

## SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

### INFORMATION PACKAGE

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Regional Development Australia – Northern Rivers (RDA-NR) requires a Sustainability Officer to join its dynamic regional team to coordinate facilitation of the region's Sustainability Advantage cluster and research the region's environmental industries. This is initially a part-time position for several months. The successful applicant is needed to commence as soon as possible and the position will be required until at least August 2010. Early in 2010, the position will be reviewed to consider extending the scope and timeframes required (including an option for full time work). Any extension of time and scope will be subject to performance and the availability of funding. The position will cover the Northern Rivers, which includes the Local Government areas of Clarence Valley, Richmond Valley, Lismore, Ballina, Byron Bay, Kyogle and Tweed Heads.

#### 1. BACKGROUND

RDA-NR is one of a network of 14 Regional Development Australia committees in NSW established as a joint initiative of the Commonwealth and NSW Governments on 1 July 2009. It has a pivotal role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Northern Rivers region. A key focus is on the economic, social and environmental issues affecting communities, including:

- Regional business growth plans and strategies, which will help support economic development, the creation of new jobs, skills development and business investment;
- Environmental solutions, which will support ongoing sustainability and the management of climate change (including the impact of drought, flood or bushfires); and
- Social inclusion strategies, which will bring together and support all members of the community.

RDA-NR requires a Sustainability Officer for the following purposes/tasks:

1. To facilitate the Northern Rivers Sustainability Advantage cluster (more information below);
2. To advise and support RDA-NR to improve its environmental performance;
3. To identify and make recommendations to RDA-NR about activities that could support ongoing sustainability, environmental solutions and the management of climate change in the region (this may include the preparation of funding applications); and
4. Based on the success of a funding application, to undertake a review of the region's environmental businesses and industry to develop recommendations about how the environmental industries can grow and respond to the challenges of climate change. If sufficient funds are acquired and the industry review identifies appropriate capability, this may include development of industry specific plans (for example a renewable energy industry plan). THIS TASK WILL ONLY COMMENCE FOLLOWING A REVIEW IN EARLY 2010 AND IS CONTINGENT UPON SECURING FUNDING FOR THIS PURPOSE.

RDA-NR is the facilitator of a cluster of regional businesses participating in the Sustainability Advantage program of the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW). The program is designed to help business focus their efforts to deliver the best results for their company and for the environment. The program brings groups of businesses together in clusters that share regional, industry or supply chain interests. The Northern Rivers cluster was established in mid-2008 and includes ten local businesses in manufacturing, food processing, aged care, health, financial, commercial and

educational services. The cluster is at an established stage, but needs the Sustainability Officer to provide hands on support to follow up on opportunities, develop regional synergies, monitor and review progress and guide further activity. RDA-NR would also like to grow the program and increase participation by other businesses in the region, which requires promotion and follow up with potential target businesses.

Sustainability Advantage is designed to help participating businesses:

- manage environmental risk and ensure compliance;
- use resources more efficiently;
- integrate environmental strategies with business planning;
- enhance customer, supplier and community relationships; and
- engage and train staff to become an employer of choice.

RDA-NR is also working in partnership with the North Coast Institute of TAFE and the Steplight Company on the YGreen Project. This is a Home Sustainability Project that trains young people to become home sustainability advisors and conduct assessments in their local community. A pilot has just commenced in the Ballina Shire Council area, and RDA-NR is seeking opportunities to augment this program. We are also interested in accessing programs like Green Skills to upskill businesses in our region. The Sustainability Officer is required to maintain a watching brief and support RDA-NR to access opportunities as they arise.

The review of the region's environmental businesses is subject to successfully attracting sufficient funding for this purpose, and a specific work plan will be developed for this function as required.

## **2. PROJECT COORDINATION**

The Sustainability Officer will be employed by RDA-NR and will report to the CEO, RDA-NR. The Sustainability Officer will work closely with DECCW in facilitating the Northern Rivers Sustainability Advantage Cluster. If funding for an environmental industries audit is successful, a steering committee will be established to oversee this project and advise the Sustainability Officer.

