Tourism Development Officer

For Joyce Country & Western Lakes GeoEnterprise ‘Geopark Project’

3-Year Contract

1. **Background**

The Joyce Country and Western Lakes Geopark Project aims to create structures and conditions which will eventually allow for recognition as a [UNESCO Global Geopark](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/unesco-global-geoparks/) within an area of South West Mayo and North Connemara. The proposed territory includes Loughs Carra, Mask and a large part of the Corrib, and 16 communities from Ballintubber in the north through to Oughterard further south.

Geoparks help to tell the fascinating stories of geological and also social, cultural and economic history of specific areas. Elevated to UNESCO status from 2015, there are now over 140 UNESCO Global Geoparks across the globe. They have equal status to World Heritage Sites but don’t carry any legislative weight and don’t impose restrictions on people, landowners or industry.

Gaining UNESCO Global Geopark status takes many years but the process of working towards the application is important for the development of tourism and other enterprise products, business, education and social and cultural networks. In short, geoparks are tools for sustainable development. There is no geopark yet in Connacht nor any with a Gaeltacht.

Funding has been secured for Phase 1 of the Geopark Project (2019-2021) from the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (part of Project Ireland 2040) and a number of state agencies. As lead agency Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) has overall responsibility for delivery of the project. Údarás Na Gaeltachta, Mayo and Galway County Councils and a number of other state bodies have also committed to supporting the project. The range of stakeholders will be represented through a project Steering Group.

A community based development company Joyce Country & Western Lakes GeoEnterprise with broad experience of rural and community development, is responsible for day-to-day management and implementation of the project. Considerable preparatory work has already been done including digital presence [www.joycecountrygeoparkproject.ie](http://www.joycecountrygeoparkproject.ie) supported by various funding instruments. Staff to be contracted by JCWL GeoEnterprise will include a Geopark Manager, a Geologist and a Tourism Development Officer.

1. **The Tourism Development Officer position**

Applicants for the Tourism Development Officer, a three year post, being advertised by Geotreallús Dhúiche Sheoigheach agus Lochanna an Iarthair CFTR, must have a high level of fluency in the Irish language. The Tourism Development Officer will be responsible for leading and supporting tourism development activities in the project area. S/he will work effectively as part of the management team of the Geopark Project Manager and the Geologist. The Tourism Development Officer will be required to attend a training course in IT Tralee. In addition, the person who takes up this position will be part of a network of marketing officers employed under this scheme. Salary is €30,000 p.a.

1. **Role and responsibilities**

The main role and responsibilities of the Tourism Development Officer within the developing geopark will be outlined in an annual work plan and will include:

* **Consultation** with local communities, farmers and other businesses on tourism-related development opportunities and needs
* **Consultation** with strategic partners including Údarás Na Gaeltachta, Fáilte Ireland, Mayo and Galway County Councils, Geological Survey Ireland, other state agencies and stakeholder supporters and collaborators and JCWL GeoEnterprise on planning, financing and supporting tourism development actions to promote the aspiring geopark
* Planning and organising tourism-related business **networks and trainings**, e.g. for hospitality providers, tour and activity guides, craft producers, other general service providers in the territory
* Preparation of **promotional content** (brochures, fliers, video, etc) and for the geopark website, other digital media and geo-site information panels
* **Presentations** at trainings and events promoting the geopark opportunities
* Support to development activities for schools and other **education** and training services
* Promote use of the **Irish language** in everyday life, especially in relation to geopark activities
* **Monitoring and reporting** on the tourism elements of the aspiring geopark
* **Project management** liaison with the Steering Group and JCWL GeoEnterprise board
1. **Required competences**
* A minimum of 3-years relevant post graduate experience or alternatively relevant professional experience of minimum 7 years
* Possess good knowledge of a wide range of sustainable tourism development and marketing concepts and techniques
* Have a strong understanding of sustainable tourism offerings in the West of Ireland which could be useful as springboards to development of the geopark concept
* Good knowledge of local government and other state bodies and their role in promoting sustainable regional, rural and community tourism
* Good knowledge of the operations and standards of a Global geopark
* Good knowledge of funding programmes and other support measures, including EU, potentially useful to the establishment of a sustainable UNESCO Global Geopark
* Proven ability to:

- Work well with others as part of a team

- Deal with new tasks and adapt quickly to new work practices in a team environment

- Be open and receptive to new information and be able to deal with changing demands within the work environment including periodic evening and weekend work

- Work in a client/stakeholder-focused environment

- Build effective entrepreneurial relationships and partnerships

- Prioritise tasks and work schedules effectively

1. **Qualifications & practical skills**
* A working ability in Irish and English
* Relevant third level qualification, preferably related to tourism development
* Full valid driving licence and access to own transport
* Good verbal and written communication skills
* Possess strong computer, IT, social media and digital platform skills
1. **Application procedure**

The application form is available from JCWL GeoEnterprise at agdsgeoenterprise@gmail.com

Intending candidates for the position should submit the whole application electronically to: agdsgeoenterprise@gmail.com including:

* A **signed** **cover letter** in Irish and English (max. 1 page each language) outlining how your qualifications, skills and experience match the requirements of the position.
* The **completed application form** (Irish & English in the same document)
* **Curriculum Vitae** (Irish & English max. 2 pages each)

CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: **5:00 p.m. Friday 29th November 2019**

*Please note you may be asked to provide evidence of the level of your qualifications and copy of certificates verifying qualifications and/or transcripts. Original certificates will be required prior to any appointment.*