

## **NATURE SOCIETY (SINGAPORE)** **EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

### **1) TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

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#### **1.1 Recruitment – Advertisements, Shortlisting, Interviews**

1.1.1 All positions will be advertised in the Straits Times and any other media considered suitable, as well as in Nature News. Full details of the position, responsibilities and the skills or experience needed will be elaborated in a document posted up on the website, to which advertisements will refer.

Annex A – Job Advertisement

Annex B - Job Description

1.1.2 Candidates should be advised not to use a member of the Executive Committee as a reference.

1.1.3 All application forms are to be treated as confidential.

1.1.4 After the closing date, two members of the Executive Committee, excluding the President and any Exco member likely to take part in interviewing, shall meet to draw up a shortlist for interview. These two Exco members will work independently, and then discuss their choices in order to draw up a single list.

1.1.5 An interview panel of at least three people shall be created, namely (1) the President or his/her substitute from Exco; (2) a non-member from a similar NGO who is involved in recruitment or staff management, or a non-member of similar standing and experience; (3) a long-term member of the Society in good standing.

1.1.6 The members of the interview panel shall be sent the application forms in advance and shall meet for at least fifteen minutes before the interviews start to discuss the form of the interviews. As far as possible they shall make a decision as to whether any candidates are suitable in their opinion, and which candidate is the most suitable, immediately after the interviews. They may suggest that references to be taken up before finalizing their decision. Their decision shall be passed to Exco.

1.1.7 The final decision for appointments rests with the Exco.

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#### **1.2 Recruitment**

The President or Vice President shall issue a letter of appointment to new employees before or on the date of commencement, confirming the conditions of appointment (remuneration, employment period, probation period, annual leave, working hours, insurance, bonus, transport claims, termination, medical benefits, etc.) and duties and responsibilities of the employee. Employees shall confirm acceptance of the appointment by signing and returning the duplicate copy of the letter.

Annex C – Appointment Letter

The probation period for new employees shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.

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## **1.4 Termination Of Service**

An employee or the Society may at any time give to the other party notice or pay-in lieu of notice to terminate the contract of service. The length of such notice shall be as follows :

<b>Staff Category</b>	<b>During Probation</b>	<b>Upon Confirmation</b>
All Levels	1 Month	1 Month

## **2) WORKING HOURS**

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### **2.1 Working Hours**

In general, the Normal working hours will be from 9:00am to 6.00 pm (Monday-Friday)

For weekend and public holiday work, time in lieu (hour for hour) shall be taken within the following month. Not more than eight hours of time in lieu, i.e. one day, shall be taken in any one week. Staff shall give advance notice of the nature of work to be done on weekends and public holidays.

## **3) WAGE & SALARY ADMINISTRATION**

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### **3.1 Payment Of Salary**

Salaries shall be paid on a monthly basis.

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### **3.2 Reimbursements for Travel and Mobile Phones**

3.2.1. Society employees shall be reimbursed for travel costs when on Society business. Employees are expected to use public transport in all normal circumstances. Claims for public transport where stored value cards are used do not need receipts, but will be checked against known standard fares. Taxis can be used for other exceptional circumstances, such as transport of heavy materials, remote locations, timing, urgency or inclement weather – the exceptional circumstances must be noted on the claim form. Original receipts shall be submitted with the claims. Since staff have some control over timing of meetings and may work at home from time to time, they can work out daily schedules of activity to reduce journeys and costs. (i.e. if there is an 11.00am meeting in town, work at home and then proceed straight to town, and travel to the Office afterwards, deducting the normal cost of travel to the Office from the claim. If the meeting time can be controlled, arrange to meet in town at 9.00 am.)

Annex D – Reimbursement Claim Form

3.2.2 The Society shall reimburse 75% of the mobile phone bill of an employee, excluding any international, internet or other charges, subject to a maximum of \$40 per month.

3.2.3. Claims for travel and mobile phone reimbursements shall be submitted on the Society Reimbursement Claim Form with adequate details to satisfy auditors and with receipts or bills attached.