## **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **TASKS**

The Sustainability Officer's role is to perform the four primary tasks identified above, that is:

1. facilitate the Northern Rivers Sustainability Advantage cluster;
2. advise and support RDA-NR to improve its environmental performance;
3. identify and make recommendations about ongoing sustainability, environmental solutions and the management of climate change in the region (this may include the preparation of funding applications); and
4. undertake a review of the region's environmental businesses and industry to develop recommendations about how the environmental industries can grow and respond to the challenges of climate change (subject to the availability of funding and a review of the position in early 2010).

To complete these tasks, the Sustainability Officer is required to:

- develop and facilitate the implementation of relevant environmental policies for RDA-NR;
- maintain a thorough understanding of climate change and sustainability legislation, programs and opportunities for the region and advise RDA-NR on recommended responses;
- assist in the development and implementation of environmental initiatives addressing key sustainability issues;

- support RDA-NR in its dealings with the industry, commercial and community sectors over their efforts to mitigate the effects of and adapt to climate change, initially through the Sustainability Advantage and YGreen programs;
- maintain a knowledge of sustainability best practice and where appropriate provide technical advice on sustainability tools, emissions reductions, environmentally sustainable design, efficient resource management and renewable energy technologies;
- research and prepare briefings, reports and presentations in relation to environmental sustainability and climate change detailing implications and opportunities for the region;
- research options and if required, complete applications for funding to support activities that benefit the Northern Rivers region;
- deliver the Sustainability Advantage cluster program to agreed timeframes, budgets and quality standards, with a particular emphasis on:
  - follow up with companies on opportunities or issues requiring more information;
  - developing regional synergies;
  - hosting cluster meetings;
  - monitoring, reviewing and reporting progress to DECCW;
  - promoting the program to increase participation by other businesses in the region.

The Sustainability Officer is required to make decisions on all matters which are the responsibility of the position and assist in the research and development of policy and projects. The position holder is required to apply project management, decision making and communication skills to achieve the project outcomes as detailed below.

#### Project Management

Coordinate the strategic and project planning activities of the primary functions in consultation with the RDA-NR CEO. The Sustainability Officer will implement an agreed work plan and the main challenge of the position is to establish priorities and to achieve work outcome/output. The position holder will often be required to seek support and commitment to specific initiatives from stakeholders.

The Sustainability Officer requires considerable self-direction and must use highly developed analysis, judgement and problem solving skills to determine strategic direction and contribute to the development of agreed outcomes.

#### Decision Making

The Sustainability Officer will provide advice and report on the activities to the RDA-NR Board, DECCW, Sustainability Advantage participants, stakeholders and the community. The Sustainability Officer will be required to undertake analysis and rigorous scoping to:

- identify issues and determine solutions to barriers; and
- determine additional assistance and support and develop mechanisms to access this support.

#### Communication

The position holder will require highly developed interpersonal, oral and written communication skills for the purpose of providing advice, guidance and information about the project. In addition, she/he will be responsible for:

- reports to RDA-NR and relevant funding providers;
- the development of promotional material contents for the project;
- environmental industry analysis and research;
- preparation of general project documentation; and
- managing community expectations and information.

The key challenges facing this position include:

- Working in a high volume environment where the range of stakeholder expectations can result in competing priorities.
- Exercising initiative, self-direction, and analytical and problem-solving skills to retain focus on strategic and business plans.
- Maintaining processes and systems to ensure relevant contractual obligations are met.
- Establishing priorities to achieve outcomes/ results that meet key performance indicators set by RDA-NR and funding requirements.
- Researching proposed initiatives to ensure the efficient use of limited time and resources.
- Seeking and gaining support and collaborative partners in the public and private sectors for new ideas and initiatives.
- Ensuring high level of knowledge about government programs for sustainability and climate change and supporting regional communities to optimise access to appropriate funding.
- Supporting improved co-ordination/ delivery of regional development programs.

