



Expedition Researcher Position Announcement

Title: Expedition Researcher

Reports to: Research Director

Duration: Annual contract (with possibility of renewal)

Start date: January 1, 2027 (negotiable)

Background

The Wilderness Project (TWP) aims to explore, study, and better protect 1.2 million km² of irreplaceable African freshwater wilderness in partnership with local communities, governments, and NGOs. Central to this effort is understanding the watersheds through a series of self-propelled source-to-end navigations of the Zambezi, Congo, Okavango and Nile River Basins in addition to several others.

Job Overview

The Expedition Researcher will conduct active river-based expeditions as part of—and potentially leading—research and expedition teams. This role supports TWP's research objectives across the major river basins of Sub-Saharan Africa: the Nile, Okavango, Congo, and Zambezi. The position requires regular travel throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, including Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, DRC, and South Sudan for fieldwork, expeditions, meetings, and conferences. The role involves spending approximately half the year away from home.

Key Responsibilities

Research Coordination in cooperation with the Research Director and Operations Manager:

- Arrange travel, accommodation, and amenities for visiting researchers
- Ensure all required documentation (indemnities, contracts, medical questionnaires, personal information) is completed before research activities begin
- Ensure adherence to relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Ensure adequate resources (food, vehicles, medical equipment) for field trips
- Keep team members properly informed about all research activities

Field Research and Monitoring Conduct research and monitoring tasks primarily on river expeditions and ongoing fieldwork, including:

- River baseline health surveys
- Hydrological monitoring
- Bird, wildlife, and human activity observations and survey recording
- Structured biological surveys (e.g. SASS sampling)
- Opportunistic sampling of ecological health indicators

Leadership and Training

- Assume expedition leader role in the absence of senior staff during expeditions
- Conduct weekly meetings with the research team on projects and developments
- Train and build capacity of team members in research and data collection methods during expeditions

Equipment and Sample Management

- Maintain and repair all research equipment
- Report, replace, and update inventory records for broken items
- Store and manage biological and scientific samples until export to specialists
- Ensure compliance with import/export processes for research samples

Reporting and Documentation

- Assist the Research Director with technical reports to government agencies (research permit updates and other requested reports)
- Assist with compilation of reports following fieldwork and expeditions
- Conduct data analysis and prepare scientific papers in collaboration with the research department
- Submit published papers to international conferences
- Assemble, catalogue, and maintain an updated library of relevant research papers and reports

Project Development

- Prepare proposals for research as listed in the Research Permit of the applicable country

- Identify new research topics aligned with TWP objectives and develop project proposals
- Assist in planning and managing potential symposiums to raise project awareness
- Monitor developments, opportunities, and partnerships in and around the Nile, Congo, and Zambezi Basins
- Investigate potential collaborating research camps and networking opportunities

Mentorship

- Provide scientific supervision and mentorship to interns, scholarship recipients, and collaborating students

Required Qualifications and Skills

Education:

- MSc or PhD in Conservation, Natural Resources, Ecology, Environmental Sciences, or related field

Experience:

- Fieldwork in remote and challenging environments
- Strong GIS capabilities
- Experience or interest in hydrological and climatological monitoring and modeling

Technical Skills:

- Proficiency with MS Office, GIS, and Google Workspace tools (Sheets, Docs)
- Strong numerical and data analysis abilities
- Valid driver's license with 4x4 driving experience
- Valid passport for travel around Sub-Saharan Africa

Personal Attributes:

- Comfortable camping and working outdoors in the wild
- Physical fitness to perform work in rugged terrain
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Highly accurate with strong attention to detail
- Good time management
- Professional yet approachable demeanor when engaging with stakeholders
- Proactive, enthusiastic, and responsive to issues
- Able to work independently and within culturally diverse teams
- Hands-on and motivated to achieve personal and team deliverables
- Research-oriented with an adaptive, forward-thinking approach

- Accountable and willing to set and meet work goals
 - Flexible and adaptable to change
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To Apply

Submit the following to mattd@thewildernessproject.org, and johan@thewildernessproject.org with "Expedition Researcher" in the subject line by **31 October 2026**:

1. Resume
2. Contact information
3. Three references
4. Cover letter outlining your interest, relevant experience, qualifications, skills, and salary requirements

Please review the required specifications, skills, and experience carefully before applying.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.