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### **3.3 Salary Increments/Adjustments**

Salary increments/adjustments shall be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

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### **3.4 Central Provident Fund (CPF)**

Central Provident Fund contributions shall be made in accordance to prevailing regulations

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### **3.5. 13<sup>th</sup> Month / Annual Wage Supplement and Bonuses**

3.5.1 A 13<sup>th</sup> Month or Annual Wage Supplement shall be paid at the discretion of the Executive Committee at the end of each year.

3.5.2 When such payments are made they will be made to all employees who are still in employment with the Society on the last day of December of the relevant calendar year, regardless as to whether the employee has already given notice to the Society or an employment contract for a specific period of employment expires at the end of that day.

3.5.3 Employees who joined during the relevant calendar year will receive a 13<sup>th</sup> Month payment on a pro rata basis determined by the number of months they have been employed during the year minus any days of unpaid leave.

3.5.4 Employees who have left the employment of the Society during the relevant calendar year do not qualify for a 13<sup>th</sup> Month payment.

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## **EMPLOYEES BENEFIT PROGRAM**

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### **4.1 Annual Leave**

Employees are entitled to paid annual leave of 14 days.

Annual leave shall be scheduled and approved in advance. Leave applications should normally be submitted one month in advance for leave periods of up to five consecutive working days, and two months in advance for leave periods exceeding five consecutive working days.

Annual leave shall be accrued on a monthly basis and may be taken on a half-day basis. Annual leave entitlement for less than one year of service shall be pro-rated based on the months of service completed.

Employees are allowed to accumulate the equivalent of one preceding year's leave entitlement to the end of the following year.

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**4.2 Advance Leave**

There shall be no advance leave.

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**4.3 Unpaid Leave**

Employees are discouraged from taking unpaid leave. However, the Society may from time to time grant unpaid leave to any employee based on the merit of each case if the employees have no annual leave balance.

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**4.5 Maternity, Paternity and Child Care Leave**

Maternity, Paternity and Child Care Leave shall be granted in accordance with prevailing government regulations.

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**4.7 Medical/Dental/Hospitalization Leave**

**Medical/Dental/Hospitalization Leave** shall be granted in accordance with prevailing government regulations.

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**4.8 Compassionate Leave**

A confirmed employee shall be eligible to apply for immediate paid compassionate leave as follows:

Death of spouse, children, parents, parents-in-law, grandparents	-	3 consecutive working days
Critical illness of above listed	-	1 working day

All compassionate leave applications must be supported by relevant documents e.g. Death Certificates. 'Critical Illness' means illness requiring the patient to be hospitalized and placed on the 'dangerously ill list' of the hospital.

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**4.9 National Service**

Leave of absence for national service shall be granted to NSmen in accordance with government regulations.

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**5) MEDICAL INSURANCE & BENEFITS**

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**5.1 Medical Insurance & Medical/Dental Benefits**

Employees shall be reimbursed a fixed annual amount for commercially available medical insurance, which the government has approved for part payment out of the Medisave account, or commercially available riders, which the government has approved for similar purposes. (*The amount at 2013 is \$150.00*)

Staff shall be reimbursed for outpatient treatment, up to a fixed amount per visit, subject to a fixed aggregate annual amount. The unused portion may be used for the reimbursement of elective medical procedures such as medical checkups, within the same year. *(The amount at 2013 is \$10 per visit, up to an aggregate amount of \$100.00)*

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#### **5.4 Workmen's Injury Compensation**

Employees are covered under this scheme, in accordance with prevailing government regulations. Any accidents must be reported to the Executive Committee immediately.

### **6) OTHER BENEFITS**

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#### **6.4 Training and Further Studies**

The Society may subsidise training and further studies, which are relevant to the job requirements of the employee.

### **7) Staff Discipline**

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#### **7.4 Discipline**

Employees are expected to abide by Society policies, regulations and ethics; meet the required standards of performance and conduct. To ensure fair and impartial treatment to all employees, disciplinary action, when necessary, is usually directed towards corrective action rather than punishment. Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to the following :-

- a) Verbal Warning
- b) Written Warning
- c) Final Written Warning
- d) Dismissal

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#### **7.7 Change Of Personal Particulars and Status of Employability**

Employees shall inform the Executive Committee on changes in personal particulars and status of employability.



