



Position Description: Nature Based Therapist

Project Coordinator- Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature

Title of the role:	Project Coordinator- Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature
Hours:	22.5 hours per week (0.6 FTE)
Remuneration:	\$74,000 per annum FTE (\$44,000 pro rata)
Contract Period:	July 2021 - June 2023
Location:	Canberra, ACT
Reports to:	CEO, Landcare ACT and Program Operation Committee
Last revised:	July 2021

About Landcare ACT

Landcare ACT is the peak body for Landcare in the ACT region. Our organisation helps to support and promote the over 60 community groups who help look after urban parklands, countryside, nature reserves and waterways.

Landcare ACT serves and is supported by its foundation member bodies, including the three Landcare Networks in the ACT (Southern ACT Catchment Group; Ginninderra Catchment Group; Molonglo Conservation Group) as well as Buru-Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation and the Rural Landholders Association. Landcare ACT is a not-for-profit company with a skill-based Board of Directors, supported by member representatives on the Members Council.

Landcare ACT is part of the National Landcare Network (NLN) along with the landcare peak bodies from each State and Territory. The role of LACT is established under a Constitution, with activities guided by a Strategic Plan.

About the Position

The Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature Project Coordinator is a newly created position for a minimum of 2 years. The primary responsibility of this role is to coordinate the Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature Program, which Landcare ACT was granted through the ACT Government Healthy Canberra Grants.

The Project Coordinator will be an experienced health practitioner with demonstrated effectiveness in mental health service provision and an interest in nature based therapy and other relevant contemporary therapies.

About the Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature Program

This Project Coordinator position will be responsible for the day-to-day coordination of the "Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature" Program.

The Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature Program is a partnership between Landcare ACT and Wellways, with numerous other delivery partners funded by the ACT Government Healthy Canberra Grants Program.

Recovery and Wellbeing through Nature has been designed to improve mental health and increase social connectedness among Canberrans through nature-based activities. Growing international experience and research shows that active participation in nature-based activities is clearly associated with reduced prevalence of depression, anxiety and other health problems and increased social connectedness. A researcher from The University of Sheffield explained "Connection with nature is valuable, sometimes life-saving, for people with mild to severe mental health difficulties" (Birch 2017). The return on investment for nature conservation activities in health has been shown to be over 8:1.

This program will support individuals with chronic mental health issues and those experiencing social isolation to participate in therapeutic nature related activities that also build social capital, create informal supports, and enhance a sense of connectedness and belonging.

Recent research has shown that ongoing impacts from recent natural disasters and COVID increase the risk of poor mental health and social isolation in specific cohorts. As such target populations include youth, older people, Aboriginal people, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The Program is managed by a Program Operations Committee comprised of Landcare ACT and Wellways. The Program is overseen and guided by a Steering Committee comprised of Landcare ACT, Wellways, Mental Health Consumers Network, ACT NRM, ACT Catchment Groups, Aboriginal representatives and others.

Duties:

Through this program a qualified and experienced community mental health professional will be employed to deliver guided nature walks, environmental care activities and therapeutic horticulture to individuals and groups from target populations.

Reporting to the Landcare ACT CEO and the Program Operations Committee, the Project Coordinator will work under limited direction and will be responsible for engaging and coordinating individuals from target populations to participate in:

- 1) Group nature walks that improve mental health and/or social connectedness
- 2) Environmental care activities (such as tree planting, waterway restoration, habitat protection, cultural site maintenance). These activities will be developed in conjunction with local community environmental groups and involve informal healing discussions as part of the activity
- 3) Therapeutic horticulture, supporting participants in the development of gardens for wildlife in community green spaces and their own backyards

To maximise the impact of the program on improving mental health and social connectedness the Project Coordinator will also be responsible to:

- Liaise with project partners in ensuring all target populations are involved and target numbers of participants are met
- Support program evaluation and reporting by ensuring evaluation forms are completed by participants, develop reports following each activity and follow up with participants at regular intervals to determine activity impact
- Collaborate with a Communications Officer to develop a broad health promotions campaign
- Provide links and support for target individuals and groups to continue to maintain social connectedness and build informal supports through ongoing involvement with local environmental care groups beyond the program
- Work with partners to develop a GPS triggered audio walking tours in natural areas
- Coordinate training events for existing landcare coordinators to better support the wellbeing of at-risk populations engaging in environmental care activities into the future

Selection Criteria

Required:

1. Demonstrated experience working with individuals and/or groups to support their mental health or social connectedness and relevant qualifications
2. Experience in coordinating projects in community context, including the ability to engage participants in evaluation and ability to compile activity and project reports
3. Proven ability to consult and work collaboratively, including an ability to encourage participation and develop effective partnerships with stakeholders.

4. Good time management including an ability to negotiate workload, competing requests and follow up within agreed timelines
5. Demonstrated understanding of the community health sector and services in the region
6. Demonstrated interest in nature-based therapy
7. Satisfactory Police Records Check [less than 12 months old] and Working with Children Check, prior to commencement
8. Right to Work within Australia

Desirable:

- Experience in nature-based therapy and other related contemporary therapy
- Experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Aboriginal people and/or individuals of varying generations

Applications have been extended and now close 5pm Wednesday 4th August.

Applications to include resume and responses to above selection criteria and referee details. Please send to ceo@landcareact.org.au.

For more information contact Karissa Preuss: 0412 206 491
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