**Position Description**

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| **Position title:** | **Ecologist** |
| **Work location:** | City Administration Centre, 12 Stewart Avenue, Newcastle West |
| **Directorate:** | Planning and Environment |
| **Reports to:** | Environmental Asset Manager |
| **Direct reports:** | Nil |
| **Salary Point:** | 16 |
| **Decision making:** | Level 6 Management Hierarchy |
| **Date revised:** | November 2023 |

**City of Newcastle Overview**

City of Newcastle (CN) employs over 1,200 staff and is responsible for a local government area of 187km2. Newcastle is both the cultural and economic centre of the Hunter region. Our organisational structure consists of four directorates, each linked to the four themes of our Community Strategic Plan (CSP):

1. City Infrastructure
2. Corporate Services
3. Creative and Community Services
4. Planning and Environment

The Environment & Sustainability (E&S) service unit is part of the Planning & Environment Directorate, and this role sits in the Environmental Assets service element, as part of the E&S service unit, reporting to the Environmental Assets Manager.

**What’s it like working at the City of Newcastle?**

We are focused on making a difference in our community and achieving our vision of***creating a liveable, sustainable, inclusive global city***. We are proud to deliver services valued by our community. People come first at the City of Newcastle, which means providing employees with meaningful work and capacity for work life balance. As a large local organisation, the City of Newcastle offers its employees the opportunity to develop in their current role, grow into future opportunities and reach their full potential.

Our organisation’s values are **Cooperation, Respect, Excellence and Wellbeing** which are underpinned by our behaviours of courage, trust, and pride. Together, our values and behaviours support our decision making as well as our day-to-day interactions.

We value diversity of thought, and we focus on equity in the workplace. We are committed to creating an inclusive workplace culture where everyone feels respected, safe, and valued so they can be themselves and fully contribute their opinions and perspectives to the success of the organisation.

**What’s it like working in Environment and Sustainability?**

The Environment and Sustainability (E&S) Service Unit is responsible for delivering a range of capital works and operational programs to protect and enhance our natural environment and to ensure the sustainability of our city, including:

* managing our environmental assets, such as our bushland, water courses, street trees, coast, estuaries and wetlands.
* delivering initiatives to transition Newcastle to a net zero emissions city and to adapt to the impacts of our changing climate.
* managing our street tree and park tree replacement program and other 'greening our city' initiatives
* tree assessment, maintenance and life extension programs
* Landcare, Dunecare and Coastcare volunteer programs
* invasive species management
* managing Blackbutt Reserve
* delivering environmental education and community engagement programs
* developing and implementing policies, strategies and programs to drive environmental and sustainability outcomes, both for CN as an organisation and for the broader community
* coastal, flood risk and bushfire management.

**What is the focus of this position?**

This role is responsible for providing specialist ecological advice for CN's environmental assets renewal program, on-ground capital projects, Natural Connection community engagement programs, and on strategic and land use planning matters.

This role will support the delivery of the *Newcastle Environment Strategy,* CN's 10-year roadmap for a sustainable Newcastle, by providing specialist ecological advice during the development and delivery of CN's Blue Green Grid Action Plan, Water Sensitive City Action Plan and Urban Forest Action Plan.

