal behaviour/appearance, acting upon/reporting such observations in a timely manner and completing all necessary records and paperwork thoroughly.
- Assists with acquiring specimens through organization of transfers/purchases with other zoological institutions, suppliers, and when required, by participation in collecting trips.
- Assisting in veterinary procedures as necessary.

- Assist with procurement of supplies and equipment.
- Assists in the advancement and implementation of exhibit goals by contributing to the design and management of the exhibit development.
- Serves as the main point of contact between aquatics staff and the Head Keeper and is accountable in the Head Keeper's absence.
- Under the direction of the Head keeper will assist with developing husbandry staff through training and increasing productivity and efficiency.
- Trains, develops, and oversees the work of work experience, Interns, and Trainee Aquarists.
- Fosters and supports a fun, team approach by having excellent interpersonal skills and a collaborative spirit.
- Leads by example by having a positive attitude, practicing high standards, modelling professional workplace behaviour, and maintaining a supportive team atmosphere.
- Taking a lead role in planning of events, public talks and outreach work.
- Any other duties as required by the Head Keeper

#### **About you:**

#### **ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Bachelor's degree in Biology, Zoology or related field required OR equivalent experience.
- 3+ years of progressive levels of responsibility providing daily husbandry to a wide array of aquatic animals, preferably at a BIAZA-accredited institution. 1+ years of experience training/supervising others highly preferred.
- Knowledge of modern principles of animal care and welfare, including behavioural enrichment, exhibit design, nutrition, disease, training, water chemistry, animal transport, PVC plumbing, and Life Support Systems
- Must have experience with quarantine procedures and aquatic animal veterinary procedures.
- Specific knowledge of temperate and tropical ecosystems.
- Strong observational skills with a high attention to detail to ensure high animal welfare standards are maintained.
- Sound judgment and ability to use initiative for effective decision-making.
- Must have a valid full clean UK driver's licence.
- Knowledge of safe animal handling practices and maintaining a safe working environment.

- Strong computer (MS Office programs such as Excel, Word, and Outlook) and organisational skills.
- Demonstrated leadership ability; experience mentoring others preferred and able to work with a diverse range of colleagues in order to get the job done.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to remain calm and focused under pressure.
- Ability to work independently as well as part of a team.
- Willingness to work a flexible schedule which includes weekends and holidays as required.

#### **DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS**

- Rescue Diver Certification or the ability to get the certification within 6 months of start.
- the ability to pass annual HSE dive physical requirements.
- Knowledge of HSE Scientific diving in a commercial setting.
- Experience in a variety of breeding programs including jellyfish, marine fish and crustaceans
- Experience of the culture of various live feeds used for nutrition of marine animals.
- Experience working with mammals and reptiles
- Knowledge of Zoo licensing process

\*PLEASE NOTE, PREVIOUS APPLICANTS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

## APPLICATION FORM BELOW

## **Employment Application Form**

*Please read the following points before completing application form.*

- Please read the job description before completing this form.
- All information on this form will be treated in confidence and will only be used to assess your suitability for the job applied for.
- Failure to complete this application form correctly and in full will lead to your application not being processed further.
- Due to the high number of applications anticipated, Aquarium Exploris will only notify successful candidates.
- A reserve list may be compiled for any future vacancies within a nine month period.

**Job Applied for:**

**(if applying for more than one job, please enter all jobs above)**

**Surname:**  **Forename/s:**

**Address:**

**Post Code:**

**Home Tel Number**  **Mobile Number**   
If Any

**Email Address**

**National Insurance Number:**

Do we need to be aware of any reasonable adjustments in order to facilitate your attendance at interview?

**Yes/No**

**If Yes, please give details:**

**Qualifications:**

Exam type (GCSE/A Level etc.)	Date Taken	Subject	Grade

Verification of the above qualifications will be sought at Job offer stage.

Please include any other information i.e. Training courses etc.

Subject	Date Completed

**Employment History**

The following section must be completed in full. Starting with your most recent employer. Incomplete areas may result in your application not being processed any further.

Name and address of employer	From (Month/Year)	To (Month/Year)	Position and responsibilities	Reason for Leaving


Continue on a separate sheet if required.

### Gaps in Employment

Please detail below any gaps in your employment history, including any periods of unemployment and volunteering etc..

Date	Reason for Gap

### References

Please include the following details of two previous employers from whom a reference may be obtained. Please include your most recent employer.

Name

Address

Tel No.

Email:

Occupation:

Name

Address

Tel No.

Email:

Occupation:

**Additional Information in Support of Application.**

In this section please demonstrate how you meet the essential and desirable skills, experience and qualifications as detailed in the job description. (Continue on a separate sheet if required) If applying for more than one job, the info below must be included for each job.

**Relocation:**

If you intend to relocate, please give us details of your intention to relocate, where you intend to live, and when you would be able to start if successful. The company owns a property located 8 miles from the Aquarium which will be offered free for a period of 3 months.

### Criminal Record Declaration

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence?

Yes/No

If yes, please give details and dates of each conviction which is not spent together with details of any penalties imposed.

- An enhanced Access NI check will be required for successful candidates.

### Salary and Notice Period

Present Salary

Notice Required   
*From current employer*

### Application Declaration

Before submitting your application please read it carefully. If you omit information we have asked for, we will not consider your application. If you are appointed to the post, any major omission or inaccurate information relevant to your application could lead to disciplinary action or in some circumstances legal action against you. I declare that the information contained in this form is true and accurate. I understand that if it is subsequently discovered that any statement is false or misleading my employment may be terminated without notice. I understand too that an enhanced disclosure check may be sought in the event of my application being successful.

I have read and understood the declaration.

Signed:

Date:



Please Post or deliver completed application form by the closing date to:

Exploris Aquarium  
The Rope Walk  
Castle St  
Portaferry  
BT22 1NZ

Or Email to [matt@explorisni.com](mailto:matt@explorisni.com)