



Sanctuary communicator– Casual Contract

Our organisation

Orokonui Ecosanctuary - Te Korowai o Mihiwaka is a 307-hectare fenced ecosanctuary, located 20 minutes' drive north of Dunedin, that has provided a safe, predator free environment for some of our most threatened wildlife since 2007. In partnership with mana whenua Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki, Orokonui supports the continued success of taoka species such as South Island Kākā, Takahē, Haast Tokoeka Kiwi, Moko Kākāriki, Tuatara, Kakaruai, Otago Skink, and Green Skink, established within the sanctuary via translocation from their original habitats. The kaupapa of Orokonui is 'wildlife on wildlife's terms'; species within the ecosanctuary live freely, in their natural habitats, as they would in the wild.

The core objectives of the sanctuary are to whakamana and support the wildlife and ecosystems of the Orokonui Valley; to inspire the wider community and visitors to the ecosanctuary to become actively involved in conservation, and to support the development of conservation knowledge and skills through the Orokonui volunteer, education, and visitor programmes.

Sanctuary Communicator role

As part of the communications team, kaimahi in this role will work as part of an interconnected kōrero-focused group of staff and volunteers. They will maintain and deliver high quality learning experiences that engage with the rich cultural, ecological, historical and research life of the sanctuary. With a strong commitment to intersectional kōrero, communications kaimahi will provide lasting points of connection for a range of visitors, from tamariki to kaumatua.

Sanctuary communicators work across a variety of public-facing teams. This role entails regular guiding hours alongside education programming and occasional hours supporting the Visitor Centre. For the right candidate, increased hours may be available during peak operating seasons (Spring/Summer).

These sanctuary roles are distinct but connected by a focus on consistent, thoughtful, and engaging communication skillsets.

Orokonui Guided Tours

Orokonui offers both daily public and private guided tours year round for a variety of visitors; local, domestic, and international. With seasonal peaks across the Spring/Summer periods, guided offerings range from one hour introductory walks, through to larger multi-hour group circuits, and specialty programmes such as Night tours and tour collaborations with experts and researchers. With a strong focus on advocacy and intersectionality, guided tours offer visitors a comprehensive introduction to Orokonui's past, present and future.

Orokonui Education Programme

The Orokonui education programme is attended by more than 5,000 ākongā annually, from early childhood, through to primary and secondary school, and tertiary level students. The programme supports the wider conservation goals of the ecosanctuary, providing engaging nature-based activities designed to inspire and empower our next generation of conservation superstars.

Visitor Centre

Orokonui's Visitor Centre is an information and hospitality hub for members of the public to safely access the sanctuary, learn about our work, and rest and connect with events bookings and Horopito Cafe. Reception staff are the first point of contact and key liaison for all visitors to Orokonui, including phone and email communications. Key focuses for Visitor Centre comms include welcoming and preparing visitors for their walks, ensuring visitors safely enter and exit from sanctuary grounds, responding to administrative enquiries, and supporting the day-to-day flow of members of the public, volunteers, and staff at Orokonui.

Responsibilities of the Sanctuary Communicator role

- Undertake guide and educator training and refresher training as required
- Engage with provided comms updates and current relevant research as required
- Ensuring that kōrero shared with visitors is accurate, protected, and shared as appropriate.
- Ensure health and safety procedures within the sanctuary are followed.
- Contribute to the development of engaging new activities and resources.
- Lead small groups of ākongā in their activities within the sanctuary.

- Guide tour groups (of up to 15 people at a time) via the sanctuary's public walking tracks.
- Supporting lead guides to operate specialty walks or larger touring circuits in a timely and unified manner.
- Adapting information delivery within the sanctuary to accommodate a variety of accessibility needs and perspectives across different visitor groups.
- Assisting with wider school holiday activities and events, and the promotion of the education programme in the education sector and wider community.
- Assist with public facing Visitor Centre comms and basic admin such as phone and email enquiries.

Person specifications

- Excellent interpersonal skills: friendly, positive, and outgoing, able to easily relate with visitors from all walks of life and work positively within a wider team of staff and volunteers.
- Excellent communication skills: able to confidently transfer knowledge in a way that is engaging and inspiring, at different levels in response to a range of visitor ages and perspectives.
- Experience, or a qualification in a relevant field (e.g. science communication, zoology, ecology, botany, biology, conservation).
- A commitment to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi; a respect for, and understanding of, mana whenua and local histories and cultures.
- A creative thinker; an interest in conveying information through storytelling, and in developing and improving ways of sharing knowledge in the forest.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills; reliable and punctual.
- Ability to multi-task and remain calm and professional under pressure.
- Previous experience working in the guiding, conservation, tourism or education sector an advantage.
- Availability and consistency during peak days (mornings and weekends) and seasons in the sanctuary (in particular the Spring/Summer season) an advantage.

Personal attributes

- A passion for Te Taiao, and the unique natural history of Aotearoa.
- A commitment to continually learning and building knowledge.
- A practical understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and related partnership processes.
- Capable of learning and incorporating aspects of Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori into your work.

- A positive can-do attitude; resourceful, able to think on your feet; an effective problem solver.
- Hard working, with a high level of personal accountability.
- Self-motivated and proactive.

Application process

To apply for the role, please email a cover letter and CV to addressed to Taylor Davies-Colley (Comms Lead)

taylor@orokonui.nz

The deadline for applications is Monday 17th March.

The hiring of this role is time-sensitive, and the role will be filled as soon as a suitable candidate is found. Please note that applications will be processed as they are submitted, and the role may be filled before the closing date.

For questions, further information, or a confidential discussion regarding the role, please get in touch.