



seed **madagascar**

sustainable environment, education & development

## Conservation Research Assistant

### Madagascar

#### About the organisation:

SEED Madagascar is a British Charity working in partnership with communities in the south east of Madagascar. We integrate high quality community health, sustainable livelihoods, education infrastructure and conservation programmes to support long term, sustainable change and add to international best practice through research and publication across all of our programmatic areas. We are now looking for entry level officers and managers to work alongside national staff and expand our team.

#### Position Overview:

Ideal for a motivated, recently qualified individual interested in working within an established international and local research team to carry out fieldwork in a world-renowned biodiversity hotspot. Based in the stunning coastal village of Sainte Luce, 40km north of Fort Dauphin, conducting research within the area's fragmented littoral forest habitats and adjoining coastal habitats. This position affords the opportunity to contribute towards vital in-situ conservation and to participate in the writing of scientific publications. Research Assistants are responsible for leading international teams of short-term volunteers, collecting and analysing data accurately and contributing towards the holistic conservation approach encouraged at SEED Madagascar. This job role involves maintaining a balance between collecting valuable scientific data and ensuring our enthusiastic volunteers are happy and contribute sufficiently to the programme. After initial training the applicant will also work with the research team to assist in developing and expanding research projects and will be encouraged towards writing scientific paper. This is an excellent opportunity for a recent graduate to gain field experience and the necessary skills essential for a career in conservation.

<b>Location:</b>	Sainte Luce, Anosy Region, Madagascar
<b>Timeframe:</b>	12 months extendable
<b>Probationary period:</b>	3 months
<b>Contract:</b>	Voluntary, unsalaried
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Conservation Research Coordinator

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

The research assistant will work in collaboration with SEED Madagascar's international and Malagasy staff in the following activities:

1. Lead data collection in the field
2. Monitor data collection in the field and ensure quality of data
3. Assist in setting research objectives and ensuring these are consistently met
4. Organise the logistics of the research projects when in the field, including equipment and resource management
5. Supervise volunteers during their time in the field, ad-hoc problem solving.
6. Assist in training volunteers in field research techniques
7. Ensure good communication and team relations between volunteers, SEED staff and local staff
8. Assist in the development of research projects, analysis of data and write up of research papers when required
9. Any other tasks the Director of Programmes and Operations/ Conservation Research Coordinator deems necessary within the broad remit of this role

**Person Specification:**

- Demonstrate sound knowledge and keen interest in conservation issues
- A qualification in a related discipline
- Specialist knowledge of either primatology, herpetology, botany or environmental education is desirable
- Able to or willing to learn to safely handle and identify reptiles and amphibians
- Previous experience of collecting data
- Working Knowledge of GPS and/or GIS is an advantage
- Good IT skills
- First aid certificate
- Ability to grasp and carry out instruction in challenging environments and maintain a

good sense of humour

- Previous experience living or working in a developing country would be an asset
- High level of communication skills and ability to develop excellent relationships within the team
- A good degree of initiative, self-motivation and commitment
- Ability to motivate others
- Excellent organisational and time management skills is a must
- Excellent written communication skills
- Ability to work under pressure and be flexible, empathetic and accommodating
- Ability to work as part of a dynamic and multicultural team
- Good degree of fitness for working in difficult terrain under tropical conditions
- Ability to spend long periods of time in basic camping conditions
- Able to commit for a period of one year minimum
- Ability to work to and advocate for all of SEED's policies and procedures, safeguarding those that SEED works with and reporting any concerns appropriately

**Practicalities:**

Food and local transport will be provided whilst on projects. All other costs will need to be covered by the candidate, including accommodation when not in the field. The successful candidate will therefore be able to financially support themselves for the full duration of this post and will have their own laptop computer (non-tablet).

**Application procedure:**

Interested applicants should send a CV and covering letter outlining how their skills and experience match the requirements in the job description criteria to SEED Madagascar Director of Programmes and Operations, Lisa Bass by email on [lisa@seedmadagascar.org](mailto:lisa@seedmadagascar.org)

Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. Long-listed applicants will have an initial informal skype chat with Madagascar-based staff. Short-listed applicants will then be offered a face-to-face interview with the London team, including the

Managing Director, Mark Jacobs, in person.

**Country and Organisation Background:**

Madagascar is one of the most impoverished and least developed countries in the world, ranking 151/187 on the UNDP 2013 Human Development Index. Compounded by inadequate government investment in the health sector, numbers only serve to highlight the devastating health outcomes caused by inadequate service provision. For example, in the remote southeast Anosy Region, less than 35% of people have access to clean water, (WHO/UNICEF, 2015), causing diarrhoea and perpetuating other significant health issues. Approximately 50% of pregnant women with untreated syphilis will transmit the infection to their unborn child, resulting in profound adverse outcomes.

SEED Madagascar is a British registered charity partnered with a Malagasy NGO which has been operating in the impoverished Anosy region of south east Madagascar for over 15 years. SEED works with and in support of urban and rural communities in southeast Madagascar, aiming to tackle the immediate effects of extreme poverty, support long-term development and protect the environment. Its central mission is to build the capacity of individuals and organisations to lead and support sustainable conservation and development initiatives in south east Madagascar, with the objective of securing local community access to quality health, education and livelihoods assets, and increasing local capacity to conserve and manage natural resources including unique but greatly endangered forest environments.

More information on the work of SEED Madagascar can be found at [www.madagascar.co.uk](http://www.madagascar.co.uk).