#### **4. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

The Sustainability Officer requires the following knowledge, skills and experience:

- Effective written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare complex reports.
- Sound understanding of and a commitment to resource management principles.
- Sound understanding of the various issues associated with climate change.
- Ability to analyse, comprehend and research data and prepare reports and recommendations.
- High order organisation and project management skills. Ability to plan, organise and manage time, so that organisational resources are optimised and objectives are achieved within a timetable.
- The ability to be pro-active and show initiative.
- Effective team player.
- Ability to gain the co-operation, assistance of members of the community and other staff within the organisation.
- An understanding of sustainability and environmental policy and program settings to align projects with Departmental and Government priorities in relation to regional NSW.
- Strong research and analytical skills
- Ability to exercise discretion in the use of commercially confidential and Government information, and awareness of political issues.
- Experience in the use of computer software programs such as word processing, spreadsheets and databases.
- Relevant tertiary qualifications or equivalent experience.
- Demonstrated understanding of Occupational Health & Safety, the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and the Charter of Principles for a Culturally Diverse Society.

#### **5. SELECTION CRITERIA**

Applicants' suitability for the role will be assessed using the following criteria. Applicants are required to demonstrate that they meet the following criteria as a minimum.

**Applications that do not address each of the essential selection criteria will not be considered.**

##### **Essential Criteria**

1. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the opportunities and issues regarding sustainability and climate change in the Northern Rivers region.

2. Proven project management, research and analytical skills, including the ability to handle numerous project components simultaneously.
3. Proven ability to work under minimal supervision, plan, organise, set priorities and to meet agreed outcomes and timelines.
4. Demonstrated effective written and verbal communication skills and the ability to develop networks with industry and community groups.
5. Sound ability to identify, evaluate problems and formulate and develop appropriate courses of action
6. The ability to develop partnerships with a range of stakeholders including Government, business and the community, including demonstrated networking skills.
7. Highly developed interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills.
8. Experience in the preparation of reports to Steering Committees, government and funding authorities.
9. Computer application skills.
10. Understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity (EEO), ethical practice, Occupational Health & Safety and the Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement.
11. A current drivers licence and independent means of transport. Private vehicles require comprehensive insurance. Note all travel expenses will be reimbursed.

#### **Desirable Criteria**

13. Tertiary qualification in relevant environmental studies or lesser formal qualification with relevant experience in energy management, policy and program development and implementation.
14. Demonstrated experience working with businesses on sustainability and environmental management issues.
15. Survey design and data interpretation skills.

## **6. OTHER INFORMATION**

This is a part-time position from December 2009 to August 2010. A total of 65 days are available for tasks 1, 2 and 3 which amounts to approximately 1.5 - 2 days per week. Allocation of time will be based on specific needs and negotiated with the successful applicant and RDA-NR CEO. Subject to performance and additional funding, negotiations will be entered into in February to 2010 to increase the scope and timing of the position to include the environmental industries research. Options could include part-time or full-time work or an extended completion date. Regardless of the funding application, there will be part time work facilitating the Sustainability Advantage until August 2010.

Applicants should note that the position will be based with RDA-NR in Lismore and will require regular travel throughout the Northern Rivers region.

The total salary package is equivalent to a full time annual salary of \$65,000 **pro rata** plus superannuation. Interviews for this position will be held on 9 December 2009. The position will commence as soon as possible.

## 7. APPLICATIONS

Applications close on at 9.30 am on Monday 30 November 2009 and should be emailed to:

Katrina Luckie – with Subject **RDA-NR Sustainability Officer Application** at [ceo@rdanorthernrivers.org.au](mailto:ceo@rdanorthernrivers.org.au)

Applications must be submitted electronically and must include the applicant's resume/CV and a statement describing the applicant's skills and experience in relation to each of the selection criteria listed in item 5. Applications that do not address the selection criteria will not be considered.

## 8. FURTHER GENERAL INFORMATION FROM

Katrina Luckie on 02 6622 4011



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