

Government Relations Advisor

Position Description

Date: Tuesday, 2 June 2026

The organisation

As Australia's only national bird conservation charity, we are on a mission to put birds and nature on the path to recovery within a decade, leading and facilitating action that halts biodiversity loss and restores ecosystems. We can only achieve this with the help and support afforded to us by our diverse stakeholders including supporters, campaigners, donors, members and like-minded conservation organisations.

BirdLife Australia takes a science and evidence-based approach to bird conservation. Where strong conservation plans are in place and well-resourced the evidence tells us that threatened species can be brought back from the brink of extinction. With a 100-plus year history and Australia's strongest and longest-lived collection of data and surveys, BirdLife Australia brings a wealth of observation and experience to the protection of native birds.

BirdLife Australia is a diverse organisation with more than 350,000 supporters, donors, volunteers, campaigners and members, over 150 staff across Australia, and a network of more than 40 voluntary community groups.

BirdLife Australia is truly local to global, with a network of more than 40 voluntary community groups on the ground in Australia and is the Australian member of the BirdLife International partnership, the world's largest partnership for conservation.

Our growing network of people generously give their time, expertise, voice and financial support, standing together with us to help protect Australia's unique birdlife.

A significant part of BirdLife Australia's work is done by volunteers acting either alone, in organised groups or serving on Committees. It is important that all staff understand and appreciate the contribution made by volunteers, and are also mindful of their varying skills, interests and motivations.

BirdLife Australia acknowledges the important role First Nations People throughout Australia have played, and continue to play, caring for Country. We acknowledge their continuing connection to land, sea and community and pay respect to Traditional Owners and their cultures, and to their Elders both past and present. BirdLife Australia endeavours to facilitate the further engagement of Indigenous Australians in the research and conservation of our native birds.

The role

The Government Relations Advisor will help deliver BirdLife Australia's Bird Conservation Strategy by managing engagement and advocacy with federal and state governments, and other key

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stakeholders, as well as draft and review policy and campaign communications that promote bird and ecological conservation.

The role will work primarily with the Senior Manager Advocacy and Policy, Senior Manager Participation, and CEO to:

- Ensure BirdLife Australia's key policy and advocacy positions are communicated to government and other key sectors.
- Leverage our substantial supporter base to influence social and economic drivers.
- Advocate for policies, programs and practices that promote bird conservation.
- Work with the private sector to influence the key decision-making processes that affect conservation targets.

Position title

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Position objective

Improve bird conservation outcomes by maximising strategic engagement with Government and other sectors to influence drivers and deliver optimal policy and legal frameworks.

Status

This is a full-time position (1 FTE) offered as an ongoing role.

Staff reporting

None. This role plays a key role in influencing, coaching and mentoring across various teams.

Remuneration / Job Level

Full-time salary at Level 4 based on program complexity, scale, experience and expertise

Location

Ideally, this position will be based in Canberra.

Reporting

This position reports to the Senior Manager Advocacy and Policy.

Key relationships

Internal: Senior Manager Advocacy and Policy, Senior Manager Participation, Senior Advisor Public Relations, Communications and Media teams, Conservation and Science teams, CEO Office.

External: Major stakeholders who influence decision-making on environmental, social and economic matters that impact Australia's birds and their habitat (e.g. State and Federal Governments, departments). Relevant community groups and/or volunteers, environmental non-government organisations and alliances, First Nations People (including Traditional Owners and representative groups); relevant industry bodies and experts (including academics and/or management professionals).

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Travel requirements

Some travel within Australia will be required.

Duties

Working to achieve the objectives of BirdLife Australia's conservation Programs, this role will focus on strategic engagement with Government and other relevant sectors to deliver conservation outcomes for Australia's native birds. This will include:

- Building and maintaining relationships within key government departments, Members of Parliament and Ministerial offices. Attending meetings alongside or on behalf of senior staff including the CEO.
- Providing oversight, research, briefings and intelligence on key policy and campaign issues including, threatened species recovery planning and development approval processes.
- Maintaining a strong understanding of federal and state legislative framework and reporting on key dates and relevant Bills, amendments and inquiry referrals.
- Assisting with State and local level strategic engagement with occasional state-based MP or Ministerial meetings and briefings.
- Organising, and representing BirdLife Australia in, meetings, workshops and other policy development and advocacy opportunities.
- Identifying local and federal funding opportunities relevant to BirdLife's science and conservation objectives and assisting with funding application processes.
- Working with BirdLife Australia's Advocacy team to develop external correspondence, policy-related documents and input into local and federal inquiry submissions.
- Building and maintaining relationships within the environment sector to ensure campaigns are aligned and united.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Experience in a government, political liaison or adviser role.
- Demonstrated ability to summarize complex information to develop communications in response to unexpected external events
- Demonstrated systems thinking skills coupled with well-developed understanding of power analysis, influencing and political strategy
- Ability to initiate and maintain effective relationships with external stakeholders and decision makers from a wide range of political and ideological perspectives
- Work collaboratively to achieve shared goals consistent with BirdLife Australia's values.
- Demonstrated influence and negotiation skills to gain agreement and progress proposals or projects.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate with clarity, power, and passion to achieve communication objectives.
- Excellent interpersonal, representational, and relationship-building skills.
- High level computer literacy.

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Desirable

- An affinity with the aims and philosophy of a non-for-profit conservation organisation, philanthropy and the environmental sector.
- Knowledge of threatened bird taxa and the conservation issues facing them
- Experience in fundraising, writing grant applications and/or government budget processes.
- Strong understanding of and/or experience working with the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) including the most recent reforms.

Workstyle, attributes, and attitudes

- A high level of professionalism and accountability in all work.
- A strategic thinker and leader.
- A team player with a highly collaborative style, the flexibility and finesse to manage by influence.
- Responds positively to feedback and accommodates change, ability to provide constructive feedback.
- Ability to work well with minimum supervision, accepts high-level responsibility for work plan delivery.
- A willingness and capacity to work flexible hours as and when required.

Living our Values

- Promote and role model appropriate behaviours that support BirdLife Australia's culture and values.
- Actively demonstrate organisational values.

<i>Passion</i>	<i>Excellence</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Collaboratio</i>	<i>Integrity</i>	<i>Impact</i>
We bring people together around a love of nature	Science and knowledge is at the centre of everything we do	We empower and inspire people to lead with courage and purpose	We embrace diversity and work in partnership with mutual respect	Our success is based on experience, honesty, trust and fairness	We think globally, lead nationally and act locally

OH&S statement

Employees and potential employees should be aware that the requirements of the position include, but are not limited to:

- Limited attendance at evening or weekend meetings.
- Possible driving for extended periods and interstate travel.
- Long periods of sedentary desk and computer duties and telephone use.
- Overnight and weekend work in the field and at conferences.