

Western Forest: Forest Action Community Organiser Freelance Role

Issued by	Western Forest - Safia Gilder-Hodgson, Partnerships and Advocacy Manager
Date issued	14 th October 2026
Response deadline	26 th October 2026 (interviews 2 nd November) Proposals to: Safia Gilder-Hodgson safiagh@westernforest.org.uk , cc Julie Buck julieb@westernforest.org.uk
Project Dates	9 th November 2026 – 31 st March 2027
Primary goal	Mobilise three urban to rural corridors that bring community voices into shaping Western Forest through community organising.
Budget envelope	£13,000+VAT – see section 7 Please provide us with a quote that outlines your day rate. We anticipate this being equivalent to around two days per week , although we welcome proposals that demonstrate an alternative approach to delivering the scope of work within the available budget and timeframe.

1. Background & Context

[Western Forest](#) is England's newest national forest, spanning Gloucestershire, the West of England and Wiltshire. Launched by government in 2025 with £7.5 million in funding, our mission is to create a thriving landscape connected by trees - for nature, farming and communities.

Western Forest delivery is split into three pillars. Forest Creation, Forest Action and Future Forest. Forest Action is our people and place focused pillar where we aim to give communities agency in shaping their region to make it greener, more resilient and a better place to live, work and play. We have created three urban to rural corridors across our area:

- Bristol to Bath
- Swindon to Braydon Forest (in partnership with Woodland Trust and Great Western Community Forest)

- Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester (Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and CPRE Gloucestershire)

These corridors will focus Western Forest's community organising efforts on places that are expected to experience significant growth and development over the next 30 years, while also strengthening connections between the forest and our urban centres. By bringing trees closer to where people live, we can improve access to nature, enhance wellbeing and build resilience across both rural and urban landscapes.

Our approach aims to be rooted in community priorities, bringing people together to shape the nature rich spaces that matters most to them and ensuring that future green and blue infrastructure investment reflects local needs.

Western Forest are looking for an experienced Community Organiser who can mobilise and accelerate the development of these three corridors. Forest Action funding finishes in March 2028 and therefore extra resource to deliver community listening, meetings and build stakeholder relations is the focus of this role.

2. Forest Action – Community Organiser Activities

The Community Organiser will support the development of the three urban to rural corridors. We are particularly interested in community organising approaches that identify and develop local leaders, build collective power and support community-led action.

Period: 1st November 2026 – 31st March 2027 (*potential to extend*)

Objective	Activity	Timeline	Output
Complete stakeholder mapping, analysis and key projects	Create stakeholder database and mapping of community groups, landowners, partners and contacts and contact them	November (Swindon and Avon) December (Gloucestershire) Bristol Climate and Nature Panel in March	Stakeholder map and contact database for all corridors.

Support and deliver community events including in Swindon.	At the end of November during National Tree Week, we aim to invite at least 50 community leads to Swindon to launch the Swindon Corridor	23 rd November	Community event to launch Swindon
Support school programme in Swindon and key events	Delivering school talks with students on trees and woodlands and public events during Festival of Tomorrow.	Planning January Event during Feb	Deliver at least 5 events in schools
Launch community organising across priority corridors	Establish relationships with key community groups, local authorities, landowners and partner organisations in 1:1 meeting.	November – January	Engagement network established across all corridors
Deliver listening campaign	Support community listening to identify priorities and co-design opportunities for woodland and forest creation	December – March	Community priorities, stories and opportunities captured
Capture stories and communications	Gather case studies, stories, photographs and content to support corridor development and communications	November – March	Communications materials and case studies developed
Facilitate strategic discussions	Support panel discussions and stakeholder conversations, including with BCNP and key partners	November – March	Strategic partnerships strengthened
Develop corridor action plans	Produce action plans and timelines aligned with the five stages of community organising	February – March	Three corridor action plans completed
Build wider partnerships	Bring additional organisations and delivery partners into corridor activity	Ongoing	Expanded partnership network
Support promotion and visibility	Assist with PR and communications around community-led action and woodland creation opportunities	Ongoing	Increased awareness and community participation

