

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Financial Project Officer - Housing Retrofit
MANAGED BY:	Housing Retrofit Manager
GRADE:	7

BACKGROUND

The West of England Combined Authority is seeking to appoint a Financial Project Officer - Housing Retrofit to join the **South West Net Zero Hub** team.

This is an exciting time to join the West of England Combined Authority. In the last year nearly three quarters of a billion pounds of new investment has been secured for the region. New plans are in place to deliver on Mayoral priorities to improve transport, skills and housing for our residents, take decisive action to tackle the climate emergency, and to support communities facing the cost-of-living crisis. There is a relentless focus on delivery to put the West of England on the map for regional, national and global success.

Led by the regional Metro Mayor, the West of England Combined Authority brings together three local councils, the Local Enterprise Partnership and works with communities, other public services, and industry to deliver for the region.

You will be a key player in leading our response to tackle the climate and ecological emergency. We are delivering on the West of England's Climate and Ecological Strategy and Action Plan and making the West of England the bee and pollinator capital of the U.K. as we push to reach our very ambitious net zero targets by 2030.

Come and help shape the future of the West of England, a place so many people are proud to call home.

The Service: The South West Net Zero Hub

The BEIS funded Energy Hubs is a nationwide initiative to support the identification, development and implementation of energy projects across five regional hubs. The initiative has five core objectives aimed at stimulating local investment in energy projects.

1. Increase the number, quality and scale of local energy projects being delivered
2. Raise local awareness of the opportunity for and benefits of local energy investment
3. Enable local areas to attract private and/or public finance for energy projects
4. Support rural community energy project development
5. Deliver initiatives to improve energy efficiency in housing

Projects can be supported across a range of scale, with Hub assistance available to

accelerate routes to market for programmes stuck in early feasibility stages. The South West Net Zero Hub (SWNZH) is currently supporting three key programmes - Local Capacity Support for strategic regional energy projects, the Rural Community Energy Fund, for smaller, community led energy projects and the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme.

The Energy Hub offers support to eligible project owners at any point through the development stages, from feasibility, business case, design and planning to financing. Where possible, the Hub will look to maximise benefits across the region by aggregating solutions to drive economies of scale.

Additionally, the Energy Hub can also serve as a new conduit between local energy actors and central Government, providing a combined voice for pan-regional energy issues, connecting local institutions and sharing best practice across the five Hub regions.

The South West Partnership:

The South West Partnership, made up of the seven Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and their accountable body authorities in the south west region, is an important supporting partner of the Hub. The Partnership members are:

Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly LEP and Cornwall Council
Heart of the South West and Somerset County Council
Dorset LEP
Solent LEP and Portsmouth Council
Swindon and Wiltshire LEP and Wiltshire Council
GFirst LEP and Gloucestershire County Council
West of England LEP and West of England Combined Authority

Each LEP area is represented on the programme steering group. The West of England Combined Authority is leading the Hub on behalf of the South West Partnership.

THE ROLE

Reporting to the Housing Retrofit Manager, the post-holder will support the South West Net Zero Hub to maintain and manage the financial aspects of grant programmes. This new role will support the current Retrofit Team. The post holder will co-ordinate the financial processes of the Energy Hub's housing retrofit Projects, alongside the associated governance, communication and reporting requirements.

The role requires someone who is familiar with grant schemes, has knowledge of project monitoring and reporting processes. The ideal candidate will be confident with financial processes and project financial processes

The post holder will apply excellent financial methodology to a number of projects, liaising and advising the project Manager from inception to completion.

A knowledge of energy efficiency would be an advantage though is not a requirement.

Experience gained in social housing, council authority, government body or similar will be

an advantage, but is not essential.