**Nature Society (Singapore)**  
seeks someone committed to nature  
conservation for the position of

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**The three main elements of the position are:**

- liaison with the public, press and other NGOs;
- liaison with potential and actual donors and sponsors;
- support for the work of the Conservation Committee.

Full details for potential applicants can be found on the  
Society website: [www.nss.org.sg](http://www.nss.org.sg)

Closing date for applications: **March 21st, 2009.**

## APPENDIX B: JOB DESCRIPTION

### **Information for applications for the Executive Officer position:**

Advertised: September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Closing Date for hard copy applications to reach the NSS Office: Tuesday September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

**The Nature Society (Singapore)** or NSS, is a totally non-government, non-profit organization, registered as a Society (ROS0235.1954/CAS), as a Charity (Reg. No 2082) and as an Institution of Public Character (IPC 000639). It is dedicated to the appreciation, conservation, study and enjoyment of the natural heritage in Singapore, Malaysia and the surrounding region. Inaugurated in 1954 as the Singapore branch of the Malayan Nature Society, it became the Nature Society (Singapore) in 1991.

The Society is run by its active members. These comprise the Executive Committee, the Council, the Chairpersons and Committees of the various Special Interest Groups and functional Committees and all those who lead, organize or support specific activities. The Society depends financially on subscriptions and donations from its members as well as donations from companies, institutions, foundations and private individuals.

Regular activities for members include guided local nature walks, slide talks and overseas eco-trips. These can be of either general nature interest or of specialist interest such as birds, other vertebrates, butterflies, plants or habitats, such as intertidal or marine zones. A programme of regular island-wide censuses of birds is now in its twentieth year and the annual bird race is in its 27th year. Workshops and short courses for members are also run from time to time. Most such activities are for older teenagers and adults, but the Society also has monthly Fun with Nature programmes for youngsters aged 5 – 9 years, and a related sponsored programme for primary schools.

The Society is at any time involved in a number of projects. These can be book projects, conservation or restoration projects or projects to provide feedback to government and other bodies on the effects of proposed developments in or adjacent to nature reserves and nature areas. For such projects specific surveys of birds, mammals, butterflies and other vertebrates and invertebrates are conducted, sometimes independently and sometimes in collaboration with National Parks Board.

In the past the Society successfully persuaded the government to set aside and manage Sungei Buloh as a wetlands nature park, a park which was so successful that it was later enlarged and gazetted as a nature reserve. The Society was also able to stave off, through its Environmental Impact Assessment report, proposals to develop part of the Peirce Forests, in the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, into a golf course. It has relocated corals from several areas in advance of reclamation projects, and it joined with other nature groups to provide information to the government on the rich biodiversity of Chek Jawa, at Pulau Ubin, which led to the government deferring proposed land reclamation. Since the publication in 1990 of the then ground-breaking Master Plan for the Conservation of Nature in Singapore, it has continued to produce numerous conservation-oriented and biodiversity-based reports, checklists and guides. In 2010, when the news of the closure of the KTM Railway line in Singapore was announced, the Society proposed a Green Railway Corridor, see website on this and other recent projects.

2008 publications by Special Interest Groups of the Society were “A Fieldguide to the Butterflies of Singapore” (February 2008) by the Butterfly Interest Group, and “Wild Animals of Singapore” (March 2008) by the Vertebrate Study Group. The Conservation Volunteers group has an active four-year old rescue and research programme in relation to Horseshoe Crabs at Kranji, which is now including an island-wide annual survey and a tracking project. In November 2008 the Society adopted the Kranji Reservoir within the framework of the PUB ABC Waters scheme. Under this Adoption it has focused on restoration of the marshland and ponds and on nature appreciation activities for the general public in the area close to Neo Tiew Lane 2. The Bird Group of the Society has adopted the Lorong Halus Wetlands. The Conservation Committee has also recently applied to adopt freshwater ponds at Lorong Halus in order to carry out volunteer-based restoration and conservation work.

### **Secretariat**

The Society operates from an Office at the corner of Lorong 28, Geylang, and at present employs three-full time staff, including the outgoing Executive Officer, and one part-time staff. Specific tasks such as the production of the quarterly Nature Watch magazine and the bi-monthly Nature News newsletter are contracted to individual members.