**What you will be doing:**

* Provide specialist ecological advice and quality control processes for CN's environmental assets renewal program, including the conservation of viable habitat and the restoration of degraded habitat and the recovery of ecosystems covered by CN's environmental assets management framework.
* Contribute to the delivery of CN's capital works program, by prioritising, researching, planning, designing and guiding the implementation and monitoring of on-ground environmental rehabilitation and restoration projects.
* Provide specialist ecological advice for on-ground CN projects, including the development of rehabilitation scopes of work for sites impacted by construction works.
* Provide specialist ecological and conservation advice for CN's Natural Connection community engagement programs.
* Providing specialist ecological advice on CN's environmental policies, strategies, plans, procedures, programs and projects, including the Urban Forest Action Plan, Blue Green Grid Action Plan, Water Sensitive Cities Action Plan, plans of management and vegetation management plans.
* Provide specialist ecological advice on strategic and land use planning matters, including the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan, development applications, planning proposals, technical manuals and guidelines and the preparation and review of planning pathways and environmental assessments under the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
* Manage the review and approval process for CN's vegetation clearing permits.
* Deliver evidence-based decision making, by coordinating research and collaborating with academic and /or industry experts, as necessary, on ecological matters relating to environmental asset management, including our local threatened species, to inform strategic and on-ground works.
* Identify and facilitate the design and delivery of practical, ecological field monitoring and reporting methods, including upskilling CN and community stakeholders in appropriate monitoring and reporting methodologies.
* Develop formal stewardship and land conservation agreements, as appropriate, in relation to land under CN's care and control.
* Assist in the maintenance of CN's environmental asset management systems.
* Proactively research best practice and innovation in ecosystem management to apply to the delivery of CN's environmental policies, strategies, action plans, programs, and projects.
* Contribute to the development and delivery of internal and external capacity building programs, including programs that improve connections with nature and mainstream the use of nature-based solutions in CN operations.
* Prepare applications for grant funding and manage successful grants through reporting and financial management.
* Manage program and project budgets to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of program and project outcomes.
* Provide exemplarily service to external and internal stakeholders, consistently delivering high quality technical recommendations and judgement with a strong customer service focus.
* Contribute to a team environment that encourages safety, innovation and continuous improvement.
* Prepare, review and deliver procurement and contract documentation, for program and project delivery.
* Work collaboratively with both internal and external stakeholders to establish and maintain productive working relationships for enhanced project and program outcomes.
* Any other accountabilities or duties as directed by your supervisor / manager which are within the employee's skills, competence and training.

**The essentials you’ll need:**

* Degree level qualification in a relevant discipline (for example, ecology, biology, natural sciences or natural resources) and/or equivalent demonstrated capability through past employment experience.
* Demonstrated experience in providing specialist ecological advice for environmental assets renewal programs, on-ground capital projects, community engagement programs, and on strategic and land use planning matters, with successful outcomes.
* Demonstrated success in creating partnerships and developing and maintaining cooperative working relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, in relation to ecological management and program and project delivery.
* Demonstrated high level verbal and written communication and presentation skills, including a capacity to interact with a diverse range of stakeholders, and conflict resolution and negotiation skills.
* Demonstrated experience in project managing the delivery of multidisciplinary rehabilitation and restoration projects, related to ecosystem management or environmental asset renewal, including the ability to set priorities, meet deadlines and develop and manage a budget.
* Demonstrated knowledge of restoration procedures, standards, and strategies involving local/regional ecosystems, especially bushland, riparian areas and wetlands, and experience in applying these approaches to successful on-ground rehabilitation and restoration projects.
* Demonstrated knowledge of environmental planning legislation and development assessment.
* Computer literacy, including the Microsoft Office suite and demonstrated experience in the use of geographic information systems (GIS) related to environmental planning and management.
* Demonstrated broad plant identification skills, with extensive experience in range NSW habitats.

**Other valuable skills you may have:**

* Master’s degree in ecology, biology natural sciences, or a closely related field.
* Intermediate or advanced GIS skills.
* Demonstrated project management experience and/or qualifications in project management, project delivery and contract management.
* Experience working in local government.
* Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) Accredited Assessor and/or knowledge and experience of the BAM and its delivery.

**We’ll encourage you along the way**

We will partner with you to support your performance and ongoing development to ensure you are fully prepared for future challenges as this position and our organisation adapts and evolves.

*I acknowledge that I have read and understood the requirements and responsibilities of this position as detailed in the Position Description (PD) and have discussed the PD with my Manager.*

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| **Employee Name:** |  |
| **Employee Signature:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |