Partner & General Finance Officer  
Full-time, based in Brussels (Belgium)

Fern is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) created in 1995. Our mission is to achieve greater environmental and social justice, focusing on forests and forest peoples’ rights in the policies and practices of the European Union.

We believe that to be effective it is essential to understand and address the social dimension of environmental conflicts; that strong coalitions are more likely to achieve lasting change; and that presenting ways forward is often more effective than highlighting problems.

We have no director and strive to make decisions by consensus. Details of our current work areas and campaigns can be found at [www.fern.org](http://www.fern.org)

We currently have 18 staff working from two offices, in Brussels (Belgium) and Moreton-in-Marsh (UK), and work with Partner organisations in Ghana, Liberia, Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Vietnam, Laos and the UK.

We are looking for a Partner and General Finance Officer to provide strong and professional support to the organisation. The post will be full time, with an indicative split of three days working on partner finance related matters and two days providing general financial and admin support to the organisation. There will, however, be flexibility required based on demand and workload.

**A. KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ASSOCIATED TASKS**

1. Partner Financial Management  
The Partner Finance Officer takes a lead role on all financial aspects of the relationship with Fern’s partners. This includes setting the agenda for partner issues, working creatively to ensure that Fern’s obligations to its donors are met and coordinating the work of colleagues when this is needed to ensure proper reporting. Specific tasks include:
   - Preparation and updating of partner contracts and budgets  
   - Liaising with partners around funding proposals  
   - Receiving and checking partner financial reports and associated documentation and ensuring they are in line with Fern and donor guidelines  
   - Where partner reports are deficient, either following up with partners or finding an alternative solution. On occasion, this may involve doing tasks directly  
   - Preparation of payment instructions for partners  
   - Visiting partners in country to support with reporting and helping partners to build their financial management capacity  
   - Analysis of partner financial reports and communication with colleagues about progress  
   - Liaising with campaigners around partner financial activity and collaborating with them around common partner support activities  
   - Developing guidelines, procedures, tools, presentations, and templates to support partners in achieving quality financial reporting  
   - Supporting the Finance Manager in the preparation of financial reports to donors  
   - Providing support before, during and after audit visits - collating evidence for auditors, especially around partner expenditure.
2. General Financial and admin management:
(With colleagues)
- Supporting planned and ad-hoc financial management tasks for the organisation
- Maintaining an overview of financial activity on Fern’s large grants
- Processing and booking payments and partner’s reports into accounting software and filing paper documents
- Assisting with cash-flow forecasting, particularly in relation to partners’ spend
- Liaising with suppliers, staff and others to resolve queries
- Ensuring all payments are properly authorised, coded and documented, and making payments
- Preparing reports and downloading data from the accounting software; supporting colleagues to understand and interpret the information, and responding to their queries
- Applying the correct exchange rates to accounting entries
Ensuring legal duties regarding Fern’s statutes in Belgium are completed in a timely manner.

3. Contributing to Fern’s Finance and Administration Team (FAT):
(Jointly with FAT colleagues)
- Participating in quarterly FAT meetings and weekly calls
- Establishing FAT objectives and drafting quarterly FAT work plan
- Regularly reviewing and updating the House Rules and Procedures
- Developing FAT job descriptions and participating in FAT recruitment.

B. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- **Travel.** As Fern is an international organisation with partners in Africa and Asia, travel will be a necessary part of this role.
- **Flexibility.** Fern is a small campaigning organisation, and some flexibility will be required in working hours, for example in the case of preparing urgent funding proposals, budgets etc.

C. PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are looking for someone who is organised, efficient, flexible, and can work effectively in a small team. The successful candidate should be a good team worker, pragmatic and a good planner. This role seeks someone who can be supportive and assertive in an equal measure.

Essential:
- At least three years’ experience of relevant financial and administrative management
- Experience of dealing with partners including those with low capacity around financial matters
- Knowledge of applications and reporting requirements of funders, notably the European Commission
- Excellent computer skills (Word, Excel, Internet)
- Ability to handle multiple tasks and competing demands
- Fluency in French and English
- A ‘support minded’ attitude
- An interest in environmental and social issues.
Desirable:
- Experience of working for an NGO
- Fundraising experience
- Knowledge of (Winbooks) accounting software
- Knowledge of Belgian regulations (legal, fiscal, social).

**Indicative starting salary & working conditions**

From €42,114 to €52,095 per annum – gross salary, plus lunch vouchers (6€ per working day) and a contribution to travel costs from home to office.

**D. HOW TO APPLY**

Applications should be made in **English** and comprise:

I. **CV**
II. a covering letter explaining why you are interested in this job, including what attracts you to Fern and what you could bring to Fern
III. a short explanation (less than a page) of the steps you would take to deal with a partner organisation who is not adhering to their Partnership Agreement and approved budget.

**Applications without a properly prepared covering letter will not be considered. Only selected candidates will be contacted in w/c 16th July.**

Deadline for applications: **12:00 13th July 2018**

Send applications to: **julie@fern.org**

If you'd like to discuss the job, contact Raphael Koenig: **Raphael@fern.org**

Fern values a diverse work force and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.