This role contributes and supports the delivery of projects to assist thousands of homes across the South West impacted by fuel poverty and is a role that can really help make a difference

This role would suit an individual who is looking to develop their skills in an emerging retrofit Market. You may be a graduate who is interested in finance and data who is looking to develop your project skills or a finance officer seeking a more diverse and exciting role

This role would be ideal for an individual who is looking to work within our expanding projects team working from home and occasionally working from our Bristol Office with flexibility around when this occurs.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Initiating Projects outlining a business's project financial objectives clearly, including preferred payment type and payment schedule
- Taking part in project meetings and suggesting adjustments
- Setting and adhering to a budget that maintains objectives and criteria of the Grant Funding, validating Grant claims and processing grant claims and invoices
- Consistently monitoring the costs, progress, and quality of a project
- Organising all project-related financial paperwork
- Communicating with stakeholders to understand and develop clear understanding and requirements, while resolving financial outputs and queries
- Developing relationships with contractors and suppliers
- Coordinating all project team members so workflow remains on schedule
- Monitoring and reviewing project progress, and assisting to producing performance management and business analysis reports
- Supporting grant funding applications and tendering
- Evaluating projects and reporting on financial outcomes
- Providing support to all project partners and relevant organisations to ensure projects run smoothly

- Coordinating and participating in regular meetings with project partners and delivery organisations
- Ensuring all relevant financial and monitoring information for each project is accurate and that documentation is stored correctly
- Managing project invoicing liaising with both internal and external stakeholders to ensure invoicing details and necessary evidence aligns with contract requirement and WECA process.
- Doing periodic reconciliation of project budget against actual invoices and managing final project reconciliation requirements.
- Identify, articulate and communicate actual and foreseen barriers to the delivery of local authority delivery in the scheme, and work with stakeholders to identify and implement solutions
- Ensure grant payment requests are correct before uploading to the accounts payable system
- Develop and maintain the Energy Hub grants database, incorporating new grants and tracking and updating the status of live grants
- Provide analysis and report programme progress
- Support the Energy Hub team on the delivery of key project activities
- Attend contract management meetings as appropriate and facilitate collaboration between different stakeholders
- Ensure effective communication is maintained throughout the programme
- Work flexibly to support and represent the work of SWNZH across the region.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Have or be working towards a recognised finance/accountancy qualification or be qualified by experience
- A proven ability to verify, analyse and simplify complex written information, with a high level of attention to detail
- Excellent computer skills, with working knowledge of Word, Access, PowerPoint, and Excel
- Superb communication and organisation skills, both written and verbal
- Ability to work with minimal supervision
- Ability to work within a team structure
- Flexible approach to work

Experience

- Experience gained in a similar project admin / support / project management officer (PMO)/finance role

- Experience in Financial/ transactional accounting
- Experience gained in a related industry to that of our clients (e.g., social housing, third sector, council authority, governmental body)
- Experience gained working with partner agencies, private businesses, and local communities
- Previous grant administration
- Developing effective stakeholder relationships
- Experience of applying project / programme management discipline to the co-ordination of a work programme or service
- Providing advice of a technical and financial nature across a range of projects, representing these issues clearly and persuasively both internally and externally

Skills and Competencies

- Ability to prioritise work independently, and work across a range of tasks on a daily basis
- Good digital skills across a wide range of software programmes and tools, including MS Office
- Partnership working and ability to deal professionally across all levels of the organisation
- Ability to analyse problems, situations and information and present innovative and feasible solutions
- Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to co-ordinate activity of a dispersed team
- Good communicator with good written English
- Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to support activity of a dispersed team

DESIRABLE

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Knowledge of housing energy efficiency data and policies.

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

Alongside a competitive salary, we offer an excellent benefits package including:

- 26 days annual leave plus bank holidays
- Generous Employer-Contribution Pension Scheme through the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Discounted monthly bus tickets
- Hybrid working to split your week between the office and home to help you achieve the best work/life balance and career goals.

We have recently moved into a new bright, airy, modern office space, with all latest technology, under a 10-minute walk from Bristol Temple Meads Train Station. We offer flexible and hybrid working options too if you would rather work from home, or another suitable location.

As an equal opportunities employer, we invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support they may need during the recruitment process.

WE PAY THE LIVING WAGE

We're proud to have been accredited as a Living Wage Employer

Living Wage accreditation means that everyone working at The West of England and Combined Authority receives a minimum hourly wage of £14.21 - higher than the government minimum for **over 23s, currently £9.50 per hour**



It also means that anyone who provides services to, or has contracts with us, must pay the Living Wage, setting the bar for good employer practices in the region. This includes those who provide services to The West of England and Combined Authority, such as cleaning and facilities management contracts, as well as those who have contracts with us - such as IT providers.