## **Job Description of Executive Officer post**

The two main roles of the Executive Officer are:

- 1) Public Relations – to liaise with the press, other NGOs and the public on issues of concern, including updating items on the website (through the webmaster(s)) and responding to requests and concerns that come in through email, letters and phone.
- 2) Fund Raising – to network and liaise with potential and actual sponsors and donors.
- 3) Promoting Habitat and Biodiversity Conservation – to support the Conservation Committee.

### Other important aspects of the post:

a) The Executive Officer would be based at the Society Office. The staff organization is intended to be non-hierarchical, with each member of staff taking responsibility for their own functions. Both amongst staff and members, the Society has always had a “hands-on and muck-in culture” which involves everyone helping out in whatever capacities are needed at times of urgency and at Society events. (e.g. the President was the first to grab a mop when drinks were spilt at a recent NSS Get-together, and other members left it to him.)

b) Decision-making in the Society rests in the hands of the seven-member Executive Committee (Exco). However, decisions are normally made by Exco within the context of Council (Chairpersons / Representatives of Special Interest Groups and Committees and Co-opted Members). This enables the Society to work as far as possible on a consensus basis and ensures that a wide group are always aware of ongoing matters. Exco / Council Meetings take place monthly, but the Exco and Council members are in constant contact through an email loop so that information is shared and decisions can be made between monthly meetings

c) To increase efficiency and to ensure that the Executive Officer is fully informed, it is intended that the appointed Executive Officer will attend the monthly Exco/Council Meetings on the second Monday evening of each month, from 8.00 pm, and produce draft Minutes during the following day, for finalization and circulation by the Honorary Secretary.

d) The initial appointment would be on a three-months probationary period, with the option of extending this to six months, if necessary. The position would operate with one month's notice on either side, both before and after the probationary period.

e) It is expected that applicants for this position would have good interpersonal and communication skills and be able to use their initiative. It is also expected that they would have a strong commitment to nature and biodiversity conservation in particular, and to wider, related environmental issues. Existing or former members of the Society are welcome to apply. We are open to applicants with a wide range of education, training, work or volunteer experiences. Applicants are free to tell us of all their skills and capacities which they feel may be of use in the position or to the Society, and we are open to an applicant with specific skills who might discuss with us a recasting of the appointment.

g) Short-listed applicants may expect to attend two interviews.

## **APPLICATIONS**

Applicants should send the following hard copy by Saturday March 21st, 2009:

1. Cover letter detailing their particular interest in the position and expected monthly salary.
2. Curriculum Vitae (CV) with contact and personal details, highlighting relevant education, experiences and skills.
3. Two references with full contact details of the referees.

To: The President, Nature Society (Singapore), 510 Geylang Road, #02-05 The Sunflower, Singapore 389466. Please write “Application for EO Position” on the top right-hand corner of the envelope.

We are sorry that we cannot accept soft copy applications for this position, as we are concerned about possible large files in relation to our present email boxes.

Further information on the Society and its activities can be found on the main website [www.nss.org.sg](http://www.nss.org.sg) and the linked webpages, websites and blogs of various Special Interest Groups and Committees. (To find the linked websites and blogs, follow the links on left hand side of webpage of each Special Interest Group and Committee.)

**Thank you for your interest**

We sincerely thank all applicants in advance for their interest.

We cannot promise responding to all applicants although we will try to do so. It is possible that we will only manage to respond to short-listed applicants and, if this is the case, we apologise in advance to all others.

Shawn Lum,  
President,  
Nature Society (Singapore)  
On behalf of the Executive Committee.

## APPENDIX C: APPOINTMENT LETTER

Date

Name  
Address

Dear Name,

### **Re: Appointment as Outreach Officer, Nature Society (Singapore)**

I hope that this note finds you well. On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Nature Society (Singapore), I am pleased to offer you the position of Outreach Officer of the Nature Society (Singapore) .