3. Forest Action – Freelancer Objectives

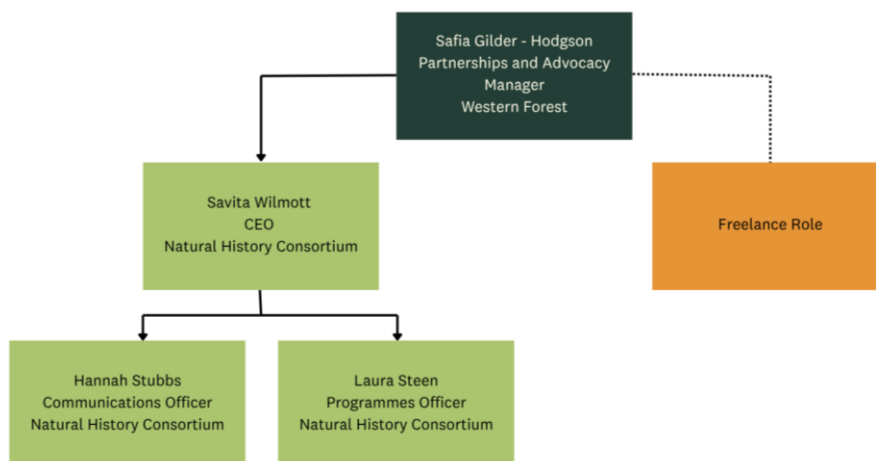
1. Complete stakeholder mapping identifying a minimum of 25 stakeholders per corridor including large projects across the geography identified.
2. Undertake at least 15 one-to-one conversations in both Swindon and Gloucester and at least 5 in Avon corridor. From these deliver a total of 15 listening events across all three corridors.
3. Recruit and engage at least 10 community leaders in each corridor.
4. Attend and deliver listening events at mass engagement events – Festival of Tomorrow (February), Community Event in Swindon (End of November), School Events Swindon (February).
5. Work with Partnerships and Advocacy Manager to produce three corridor action plans by March 2027 for year 3 of the full Western Forest programme.

4. Reporting and Management

You'll join a really friendly team made up of Western Forest and Natural History Consortium.

- Monthly progress report – captured on Monday board.
- Weekly supervision meeting with Partnerships & Advocacy Manager.
- Joining Forest Action team meetings on working days (Tuesday)
- Final report summarising community insights, leadership development, stakeholder map and recommended next steps.

4b. The Team



5. Experience and Person Specification

We are seeking someone with a strong background in community organising. This role is not primarily focused on consultation, engagement or communications. It is about building relationships, developing community leadership, listening to communities and supporting people to take collective action around opportunities for forest creation and greener, more resilient places.

Experience and Essential Skills

- Proven experience in community organising, community development or grassroots mobilisation. With a strong Understanding of community organising principles, leadership development and power-building.
- Experience building trusted relationships and networks with residents, community groups and local partners.
- Skilled in one-to-one conversations, listening campaigns and identifying community priorities.
- Ability to bring people together around shared interests and support community-led action.
- Experience planning and facilitating community organising activities, including meetings, workshops and listening events.
- Strong communication and facilitation skills, with the ability to engage and motivate diverse communities, with the ability to translate community priorities into practical projects, campaigns or local action.
- Experience recording, reporting and sharing learning, outcomes and community insights.
- Strong organisational skills and ability to manage multiple activities and relationships.

Desirable

- Understanding of woodland creation, forestry, green infrastructure or nature-based solutions.
- Experience of supporting volunteers and community-led action.
- Experience of working with schools, young people or educational settings.
- Full UK driving licence and access to transport, or the ability to travel independently across the Western Forest area.
- Willingness to undergo a DBS check if required for activities involving schools, young people or vulnerable groups.

Key Personal Attributes

- Excellent listener with a genuine interest in people, communities and place.
- Enthusiastic, proactive and self-motivated.
- Inclusive and empathetic, with the ability to work with people from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Confident relationship builder and networker.

- Passionate about empowering communities and connecting people with nature.

6. Where will you be working

Work will be a mixture of in office, on site and remote working. Our expectation:

- 1 day a week in [Bristol office](#) (same day as Partnerships and Advocacy Manager – this can be flexible on day).
- 1 day remote or in-person with meetings (across Swindon, Gloucester, Cheltenham and West of England)

7. Fee

The total Forest Action freelance budget is £13,000 + VAT (£15,600 inc. VAT).

- Events will come out of our central Forest Action budget.
- £500 for travel will be included for the full five months.

8. How to Respond

If this role excites you and you would like to apply, amazing! Please submit a proposal of up to 5 pages covering:

- Your CV (2 pages)
- A cover letter explaining your experience and how you would approach this work (1 page)
- Relevant experience and two or three brief case studies (2 slides or 2 pages)
- Please provide us with a quote that outlines your day rate. We anticipate this being equivalent to around two days per week, although we welcome proposals that demonstrate an alternative approach to delivering the scope of work within the available budget and timeframe

Please send proposals to: Safia Gilder-Hodgson safiagh@westernforest.org.uk , cc Julie Buck julieb@westernforest.org.uk

Questions: Please send any questions to the above email addresses.

Deadline for proposal: 26th October 2026

Interview will take place: 2nd November

Thank you for your application!