

National Data Manager Scotland

Contract type:	Fixed term (18 months)
Working hours:	Full time (35 hours per week)
Location:	Edinburgh
Salary:	£49,204
Department:	Preserved Collections
Division:	Science

Job Description

Purpose

The National Data Manager Scotland is the central role overseeing data management, data sharing and aggregation between a national hub for specimen digitisation in Scotland – hosted jointly by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and National Museums of Scotland – and a network of partner natural science collections. The project is part of DiSSCo-UK, funded by UKRI.

This role provides strategic and technical leadership focused on delivery: leading on data management, developing and coordinating data sharing pipelines, monitoring data quality, resolving issues, and supporting institutions to meet agreed data standards and schedules.

Main Duties

Data management (70%)

- Develop and implement a data management plan for the digitisation of natural science collections Scotland, aligned to data management plans for the national collections.
- Oversee the end-to-end process of data transfer from consortium members to the national aggregator.
- Develop, maintain and manage data sharing pipelines.
- Agree schedules and workflows to ensure timely and complete data submissions from partners to aggregators.
- Track data delivery performance across institutions and work with the project team to proactively address delays or gaps.
- Maintain current documentation relevant to all data management practices.

Data governance and quality assurance (20%)

- Define agreed data standards, including metadata schemas, controlled vocabularies, and formatting requirements, for all collections to follow.
- Conduct regular audits of incoming data to identify errors, inconsistencies, or missing fields.
- Provide clear feedback and guidance to work package leads and partner institutes to resolve data quality issues.

- Provide focused support to national collections and partner institutes to resolve data quality and sharing issues.
- Maintain dashboards or monitoring tools that track data completeness, accuracy, and compliance.

Horizon and network (10%)

- Participate in the Scotland project meetings, activities and training delivery as relevant.
- Maintain dialogue with DiSSCo-UK regarding data management, standards, sharing and aggregation.
- Communicate and review sector developments to the Scotland project team.
- Participate in sector-wide discussions regarding R&D for automated data handling processes for digitisation and curation.

Person Specification

Essential

- High level of data literacy, including working directly with datasets.
- Practical experience of managing and coordinating data flows between organisations.
- Experience designing or managing end-to-end data pipelines.
- Confident working with structured data sets in SQL, DarwinCore and other biodiversity data standards.
- Experience in data quality management, including validation, reconciliation, version control and auditing.
- Ability to define and manage data submission schedules, workflows and dependencies across partner organisations.
- Ability to understand and communicate technical issues clearly to technical and non-technical stakeholders.
- Experience maintaining data management documentation including standards, workflows and guidance for contributors.
- Experience implementing data governance arrangements including agreed standards, responsibilities and decision-making.
- Knowledge of data standards and metadata schemas, and the ability to support partner organisations to implement them consistently.
- Awareness of data protection, licensing and ethical considerations for sharing data.
- A relevant degree or equivalent experience.

Desirable

- Experience aligning local collection data with national/international standards.
- Experience supporting organisational change related to digitisation or data standards.
- Familiarity with data aggregation platforms or national/international data infrastructures.
- Knowledge of biodiversity and natural science data standards.

- Working knowledge of SQL or basic querying concepts, scripting tools such as Python or R, and APIs.
- A postgraduate degree in a relevant subject.