In conjunction with the appointment, I hope you will find the following terms agreeable:

#### **1. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The principal duties of the Outreach Officer, as stated in the advertisement of the position will be:

- a. To nurture and reinforce nature appreciation and nature conservation culture of members and to initiate and develop this culture with schools and the wider public.
- b. To support, where needed, member's program of walks, talks, activities and the work of the Special Interests Groups (SIGs) in providing the programs of walks, talks, workshops, surveys, and other activities for members.
- c. Projects involving both members and non-member volunteers – To support Project Leaders in conservation, restoration and other projects (e.g. Kranji Reservoir Adoption, Horseshoe Crab Rescue and Research) and to take some leadership roles in existing and new projects, particularly in relation to outside groups that wish to find volunteer opportunities for their students/members/staff.
- d. NSS Green Hub @ Ubin – to develop and co-ordinate the use of this house for the activities of NSS with members and volunteers and activities of other green groups.
- e. Education Group Bird Identification Web Tutorial : to recruit the first 30 primary schools to be involved in this project, co-ordinate training program for teachers and liaise with the teachers and schools in relation to the program of prizes involving junior membership of the Society and special introductory walks and talks. (Web tutorial will be created by an IT company).
- f. To respond to requests from the public and schools for guided nature walks, environmental talks and other nature appreciation activities. Liaise with members who may be able to individually fulfill requests as guides, speakers or organizers.
- g. To respond to requests from secondary schools, universities for volunteer and nature related environmental activities in the field.
- h. Materials and Protocol – to modify and update existing factsheets, leaflets, operating procedures, handouts, posters etc and develop new ones for generic or specific outreach programs and activities
- i. Archives and Record Keeping – to keep an updated register of all relevant details and information (contacts list, speaker's/attendance list, photographs, videos, slides in the computer as well as hard copies of all outreach programs and activities conducted by NSS.
- j. Membership Recruitment - to promote and recruit new membership wherever possible. This may involve organizing NSS participation in exhibitions, roadshows, as and when the opportunity arises and as agreed by the Exco and Council with other Secretariat staff.
- k. To undertake work of a similar nature as directed by Exco.

**2. REMUNERATION**

Your salary shall be AMOUNT per month. Additional salary increments will be considered by the Executive Committee based on performance at the end of a one-year employment period. The Employer's CPF contributions will be borne by the Nature Society (Singapore), but you will be responsible for the payment of the Employee's CPF contributions and your personal income taxes.

**3. EMPLOYMENT PERIOD**

The appointment is envisaged for two years and would be reviewed annually one year in relation to the Society's financial position.

**4. PROBATION PERIOD**

Upon the assumption of duties, you shall undergo a three month probation period, with the possibility of this being extended to six months, if necessary. Subject to your satisfactory performance during this period, and subject to your desire to continue in our employ, your position as Outreach Officer shall be confirmed.

**5. ANNUAL LEAVE**

You shall be entitled to annual leave of 14 days. Leave periods are to be taken at times mutually agreed between yourself and the Executive Committee.

**6. WORKING HOURS**

Working hours are from 9.00am to 6.00pm on Mondays to Fridays or equivalent. You may be required to assist at events take place on weekends, holidays, or in the evenings.

**7. INSURANCE**

We shall provide basic workman's compensation for you.

**8. BONUS**

There will be a review of Society financial status and individual performance at the end of each calendar year, arising out of which we may decide to pay you a bonus. The decision to pay such a bonus shall be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

**9. TRANSPORT CLAIMS**

You shall be reimbursed for reasonable travelling expenses incurred in carryout out official assignments. This shall not apply to your normal daily travel between your residence and the office.

**10. TERMINATION**

Termination by either party shall be with a minimum of one month's notice at any point in the employment period, including the probation period.

**11. COMMENCEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT**

Your term of employment will commence on DATE or at the earliest possible date that is mutually agreeable to you and the Executive Committee of the Nature Society (Singapore).

We trust our offer is of interest to you, which is made subject to our belief that the interview process covered all relevant matters and that there was nothing unrevealed which would adversely affect you role as an integral part of Nature Society (Singapore).

If you decide to accept our offer, would you please sign the duplicate copy of this letter, together with the statement of integrity, and return it to us.

Yours Sincerely,

SHAWN LUM  
President

I hereby accept this offer of employment on the Terms and Conditions as stated above.

Signature  
Name

Date:

Statement of Integrity

I believe that there is nothing unrevealed which may in any way affect my work or my position as an integral part of the Nature Society (Singapore) or which creates a conflict of interest with my position at Nature Society (Singapore).

Signature:  
Name  
I/C No:

Date:

